

**THE CHALLENGE OF SHIFTING PARADIGMS:
SOCIAL WORKERS EXERCISING THE ECOSYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE**

by

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SUMMARY

This dissertation demonstrates and illustrates the challenges involved in the construction of new realities when Duhl's (1983) idea of using metaphor to apply the ecosystems concept of wholeness of systems, was exercised in two ways.

Firstly, the study was written in the form of an imaginary conversation between the author in the role of *researcher* and an imaginary peer consultant, about making sense of ways of thinking. Through presenting her observations to other observers, who are actually herself, a new reality was constructed for the author. Secondly, new individual and group realities were constructed by a group of social workers in the SANDF, who encountered their own ways of thinking through metaphorical means such as sculpting.

Recommendations, co-constructed by the author, the imaginary peer consultant and two more imaginary colleagues, suggest possible uses of the ecosystems perspective in social work including in settings such as the SANDF.

KEY WORDS

challenge	metaphor	thinking
conversation	paradigm	wholeness
ecosystems	realities	
epistemology	social work	

"I declare that THE CHALLENGE OF SHIFTING PARADIGMS: SOCIAL WORKERS EXERCISING THE ECOSYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references."

SIGNED: *Dicker* **DATE:** *20 September 1996*

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The author dedicates this conversation to:

- * God, my Heavenly Father, who endlessly challenges me in no small way by His amazing love, grace and mercy, and to Leon, Claire and Samantha, whose exceptional love and understanding embraces me through the shifting.

Many thanks to the following people for their contributions in co-constructing the conversation:

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Ma pensée, c'est moi: voilà pourquoi je ne peux pas m'arrêter. J'existe par ce que je pense...et je ne peux pas m'empêcher de penser.

My thought is *me*: that's why I can't stop. I exist by what I think...and I can't prevent myself from thinking.

Jean-Paul Satre 1905-80
French philosopher, novelist, playwright, and critic
La Nausée (1938) 'Lundi'

The little girl had the making of a poet in her who, being told to be sure of her meaning before she spoke, said, 'How can I know what I think till I see what I say?'

Graham Wallas
British political scientist
The Art of Thought (1926) ch.4

I paint objects as I think them, not as I see them.

Pablo Picasso 1881-1973
Spanish painter
in John Golding *Cubism* (1959: 60)

**THE CHALLENGE OF SHIFTING PARADIGMS: SOCIAL WORKERS EXERCISING THE
ECOSYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE**

CONTENTS	PAGE
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 <i>INTRODUCTION AND FOCUS OF THE OBSERVATIONS</i>	1
1.2 <i>THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE (LENS)</i>	3
1.3 <i>AIM OF THE STUDY</i>	6
1.3.1 <i>Objectives</i>	6
1.3.2 <i>Assumptions to be observed</i>	7
1.4 <i>THE CHALLENGE OF NEW PARADIGM RESEARCH</i>	8
1.5 <i>LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY</i>	9
1.6 <i>RATIONALE FOR PRESENTATION STYLE OF CONTENTS</i>	10
CHAPTER 2 THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE (LENS)	
2.1 <i>INTRODUCTION</i>	13
2.2 <i>THE CHALLENGE OF THINKING ABOUT PARADIGMS</i>	14
2.2.1 <i>Understanding “map”, “paradigm” and “epistemology”</i>	15
2.2.2 <i>Looking at different paradigms</i>	24
2.2.3 <i>Understanding “paradigm shift”</i>	28

2.3	THE CHALLENGING IMPLICATIONS OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS	30
2.3.1	<i>The challenge presented by the relationship between the observer, his/her observations and the observed</i>	
2.3.2	<i>The challenge presented by the what and how of thinking - paradigms and conceptual tools</i>	33
2.3.3	<i>The challenge presented by human constructions and values</i>	38
2.4	SUMMARY	43

CHAPTER 3 THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS IN SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF

3.1	INTRODUCTION	45
3.2	THE CHANGES CHALLENGING SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE SANDF	45
3.3	THE CHALLENGE OF BUILDING A NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE AS PART OF NATION-BUILDING	48
3.4	THE USEFULNESS OF THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS FOR SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF	51
3.5	SUMMARY	56

**CHAPTER 4 AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE
ECOSYSTEMS LENS IN SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF**

4.1	<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	58
4.2	<i>THE CHALLENGE OF NEW PARADIGM RESEARCH</i>	59
4.3	<i>THE SELECTION PROCESS</i>	59
4.4	<i>THE FRAMEWORK USED FOR INQUIRY</i>	65
4.5	<i>A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS AND THEMES WITH ILLUSTRATIONS</i>	68
4.6	<i>SUMMARY</i>	92

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1	<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	94
5.2	<i>CONCLUSIONS REGARDING AIM AND OBJECTIVES</i>	94
5.2.1	<i>Conclusion: The challenge of using the ecosystems lens for the author</i>	95
5.2.2	<i>Conclusion: The challenge of using the ecosystems lens in social work in the SANDF</i>	97
5.2.3	<i>Conclusion: Social workers sharing epistemologies through metaphor</i>	98
5.2.4	<i>Conclusion: Using the ecosystems lens to generate information</i>	100
5.3	<i>RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	101
5.3.1	<i>The recognition of the ecosystems perspective as a useful epistemology</i>	101

5.3.2	<i>A conscious awareness of the values expressed by human constructions</i>	101
5.3.3	<i>The application of the concept of wholeness and the technique of metaphor in social work practice and training</i>	102
5.3.4	<i>The use of the ecosystems perspective in building work relationships</i>	103
5.3.5	<i>The use of new paradigm research methods in social work</i>	103

BIBLIOGRAPHY	104
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APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS OF ACTIVITIES USED IN THE WORKSHOP	107
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APPENDIX 2 TRANSCRIPT OF THE WORKSHOP	110
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 *INTRODUCTION AND FOCUS OF THE OBSERVATIONS*

Like the country it serves, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) currently finds itself in the midst of transformation in almost every sphere, including the political, economical, social and cultural spheres. The social workers are just one group of professionals in the organisation who are being greatly challenged with the demand for constant adaption in the working environment, the exploration and development of methods of services in areas previously untouched, with little or no experience of others as sources of reference, and the need for much innovative and creative thought.

Numerous thought-provoking examples of change in the SANDF can be mentioned. A most significant and unique challenge noted by Cilliers (1994: 23), is the integration of five statutory military forces and two non-statutory armed forces, as well as their associated intelligence structures. The defence forces of the former TBVC countries (Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei), the South African Defence Force (SADF), Umkhonto weSizwe (MK), and the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), of which some were previously considered to be enemies, have been in the process of forming a *National* Defence Force (NDF). The integration is part of the restructuring of an NDF, whose role in nation-building and peacekeeping is being extended. The social workers,

like other members of the organisation, are finding themselves in a learning situation which is challenging them to “think on their feet” and to investigate and explore other ways of thinking.

Amidst the change, many of the social workers have been expressing the need for a “*paradigm shift*” to be made in terms of the quest to contribute to nation-building both within the organisation and in the community. The latest Business Plan (1995) laid out by the Social Work Directorate, a part of the South African Medical Services (SAMS) which serves the other three arms of service, presents conditions for the willingness of social welfare personnel to execute the mission. One of these conditions is the perception of changes as opportunities and *challenges*, and the social workers will feel allowed to execute this mission if they experience room for creativeness, innovative and individual approaches. The recognition therefore exists that the perceptions of social workers regarding change and the challenges it presents, are vital to the execution of the mission of social work.

The challenge to change thinking has to be the greatest challenge and the most demanding in practice, since it is of the deepest order humanly speaking. It is about this challenge that the author has developed much curiosity and which has lead to this adventure. Many different ways of exploring change can be used. The author has found the lenses of the ecosystems perspective to be very useful.

1.2 *THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE (LENS)*

Ecosystemic epistemology, which is the metaperspective from which the author as researcher will be endeavouring to make observations, is a framework of ideas based on the perspectives of cybernetics, ecology and systems theory (Keeney & Sprenkle 1982: 1). From the ecosystems perspective, the observer, his/her observations and the system being observed, are included in the same system and are therefore perceived of as a whole. The challenge in thinking about thinking thus lies in the metaposition that the observer is required to take to examine his/her thinking, and the way the relationship between *what* is thought and *how* it is thought about, is considered. Hoffman (1990: 4) describes this as the lens of a second-order view. The observations of the observer are considered to be constructions, and therefore inventions, which are based on the epistemology being used (epistemology will be defined for now as “world view of world views” while further defining will take place under 2.2.1 *Understanding “map”, “paradigm” and “epistemology”*). Certain values such as respect for the autonomy of the individual, and responsibility for one’s perceptions and actions, are a consequence of the relationship between the observer and the system being observed.

Duhl (1983: 129) describes mind as a metaphoring process. She refers to Jimenez’s account of Gordon’s perception that the mind performs basically in two different ways: incorporating new experiences and so forth into already established frameworks by *making the strange familiar*, and secondly, liberating things from stereotypes imposed by the observer and meeting new realities through changing one’s angle of vision by *making the familiar strange* (Duhl 1983: 126). Since a

system is actually a metaphor used to describe patterns of actions and relationships as wholes, and metaphors grasp wholes (Duhl 1983: 127), metaphor is a technique which can be used in thinking about systems. Duhl (1983: 128) implies the usefulness of metaphor as lying in the idea that the rules of thought applied by the observer, are brought to the surface and can be explored.

One useful way of generating new ideas regarding change, such as that taking place in the SANDF, may be to approach this in the form of metaphor. The following metaphor invented by the author/researcher will be referred to and continued as an exercise in CHAPTER 3 under 3.4 ***THE USEFULNESS OF THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS FOR SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF***. This will be in addition to other metaphors used, the main metaphor being the imaginary conversation between the author as researcher and an imaginary peer consultant, which forms the study.

Some time not too long ago, there were seven kings who each ruled a kingdom living on an island. The seven kingdoms had once inhabited a large island together, but the stench of ash vomited up by a volcano threatening to erupt had sent six of the kingdoms scuttling across the sea to shelter on neighbouring islands. Although the islands were in close proximity to one another, there never seemed to be anything but animosity between the kingdoms. Whenever disaster struck or the kingdoms were threatened, the islanders took to wagging fingers at each other and making derogatory comments on how the other kings were ruling their people.

One day, a powerful whirlpool developed in the ocean and the fate of the seven kingdoms was suddenly questionable. The seven kings very quickly realized that they needed to confer, so they put on their thinking caps, stroked their long beards, and scratched their heads. The conclusion was

reached after much heated debate, that the seven kingdoms would somehow have to amalgamate. One kingdom, one king! The thought almost pulled muscles in the heads of the islanders. How in the world were seven kingdoms to become one kingdom - they were each so different from the rest, so special, so unique. The sacrifice would be enormous - how could the other six kingdoms ever comprehend how important it was to the one kingdom to observe the first sunrise of every week? And would they also support the cause - to prevent tourism from taking over the island? How could they ever understand? What of their loyalty to their kingdom? How could they ever agree on which was the best way to live? What language was to be spoken? And what of what history had taught them? The largest kingdom, which occupied (they said they owned it) the largest, richest, most resourceful island might be calling all the shots. How were they going to live with this?

One thing was clear, it was all or nothing! If the seven kingdoms continued to live as they were in the midst of the whirlpool they would all be destroyed. On the other hand it would be impossible for the kingdoms to join hands and be the same kingdoms - there would have to be a new kingdom. But how? And its name would be...well, no-one could quite agree on the spelling, but the pronunciation appeared to be the same...Toyi-Toyi, or Toy-Toy, or Toit-Toit. Perhaps Tau-Tau? Each king consulted with his wise counsellors, who rubbed their noses, coughed and shook their ancient heads. Nowhere else in the world had seven kingdoms with such dreams and hopes come together as one. It was unheard of!

Great plans were drawn up and were tested on some of the islanders. Some were ready to buy the plans, whereas others said they would call when they needed them. In the mean time, the rest were setting to work and resorted to sending messages to the other islands by enclosing these in coconut shells tied to the backs of turtles. A group of little children, becoming giddy at the sight of the whirlpool, deliberated on whether or not they

should tell the kings to stop the world so that they could get off, or whether they should trust the kings and jump in with the rest of the islanders...

1.3 *AIM OF THE STUDY*

The aim of the study is to demonstrate and illustrate, from an ecosystems perspective, what may happen when a number of social workers in the SANDF, including the author/researcher, are challenged with exploring their own paradigms (world views) and/or epistemologies (world views of world views). In addition, it is hoped that the reader will be challenged to explore his/her own way of thinking, and that his/her perspective may be broadened by the study.

1.3.1 *Objectives*

The objectives of the study are fivefold:

- (i) To demonstrate and illustrate what may happen when the lenses of the ecosystems perspective are used to observe the challenges involved in thinking about thinking, or understanding understanding, using the author's experience, as an example;
- (ii) To describe and illustrate the challenges involved in using the lenses of the ecosystems perspective in social work in the SANDF;

- (iii) To demonstrate and illustrate what may happen in practice when a group of social workers encounter their individual and group epistemologies (world views of world views) by using metaphor;
- (iv) To generate information by making observations, using the lenses of the ecosystems perspective, of the audio-taped workshopping of the group of social workers mentioned above;
- (v) To construct conclusions of the study as a whole, and to make recommendations regarding possibilities for using the lenses of the ecosystems perspective in social work practice including in settings such as the SANDF.

1.3.2 *Assumptions to be observed*

There are two related assumptions which are to be observed:

- (i) By using the lenses of the ecosystems perspective to observe the challenges involved in thinking about thinking in social work in the SANDF, a new system will be created, hence a new reality, for the author. A more useful paradigm (world view) about social work in the SANDF, and possibly a more useful epistemology (world view of world views), will be co-evolved.

- (ii) By using metaphor to encounter individual and group epistemologies (world views of world views), a new system will be created, hence a new reality, for a group of social workers in the SANDF. Paradigms regarding social work in the organisation, or epistemologies, will be challenged, and more useful paradigms regarding social work in the organisation, or more useful epistemologies, will be co-evolved.

1.4 ***THE CHALLENGE OF NEW PARADIGM RESEARCH***

A way of researching which approaches systems as wholes, which is carried out *with* and *for* people, is co-operative experiential inquiry proposed by Reason & Rowan (1981). A major difference between previous forms of research and this form, is that since all those involved contribute to the process, the distinction between researcher and subject vanishes, and all participants are perceived as co-researchers and co-subjects (Reason 1988: 1). For this reason, Reason sees co-operative inquiry as also being a form of education, personal development and social action.

The author attempted to engage in a form of co-operative inquiry, involving herself as a co-researcher or co-subject, and at one stage inviting a group of co-researchers to become involved in one phase of the study. The ideal would have been to involve the co-researchers from start to finish. The study is nevertheless a collaborative effort between a number of people. As will be seen, the study is about exploring and describing the subjective experience of the author's making sense of her own way of thinking, as well as making sense of the way others involved, make sense of their thinking. In the same way that "Wonderland's weirdness can never be separated from Alice's

observational participation in creating it" (Anderson, Goolishian & Winderman 1986: 4), the reality brought about by the study, cannot be separated from the author's thought and actions.

The study consists of a recursive process of observing (looking and seeing), reflecting (thinking) and acting (reading and rereading, writing and rewriting, listening and conversing, "brainstorming" and collage making, storytelling and sculpting). Reflections, with the use of the lenses of ecosystems theory, on observations of the thinking of those involved in social work in the SANDF, including the author, form the greater part of the study. This also includes immediate observations made during the workshopping of a group of co-researchers (social workers), and afterwards of the transcribed process (audio-taped), and photographs of the models created by the social workers during the workshop.

1.5 *LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY*

There are certain limitations to the study which need to be noted. Those of which the author is consciously aware, will be mentioned.

One workshop with a group of eight social workers took place. Observations with regard to patterns of interaction and ideas or themes over a series of workshops, could not be made. The application of ideas can therefore not be generalized. One reason for this is that this study is a mini-thesis.

The study can in no way demonstrate or illustrate all the ideas or concepts comprehensively, and it is the author/researcher's intention to present it only as her observation of observations. The study is her construction of events with the use of the lenses of ecosystems theory, and is therefore a subjective account of an experience. It is the consequence of a world view of world views embraced by the author which has been in the process of evolving over the past five and a half years, and which is continuing to evolve. Other social workers would present it differently according to their own epistemologies or world views of world views.

1.6 *RATIONALE FOR PRESENTATION STYLE OF CONTENTS*

Part of the study was originally written in the conventional format in which most studies of this nature are written. This proved, as far as the author was concerned, to be dissatisfying, frustrating and restricting of what the author wished to communicate to the reader, and how. As the author's thinking was slowly and continually challenged with the attempt to make sense of the ideas explored, the need to present the contents in a different way, was experienced and the study began to take on a different shape, and in a sense, a life of its own. The author realized that the idea of shifting paradigms would need to be communicated with the reader on at least two levels - that of the *content* as well as that of the *form* - in other words that the author would need to share with the reader not only an idea on paper, but also an experience of the idea in action.

Presenting the contents in the form of a conversation seems, to the author, to convey more effectively a sense of the the ideas embraced by the ecosystems perspective, such as the co-evolving

of ideas and events, as well as the notion of thinking in different ways - of ways novel, creative, and innovative. Furthermore, in the mind of the author, the conversation also fits with the idea of how relationships develop through the sharing of thoughts, how connections or links are made, how new realities are co-constructed and fresh perspectives are evolved. The author hopes to provide the reader with the opportunity of experiencing a slice of human drama, and the invitation to join in on a conversation, which may have the potential to challenge the reader's own thinking.

The contents are presented in the form of an imaginary conversation between the author in the role of researcher (JLD) and an imaginary peer consultant (Jay). During the phase of evaluating the study, the author steps out of the shoes of the researcher to have a look at herself and her methods of researching in this role. The chapters are used to punctuate different phases of the conversation. The headings are used to provide markers as the process evolves. The bibliography completes the study. Appendices 1 and 2 are tools (photographs and transcript of audio-taped workshop) which were used to illustrate the idea being investigated

The study should preferably be read in sequence since each chapter evolves out of the previous one. It is not possible to simply scan the study, as a sense of the unfolding of ideas and of the whole will be lost. Ideally, the transcript should be read with **CHAPTER 4 (AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS IN SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF)** so that a sense of the unfolding of the process and a sense of the whole can be appreciated.

The phases of the conversation are as follows:

- * **CHAPTER 2 THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE
(LENS)**
- * **CHAPTER 3 THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS IN
SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF**
- * **CHAPTER 4 AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE
ECOSYSTEMS LENS IN SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF**
- * **CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

CHAPTER 2

THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE (LENS)2.1 **INTRODUCTION**

Jay: I feel honoured that you want to consult with me concerning this exercise, but I must warn you that I'm feeling ever so much out of my depth regarding the topic! Anyway, as you've already pointed out, almost every day I also find myself involved in a conversation which usually moves in the direction of all the changes taking place in the country, and especially in this organisation (the SANDF). Inevitably, someone makes that statement that you say you're so intrigued by: "We need to make a *paradigm shift!*" I, like you, am often left wondering just *what* they mean by that, and, I have to admit this to you, I'm *still* not sure what exactly a paradigm is.

JLD: It sounds as if you mean it's like Alice's use of "nice grand words" without having an idea of what they mean (Carroll 1962: 26). I've also used the word in the past, only having the vaguest notion of what it entails. This has led me to list a number of questions with regard to the idea of shifting paradigms in social work in the organisation, which has provided me with a fair idea of the challenges involved in endeavouring to understand this idea. Would you like to hear them?

2.2 *THE CHALLENGE OF THINKING ABOUT PARADIGMS*

Jay: Yes. Just let me quickly dust off my thinking cap!

JLD: For the sake of this exercise, I'm using the social workers, but it's applicable to anybody.

Here goes:

- * What do we mean when we use the concept "paradigm"?/What is a "paradigm"?
- * What do we mean when we talk about making a paradigm shift?
- * About what "things" does a paradigm shift need to be made by us?
- * How would we describe the paradigms used in the Defence Force, SAMS, the Social Work Directorate and management team?
- * How would we describe the paradigms we think we have been operating from until now?
- * To what extent is there a fit between the various paradigms used?
- * To what extent do we think about the paradigms we operate from?
- * At what times do we think most about the paradigms we operate from?
- * At what times do we think least about the paradigms we operate from?
- * What aspects of the present paradigms do we consider to be useful for the work to be done in the future?
- * What aspects of the present paradigms do we consider to be of little use for the work to be done in the future?
- * What differences would be evident if a shifting of paradigms were to take place?
- * What needs to happen for us to be able to make a paradigm shift?
- * What losses could be experienced if we were to make a paradigm shift?
- * What gains could be experienced if we were to make a paradigm shift?
- * What is involved in making a paradigm shift i.e. what needs to be addressed by whom, what tools need to be used when and how?
- * What could be possible obstacles to making a paradigm shift?
- * What could be possible enablers in making a paradigm shift?

Jay: Whew! Your never-ending barrage of questions makes me think of a fountain which may never run dry. Do you really think that *together* we can make sense of this? Where do we start? How do we start? You surely don't think that we can address *all* those questions, do you?

JLD: Perhaps in addressing only the first one or two, we'll be addressing some of the others.

2.2.1 *Understanding "map", "paradigm" and "epistemology"*

JLD: Because I've developed such *great* curiosity and a need to make sense of this, I've resorted to "getting into conversation" with different people, including authors through their writings. Before I launch into some of the descriptions that I've been finding useful, let me illustrate the concept with a simple little story which I have made up and found rather useful. By the way, Duhl (1983: 131) describes a paradigm as also being a metaphor, and Hoffman (1990) implies this, so a story could work just as well.

Once upon a time there were four zoologists from four universities of world-wide acclaim, who admired that prehistoric-looking beast, the elephant! It was thought that by assigning four such great minds the task of studying the life of the elephant, the animal-lover world would be so much the richer. So, together, they set out on a mission to become more knowledgeable about the animal, each taking with him what he considered to be the most appropriate instrument for observation. A microscope, a magnifying glass, a pair of binoculars and a telescope. Each believed his

instrument with its finely made lenses to be the most effective in capturing knowledge about the way the animal lived.

After the group had made their observations, an argument ensued as to which observation was most valid and reliable, which was “more” right, and would most benefit other elephant-lovers. The microscopist attempted to convince the group that the world he had encountered whilst observing a portion of the elephant’s skin, was by far the most important since he could give an account of possible diseases that the elephant could be plagued by. The zoologist wielding a magnifying glass thought the microscopist to be too obsessed with detail invisible to the human eye and proceeded to present an argument for why it was that there was such a market for elephant hide, and that more protection should be offered to this animal with such tough yet beautiful skin.

The binocular-observing zoologist and the telescopist nearly came to blows about whose observations were to go down in the National Geographic Journal. “Only a coward would try and observe such a lovely creature from such a distance!” snorted the third zoologist, momentarily forgetting that the other two zoologists had been observing a near dead elephant. “You could have been perched upon the peak of Kilimanjaro and looking down a tube for all we know. Who’s going to believe that the elephant you saw really exists? It may have been a Loch Ness monster!!!”

After much deliberation, each went his separate way in a huff. A Bushman passed the spot where they had last met and came upon the remains of the instruments which had been left behind. Enormous thick grey tree stumps had trampled the dust - and fragments of lenses were glinting in the sun. Concern etched his weathered features “The gods have lost their eyes. How shall they see again, and look after us? Maybe, my old friend, the wise One, can help me find eyes for the gods, again.”

A small, bright eye winked and blinked between the blades of grass. Nearly another veld fire...if it weren't for those massive feet which had smothered the flames. How was he to know that the magnifying glass was purchased from the proceedings of a Nobel Prize?

Jay: I'm beginning to get the idea - stories do help, don't they?

JLD: As I've already mentioned, Duhl (1983: 131) describes a paradigm as also a metaphor, and linked to that, she sees a map and epistemology as metaphors, too.

Jay: Woah! Stop the bus! Map? Epistemology? I'm still struggling to understand "paradigm", and here you're coming with *these*. Where is the connection and what is the difference?

JLD: As you say, they are all connected and yet they are different. Hoffman's (1990) experience of using different "lenses" has helped me to understand the concept better by seeing a paradigm as a lens, and epistemology as a lens of lenses, like the lenses you and I are using to look at the lenses used by the characters in the story. For example, each zoologist looked at the same animal using different lenses, depending upon his intention, yet each forgot that *what* they saw depended on *how* they looked at it, and that they had decided which lenses to use according to their intention. We'll go into that more a little later on.

Jay: And a map?

JLD: A map, as I understand it with the use of this metaphor, would be like the ideas that the characters developed regarding the situation. Smale et al (1988: 14) talk about the paradigm they're presenting as "a guide to map making". But, if I can combine this with Steier and Smith's (1986: 59) suggestion regarding the idea of the fit between our theories of the world and our experiences, instead of a map which is a representation of territory, it is like a key which fits a lock. Another idea which appeals to me is of a pair of shoes which fit a pair of feet.

Jay: I see. So, for example, you and I will create different maps of this conversation which each fit with our own experiences. What then does paradigm shift entail?

JLD: Before we get into that, or maybe we've already got into that as you shall see later, I think we need to broaden our perspective on paradigm. Why I say this is that it seems as though many of us, like Alice, use a term without having sufficient understanding of what it involves. I can somehow understand Haworth's (1984: 344) opinion that "paradigm" is an overused and abused term.

Jay: I too have wondered, to be honest, how making a paradigm shift can be possible if one doesn't really know, in the first place, what a paradigm is.

JLD: From what I've seen, there appears to a lot of literature on thinking from the perspectives of different fields, such as modern science or new physics, philosophy, biology, anthropology,

cybernetics, family therapy, sociology and so forth. I've tended to concentrate on the writings of a number of authors who have worked in some of those fields, and who, in my opinion, offer useful descriptions of the ideas of paradigm and epistemology. I think that since there is a limit on our time to talk, I'll sometimes just mention sources that I've consulted, which you may want to consult later. Authors such as Auerwald (1985), Bateson (1979), Bogdan (1984), Capra (1982), Dell (1985), Duhl (1983), Guba (1990), Haworth (1984), Hoffman (1990), Keeney (1983), Manrique (1990), Peile (1988), Reason (1988), Rosen (in Dorfman, 1988), Searight & Openlander (1987), Watzlawick (1984), all present or imply ideas of what epistemology and paradigm are.

Jay: My head is spinning! Back to my first question - where did you start? Where should I start?

JLD: Well, in retrospect, I just started somewhere, anywhere. It seems as though looking at paradigms leads one to the questions Maturana asked, which Watzlawick (1984: 26) quotes - "What is to know?" and "How do we know?" I found that thinkers who have reflected on both these questions, have occupied themselves with epistemology, which Keeney (1983: 13) defines in the socio-cultural domain, as the "study of how people or systems of people know things and how they think they know things", in different words "recognizing how people come to construct and maintain their habits of cognition". We could also talk about understanding human understanding, which is no small fry. I came across authors who made different connections, like Bateson, who, according to Dell (1985: 2), used the term "epistemology" in five different ways, one of these ways being epistemology as paradigm,

which “provides a grammar of reality: it specifies how the objects and events of the world should be punctuated.”

Jay: Suppose you were to choose the best definition or description?

JLD: I think it's wise to first read widely and get an idea of the different ideas people have. A paradigm is seen as equivalent to a world view for Keeney (1983: 15), for Guba, (1990: 17) it is a basic set of beliefs that guides action, Dell (1985: 2) refers to Schefflen's idea of “a body of theories, methods, and findings about a particular phenomenon”, an example I've looked at being the paradigm for change presented by Smale et al (1988), and Hoffman (1990) uses the imagery of a lens.

In terms of usefulness, I think Rosen's (in Dorfman 1988: 392) description is one that provides quite a comprehensive picture of paradigm as “...a conceptual-interpretive framework - an interlocking network of presuppositions, assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, premises, expectations, and values. It is a construction of reality that orients a person to the world and that guides him or her in the selection of problems and methodology for conducting research programs.” I *do* like Hoffman's image of the lens, though. For me, it offers many possibilities for coming to grips with the concept of paradigm, as you can already see with the story. An important feature of paradigms that we need to realize, which is stressed by Peile (1988: 6), is that they are loose and evolving frameworks rather than hard and fast sets of rules.

Jay: Hmm. I get the picture of a spider's web in my mind - with many, many connecting strands and never-ending possibilities...But I'm still a bit vague regarding the connection and the difference between paradigm and epistemology.

JLD: Perhaps Guba's (1990) theoretical perspective and Hoffman's (1990) metaphorical ideas can be of assistance to us here. The first mentioned author provides a perspective on the relationship between paradigm, ontology and epistemology, which enables one to fit the concepts together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle and a fourth-dimensional one at that!

Jay: What was that?

JLD: I was just making a connection which we may get to later on. Anyway, Guba (1990: 18) contends that paradigms can be characterized by the way their proponents respond to three questions, which I'll tell you in a minute, and that answers to these questions may be termed the basic belief systems or paradigms. Let's write these questions down:

- * "What is the nature of the 'knowable'? Or, what is the nature of 'reality'?" which is the ontological question.
- * "What is the nature of the relationship between the knower (the enquirer) and the known (or knowable)?" which is the epistemological question.
- * "How should the enquirer go about finding out knowledge?" which is the methodological question.

Jay: That's quite a mouthful or should I say earful or eyeful!

JLD: Before we draw the connections, I just want to add that I've broadened the perspective on paradigms for myself by including assumptions used by Peile (1988: 7) in his description of the paradigmatic context of different schools of social research. Perhaps we should write these down too:

- * cosmological assumptions, which I've understood from Haworth (1984: 344) to mean the structure of nature and the place of humans in it
- * ethical assumptions - I'm using van Leeuwen's (1994) reference to Plug et al (1986) which explains this as the study of the foundations, nature and form of value judgements
- * spiritual assumptions
- * relationship and political assumptions,

and as if that is not enough, I'm also going to add Haworth's (1984: 344) inclusion of the recognition of the rest of the philosopher's lexicon which includes for example, aesthetics and metaphysics.

Jay: This is enough for me to chew on for a long, long time.

JLD: Hang on. We've just started, although I think I know what you mean. I've had to taste little morsels and digest them before the next mouthful, although I rather feel like a cow chewing the cud, regurgitating ideas. Hoffman (1990: 4), on the other hand, describes social construction theory, which she had originally mistakenly come to understand to be equivalent to constructivism, as a lens about lenses, in other words, an epistemology. Let's try and summarize this and apply it very briefly for now to our own situation in the SANDF. What are your ideas?

Jay: You don't know what you're asking for, but here goes. From what I've come to understand so far, a paradigm is like a framework or a world view, whereas epistemology is like a framework of frameworks, or a world view of world views, in other words a paradigm of paradigms. What would you call it? A metaparadigm? That's radical - that's on a different level - I don't know if my mind can stretch that far.

JLD: That is where one of the challenges lies! Watzlawick, Weakland & Fisch (1974: 10-11) talk about different orders in change, which they have termed "first-order change" and "second-order change", or change within a framework as compared to change of change or change introduced from outside the framework.

Jay: Give me some time for that one. You said we're going to link this up to the SANDF.

JLD: I guess we could talk for years on that so perhaps we can focus on one example only, which we can discuss more extensively later on. What would you like us to reflect on?

Jay: I think the integration (refer to 1.1 *INTRODUCTION AND FOCUS OF THE OBSERVATIONS*). Firstly, each defence wing was composed of thousands of people each with their own particular world view, although somewhere, somehow there was some consensus as to what the mission, vision and so forth of each particular defence wing was for those members. Now we have a huge defence wing comprised of all these people with

all their different world views who have somehow got to identify with and , if I can say, own the organization.

JLD: So the challenge here is not only to understand how you and I understand, but for all these people to try and understand themselves and each other, which may help them to be able to make this organisation work better.

Jay: But aren't we then talking about thousands of paradigms here? That's impossible!

JLD: That leads us to another question. What different kinds of paradigms are used by people and what are the implications of these? Maybe that can help us to make sense of this.

2.2.2 *Looking at different paradigms*

JLD: Of all the literature that I've perused, I think the following authors present useful descriptions for understanding the differences between various paradigms and the levels at which these differences lie - perhaps you want to list them for future reference: Anderson & Goolishian (1988), Auerswald (1985), Capra (1982), Dorfman (ed, 1988), Guba (1990), Haworth (1984), Hoffman (1990), Keeney (1983), Lucas (1985), Manrique (1990), Peile (1988) and Sluzki (1983).

In general, a distinction is made between two thought systems, or epistemologies, each with their own set of rules for defining reality, which, Auerswald (1985: 2,5) contends, are separate and discontinuous. As we've already observed, a paradigm then, is a subset of rules defining a particular part of reality (Auerswald 1985: 1). The predominant thought system of the Western world uses rules of thought common to Newtonian Physics and Darwinian Evolution (Auerswald 1985: 4), which Keeney terms lineal epistemology, and is characterized by atomistic, reductionistic and anticontextual thinking (Keeney 1983: 14). The other thought system which uses rules of thought common to New Physics and Batesonian Evolution (Auerswald 1985: 4), often called the new epistemology (Auerswald 1985: 1, Searight & Openlander 1987: 52) or nonlineal epistemology, emphasises relationship, ecology and whole systems (Keeney 1983: 14) and includes new rules of thought with regard to subjectivity, for example (Lucas 1985: 170).

An example of models with a lineal epistemology, would be psychopathology, whereas nonlineal forms are, according to Keeney (1983: 14), also called, amongst others, ecosystemic, ecological and cybernetic forms. What we need to remember here, is that the central idea of a system, which is found in the latter-mentioned forms, is a metaphor for patterns of actions and relationships and not a concrete reality (Duhl 1983: 127).

Jay: What, then, in plain English, is the most significant difference between these schools of thought, would you say?

JLD: Let me refer to Guba's (1990: 19-27) useful construction about the way four paradigms address the three questions we mentioned earlier on: the ontological, epistemological and methodological questions. A most significant difference between the first three paradigms, Positivism, Postpositivism and Critical Theory, and the fourth paradigm, Constructivism, is the way the relationship between the observer and that which is observed, is approached, in other words the epistemological question. Watzlawick (1984: 15) describes the difference between Radical constructivism and traditional world images as the basic assumption that the latter all have in common, "that a real reality exists and that certain theories, ideologies, or personal convictions reflect it (match it) more correctly than others."

Constructivism, on the other hand, positions the inquirer and the inquired-into as one entity since findings are a result of interaction between the two; therefore, what can be known and the individual who comes to know it are perceived as a whole, according to Guba (1990: 26).

Jay: So what you're saying is that the observer or inquirer is always part of that which is observed or inquired-into? In other words, whatever you and I are observing or inquiring into here, should include observation of or inquiry into ourselves? That's far out!

JLD: And tremendously challenging, I'm sure you'll agree. The implications of this kind of approach to the relationship, are that we examine not only *what* we think but also *how* we think since these are connected. And, that's not all. If we see our observations as including

our own way of thinking, then we are also talking about different *values*. But before we get into that, let's spend a few more moments on connecting this to our example in the SANDF.

What are your thoughts on this?

Jay: It seems from what we've discussed that there are many different paradigms used by people - which seem to fall under two sets of rules for thought. Actually I'm beginning to get the idea that according to the second way of thinking, we could say paradigms made up or constructed by people. The difference lies on a much deeper level than I had realized. The general way of thinking in any military organisation is based on hierarchy, power and control. The difference in the way of thinking seems to be as vast as the distance from one side of the Grand Canyon to the other.

JLD: Anderson, Goolishian & Winderman (1986: 1-3) challenge these very punctuations, which were elaborated on by Parson, and the way they have influenced our thinking in the mental health field. Steier & Smith (1986) and Blount (1986) also present different and useful ways of seeing organisations and organisational change that fit with the ideas we're looking at. Go on.

Jay: Let's see. This would be a form of lineal epistemology then, is that right? So then with the integration, we've got thousands of people coming together from different military wings to form one organisation based on this kind of thinking. I'm still wondering how all these people can reach some consensus on what the organisation is all about and how it must

operate. Is it possible to think any differently? How could one think any differently? Now you've got me thinking about thinking!

JLD: We've arrived at thinking about thinking *together* - I didn't cause it and it's still our choice. We've got this far together. Let's have a look at some of those challenging implications that were mentioned earlier on.

Jay: Hang on! You're forgetting that we haven't yet made sense of what "paradigm shift" means - or should I say, *I* haven't yet made sense of it.

2.2.3 Understanding "paradigm shift"

JLD: Well, believe me when I say I'm still trying to make sense of it all. How do you see "paradigm shift"?

Jay: I'm trying to figure out whether the concept means a complete move from one framework to another, in other words shifting between two different and separate ones. Or does it mean rather an extension of the framework being used, a broadening so to speak.

JLD: Here, I'd like to refer to the explanation provided by Newton & Caple (1985: 163) who discuss Kuhn's idea of "paradigm shift":

Transition from an old paradigm to a new one is not simply a cumulative process or an extension of an old paradigm. It is a reordering of knowledge, based on new ideas that change many of the fundamental beliefs and applications in one's world that have been held for so long...One cannot simply exchange one set of data for another. One must see differently and think differently.

Jay: I see...it's a lot more radical than I thought. I must admit, it is also confusing especially with the ideas of paradigm and epistemology. Sometimes it would seem as though some of the authors use "paradigm" when they mean "epistemology", not so? I mean, in this sense, a paradigm shift means the use of new rules of thought which as we've found, constitutes epistemology. Or am I now totally missing it? Whew!

JLD: You're not the only one who's fazed. What helps me to make sense of this is the example that Newton & Caple (1985) refer to - of the belief that the world is flat. Believing that the world is round cannot just be an extension of the same paradigm - just think of how this new belief must turn the former belief on it's head - it brings a new world into view, not just something new of the old world, if you get my drift. In Reason's (1988: 9) discussion on a new paradigm for research, he contends that "the essential quality of a paradigmatic shift is that it presents a discontinuity with the previous world-view and methods..." This brings us to the different world we begin to envisage when applying the rules of thought embraced by the ecosystems perspective.

2.3 *THE CHALLENGING IMPLICATIONS OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS*

Jay: If I remember correctly, you said we're going to look at the very different or radical way the relationship between you and I as observers, and that which we are observing, is approached. And then we're going to talk about how *what* we think about and *how* we think about it are related. Didn't you also say something about values. I wonder where that fits in?

JLD: Let's wait and see.

2.3.1 *The challenge presented by the relationship between the observer, his/her observations and the observed*

JLD: Remember George Kelly's social construction theory on human behaviour?

Jay: Didn't Kelly (Efran, Lukens & Lukens 1988: 28) see humans as behaving as inventors rather than discoverers, in their endeavouring to understand their world? I remember that the essence of his ideas, was that humans use a "construction system" to interpret, predict and control events (Meyer, Moore & Viljoen 1989: 400).

JLD: Yes, and a "construction system" was seen to be a working and changing cognitive system or framework comprised out of a large number of personal constructs or classification

systems which Kelly regarded as being created by the individual, and not innate as believed by Kant (Meyer et al 1989: 400-401). Kelly thus punctuated the observer, his observations and the observed as a whole.

Jay: I knew there was something else that struck me about Kelly, and now I remember what it was. Didn't he also perceive behaviour as a means of asking questions in a process of inquiry?

JLD: Yes, Efran et al (1988: 32) indicate that about Kelly. And another thing the authors mentioned indicate about Kelly, that I find challenging, is that he said of his own theory, that he'd been making it up or inventing it all along - it was also a construction about constructions!

Jay: So, if we are involved in research, like you are right now...

JLD: You mean like *we* are right now...

Jay: Yes, I'm actually just about to contradict myself - I wanted to say that the implication of this is that the distinctions between researcher, "research subjects" and the description of the research process fall away, and then we are talking about a research system, not so? In other words, you will be looking at your own observing as well as whatever you are observing.

JLD: That is a viewpoint that I'm finding tremendously challenging with this whole exercise. It's one thing to see this, but another to also practise this. Keeney and Ross (1983: 381) call the position where the observer is punctuated as part of the observed system, a second order cybernetic view.

Jay: Isn't this quite a tall order, I mean, to examine your own thinking. How does one go about this? Where do you start? How *do* we think? This is quite a different kettle of fish we're talking about here. I'm intrigued.

JLD: Well, Watzlawick (1984: 15) recognizes how different this kind of thinking is - he goes as far as calling it radical:

We build this world for the most part unawares, simply because we do not know how we do it...Radical constructivism maintains..that the operations by means of which we assemble our experiential world can be explored, and that an awareness of this operating...can help us do it differently and, perhaps, better.

Jay: So we can actually get to know what we do to think in certain ways? And if we get to know this, this can improve our thinking? I know this may come as a silly question, but do we always think? What I mean to say is, is it like communication where we cannot not communicate? We cannot not think?

2.3.2 *The challenge presented by the what and how of thinking - paradigms and conceptual tools*

JLD: Let's link up what you've said to what Keeney (1983: 13) says - just as not communicating is an impossibility for human beings and other living systems, not having an epistemology is also impossible; thinking, knowing and deciding are fundamental actions of us as humans. Newton & Caple (1985: 163) point out that a world view takes on societal acceptance and it becomes internalized to such an extent that it is no longer consciously questioned. What appears to be most difficult and therefore most challenging, is the development and the maintenance of a conscious awareness of our epistemology, or understanding our own understanding. Keeney (1983: 59,60), who sees all living and mental process as cybernetic, shows his appreciation of the cognitive leap we're talking about, in his statement:

"The trick is to be a cybernetic epistemologist and know it."

Jay: This is quite a trick, isn't it? It's almost in the field of magic - eat your heart out, David Copperfield! I would say that you've almost got to trick your mind so that it will give itself away in how it operates. I feel like I'm doing mental gymnastics here for which I'm only starting to warm up for! I think Keeney is right. I haven't got the foggiest idea what my epist... what's that word again...epistemology is about - I know I keep repeating myself, but I just want to say again, that it's a major challenge to find this out!

JLD: As we've said, this is *radical*. Since changing our epistemology means transforming our way of experiencing the world, it is understandable that this form of change would be of the deepest order of change possible to a human being (Keeney, 1983: 7).

Jay: Hence the most challenging form of change!

JLD: Yes, as we've already noted previously, this would mean both a change in *how* we think, perceive and decide, and *what* we think, perceive and decide.

Jay: How did we get *there*? We're taking quantum leaps here!

JLD: Guba (1990: 25-27), Keeney (1983) and Dell (1985) are just some of the authors who present the view that the relationship between ontology, or the nature of being, and epistemology, or the study of how we arrive at knowledge, is one of wholeness, in other words, how we exist or live and how we know, are one and the same. The *what* of paradigmming or thinking is therefore inseparable from the *how* of paradigmming or thinking. If we think again back to the story, what each zoologist, for example, saw was inseparable to the lens he used to observe it with.

Jay: I must just tell you, that since this conversation began, it feels as though I'm starting to get a glimpse of a world that I previously had not known, existed. Not to mention the strong mixed feelings I'm experiencing about it.

JLD: It's also a new experience for me - it would have been quite different to just write an essay of sorts - here it's unpredictable. You don't know what my next response will be, and I don't know what your next response will be, and together we don't know where this is leading to. Becoming aware of ideas like these leads to our perspectives being challenged and altered or changed - and in this case, it leads to new experiences, new realities.

Jay: This is all so abstract - I'm still wondering about the nitty gritty parts, like *how* do you and I think? *What* do we think with? Do we talk about thinking...ummm...thinking *tools* or instruments, for example?

JLD: Let's see. Keeney (1983) specifies epistemological tools of constructing our world of experience as being the following which we can maybe jot down over here. Firstly drawing a distinction, which creates a difference, is considered to be the most basic act of epistemology (Keeney 1983:18). Language is our most important tool for drawing distinctions upon chaos (Freud in Dorfman, 1988:385), since we live and think and love and work with each other in language (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988: 377). Another tool is the indication of a punctuation which organises a stream of experience or events (Keeney 1983: 24-25).

Jay: So...if we were to refer to that useful little story, each character then *punctuated* what happened in a different way? The zoologists each thought the others saw the situation incorrectly, whereas each one just punctuated it differently?

JLD: We could see it like that, which leads me to the next tool specified, which is the marking of orders of recursion, or a way of drawing distinctions upon distinctions, or distinguishing between the items in a frame and the frame of reference itself (Keeney 1983: 29, 31).

Jay: So that's on an even higher level. Do you mean, for example, the way in which we look at how the characters looked, is looked at?

JLD: Yes, and a useful tool for that is double description, which is the combination of the punctuation patterns of two or more people so that a more in depth, holistic picture of the relationship can be acquired (Keeney 1983: 37). Bateson (1979: 79-81) termed this binocular vision, which is a useful metaphor for understanding this tool, I think.

Jay: Oh, so it would it be like putting together the views of say the microscopist and the telescopist, or the Bushman and the elephant? What do we call it when we put together all the views of the characters?

JLD: We could call it "multiple descriptions" or "polyocular vision".

Jay: What, then, is the advantage of knowing about these tools? Does Keeney tell us?

JLD: He does. The awareness and use of these tools in the recognition and appreciation of patterns, or cybernetics, enables a shift to be made from the first order of cybernetics to the

next, that is, from an appreciation of patterns to an appreciation of patterns of appreciation of patterns! This denotes a massive cognitive leap. Keeney (1983: 15) stresses the enormity of this leap by insisting that viewing an alternative world will require us to be in that world, and that the attempt to do so will be influenced by the world view of which we are already part.

Jay: The picture I get in my mind is of someone with a shadow - no matter where he goes or what he does, the shadow remains "attached" to him. And this is a shadow not just caused by light.

JLD: I'd never thought of it that way. That reminds me...you and I are languaging about thinking. The image of the person with a shadow conjures up all sorts of possibilities for me. It's like the possibilities that were conjured up with Hoffman's(1990) image of the lenses. Language, which is a consequence of relationship, is a way of making distinctions, and since there are many ways of making distinctions, Dell (1985: 16) argues that we live in a *multiverse* rather than a universe.

Jay: We could spend hours just talking on that alone. So what this boils down to...or one of the conclusions *I'm* making, is that *what* I see depends on *how* I see it and how I *language* it, and *how* I see and *language* it depends on *what* I see.

JLD: It's a recursive process - we can't have one without the other. This is where self-reference is a very important part of the process. What I see and how I describe it always reflects how I am looking at whatever it is, and how I am looking always reflects what I am seeing.

Jay: But then, if this is so, each person's view is equally valid, is it not? Who's to say that you are wrong and I am right? On the other hand what about responsibility?

JLD: It depends on whether you are using a right-wrong punctuation. There are other ways of punctuating. But I see what you are getting at. You're bringing in the issue of *values*.

2.3.3 *The challenge presented by human constructions and values*

JLD: The active subjective role of the observer does have certain implications. Efran et al (1988: 29) point out that constructivists recognize their responsibility since they consider all human undertakings to be value-laden in nature. The authors take this even further in their statement about the connection between values and therapeutic activity:

"For constructivists, the *entire therapeutic venture* is fundamentally an exercise in ethics - it involves the inventing, shaping, and reformulating of codes for living together."

Jay: They're talking about therapy. What about other human interaction?

JLD: Therapy is a punctuation. Reason's (1988: 10) perception is one that I personally like -
listen to this:

Just as wholeness implies participation, so participation means empathy, 'an almost complete identification with the subject of our attention'; and empathy implies responsibility, since we 'cannot truly participate in the whole unless we take responsibility for it'.

Anyway, there's a host of literature which either directly points to or implies certain values connected to this kind of thinking. The authors we've already mentioned such as Anderson et al (1986), Auerswald (1985), Duhl (1983), Hoffman (1990), Keeney & Ross (1983), and Searight & Openlander (1987). Here, I want to add the discussions on the consequences of Maturana's ontology of living systems presented by Dell (1985) and Leyland (1988). For this we need another large sheet of paper to write the ideas that we've discussed and connect them to values, like a mind-map.

Jay: Where shall we start? OK, I know what you're going to say - we can start anywhere?

JLD: Some people think that all roads lead to Rome! Where do *you* think we can start?

Jay: One value that I *do* recognize, and that we talk about so easily but which is so difficult to practise, is that each system should be approached as unique.

JLD: Anderson et al (1986: 9-10) show concern for this respect when it comes to changing other people, since we're working in a "moral" domain.

Jay: Can we really change other people, I wonder.

JLD: If we hypothesize that "we can only know the world through the structure-determined "lenses" of our own bodies" (Dell 1985: 10), objective knowledge is impossible since each system will specify how it will behave and not the information provided it (Leyland 1988: 361). That is why Dell (1985: 11) also sees instructive interaction as an impossibility ontologically, in other words as Leyland (1988: 372) has pointed out, the role of a "change agent" can only be that of a facilitator or catalyst; change can only be triggered.

Jay: So, neither you nor I can cause each other to change. That would mean that our response is unpredictable, not so?

JLD: Yes, the response depends on the structure of the system (Leyland 1988: 365, 372). We can add to this Dell's (1985: 11) observation that structure-determined systems are "perfect" in that they never make mistakes since they always behave according to their structure and not according to purpose.

Jay: I'm not so sure I understand *that* one so I'll use our story again. Does that mean, for example, that the microscopist could see what the microscope *could* enable him to see; he

couldn't expect to see with his microscope what the zoologist with the binoculars *could* see with his binoculars.

JLD: Something like that. The reality of the situation for them was thus dependent on their structure - realities are subject-dependent, which also makes it important for people to do self-observation (Leyland 1988: 364). I hasten to add, though, that Hoffman challenges the biological metaphor of how realities are shaped, with social construction theory which places "far more emphasis on social interpretation and the inter-subjective influence of language, family, and culture, and much less on the operations of the nervous system as it feels its way along" (Hoffman 1990: 2). According to this theory, knowledge is seen to be a social phenomenon, which evolves in conversation between people (Hoffman 1990: 2, 3). The perceptions of Hoffman and Anderson et al (1986: 10) regarding change seem to fit, since the latter describe change as existing "when what we observe no longer matches our previous descriptions."

Jay: Then we could say that change has been taking place during this conversation because what you and I are observing no longer matches the descriptions we used before we began conversing. It sounds as though responsibility is important - I mean, if I've got to recognize that whatever I see depends on the lens I'm using, I can't then really blame the telescopicist for seeing something differently to what I do. At the same time, if, as Hoffman (1990: 2) implies, our beliefs are a social invention, then we need to take responsibility together.

JLD: This position is non-blaming (Auerswald 1985: 6), non-judgemental, and appreciative of the validity and uniqueness of each person's world-view, therefore world-views are seen to be relative (Searight & Openlander 1987: 55,56). Another important point linked to this as well as the idea of only being able to trigger change, is that we move from punctuating events according to their correctness or truthfulness, to the principles of *fit*, *meaningfulness* and *utility* (Efran et al 1988: 28; Keeney & Ross 1983).

Jay: So, in other words, when working with people, you look at what *fits* with them, like a key to a lock or a pair of shoes to feet, what would be *meaningful* to them or make a difference to them, and what would be *useful*, instead of right or wrong.

JLD: Our conversation is an example of these principles. It's working for *us* - the story or metaphor we're using fits with us and it is meaningful as well as useful to both of us. It may have been that with someone else, something else would have fit better, been more meaningful and more useful. For some people "listening in" on the conversation, some things may fit and some may not, some comments may be meaningful and some may not be, some illustrations may be useful and some may not be - it's unpredictable.

Jay: Quite a while ago, we also agreed that changing our epist...what *is* that word? I can't get my tongue around it! Epistemology! Changing our epistemology is the deepest and most challenging form of change. Now I've lost my train of thought...

JLD: I don't know if I'm hearing you correctly...is your question about levels of change? It is? Alright, Auerswald (1985: 6, 11,12) speaks about transformation being the goal of this way of thinking, and not just change. If we talking *transformation*, then the implications can be far-reaching and long-lasting (Searight & Openlander 1987: 59), hence the position that we need to accept responsibility for what we do.

Jay: And don't do. Earlier on we spoke about how we language things - we love in language, we work in language, we live in language. We all language differently. Can we tie this in somewhere?

JLD: Well, language is connotative; different words will mean different things for different observers (Leyland, 1988: 370), and therefore different realities and different experiences. If you just think of the words "elephant" and "Nobel Prize", what they mean to you and what they mean to me is quite different to what they mean to each of those zoologists and the Bushman. At the same time, that does not mean anything goes. Efran et al (1988: 33) have pointed out "that we do not live alone, and that our shared language distinctions quickly become our realities."

2.4 **SUMMARY**

Jay: Well, you've certainly got me thinking. We've covered a vast amount here. Let's see, my image of the concept of "paradigm" has changed considerably since we began this

conversation. And I've learnt about some mind-boggling ideas, like epistemology, which is making a lot more sense now. The use of metaphors has come in very handy - it has helped me to get to grips with many issues. You know, I think the most important part of this experience has been, for me, the way we've moved along in a conversation - we've shared something, we've created it together, it's not mine and it's not yours, it's ours! I almost get the feeling that that has something to do with what making a paradigm shift is about. But now, perhaps the most important question of all. How will this way of thinking benefit me in my involvement in social work, let's say for example in the SANDF, or anyone involved in human relations, for that matter?

JLD: I'm glad you see it that way - I mean, that it may be *useful* to anyone - in fact, any human being! It seems as though that's something you want to spend considerable time on. So, perhaps we need to get together again.

Jay: I like the sound of that. How about...

CHAPTER 3**THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS IN SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF****3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Jay: I must admit that after our conversation about thinking about thinking, I'm looking forward to understanding more of how the ecosystems lens can benefit us in social work practice. I, for one, really need a fresh perspective on what has been happening in the country and the organisation, and for the role we need to be playing in nation-building. It's all very well talking about it, as we've said earlier on, but *doing* it... Could we once again adjust our binoculars to zoom in on the integration as part of building a National Defence Force, which again is part of nation-building?

JLD: How would you like us to go about this?

3.2 THE CHANGES CHALLENGING SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE SANDF

Jay: I have a need to create a context here, which we can use as a backdrop. I'm just thinking how vast and how many changes we're being challenged with. One just has to read the comments in the 1993 Annual Report (of the Social Work Section of the Northern Transvaal

Medical Command) or the latest Business Plan of the Directorate (of Social Work 1995) to get the picture. We could talk for days and days if we were to investigate the changes.

JLD: You're right. At one stage I made a list of changes to try and get the whole picture, and I came up with fourteen themes.

Jay: That sounds like it may cover everything. Tell me about it.

JLD: Let's jot them down. It goes something like this:

Change in the

- * mission, ideology, values, and so forth, of the SANDF;
- * target community of social work;
- * relationship between the SANDF and the civilian community;
- * in the function of social workers:
- * in the thinking of social workers;
- * in the content of services rendered by social workers;
- * in the process of service delivery;
- * in emphasis on social work methods;
- * working conditions and environment of social workers;
- * job descriptions and expectations of social workers;
- * working relationships of social workers;
- * social work policy-making;
- * social work personnel development needs;
- * personnel support mechanisms and systems.

Jay: My goodness! I don't think we realize the extent of change that has been taking place. An enormous study could be done on all these changes. We could also compare notes with our

American counterparts for example, who, I believe, are also experiencing new demands with the impact of change in the U.S. military mission and organisation (Knox & Price 1995:1). I suppose the phrase "we need to make a paradigm shift" *triggered* something for you, and that's why you've chosen to concentrate on thinking.

JLD: It always boils down to our thinking. If we talk about the changes which are challenging us, I think we can basically sum them up under the theme you've pointed out, nation-building, which is connected to another theme - the process of democracy, of different values, of appreciating the rights of all people. From what I read and thought about, it seems as though there is a pattern of thought and actions aimed at democracy, and a pattern of integration which is taking place on an international level, a national level (South Africa), and for us, an organisational level, group level, and an individual level. I'd like to share with you what Cilliers (1992: 50) has said, since he very effectively connects these patterns of change in different systems and shows how relationships are being challenged by this:

The principles and policies of defence, the purpose of armed forces, their structures and the motivation of acquiring armaments are being widely challenged in a changing world, marked by diminished and changing threat scenarios, altered social values and disarmament initiatives. These changes have also had an impact upon how military discipline is exercised, how armed forces are composed, to whom and how they are responsible and how they are run...South Africa is also faced with its own particular challenges regarding the requirement for a changed defence force in accordance with, and in support of, the broader changing social and constitutional system.

Jay: So what you are seeing and thinking is that the changes challenging social work in the SANDF are also connected to this, also part of the pattern, as you put it.

JLD: You can say that - just look at how South Africa's years of international isolation was expressed through military isolation, for example, as elaborated by Geldenhuys (1991: 65, 84). And now the Defence Force's integration into the international military community is connected to South Africa's reintegration internationally. There are many examples of this such as the change in military relations between South Africa and the United States (The Star 2 October 1995: 7).

3.3 *THE CHALLENGE OF BUILDING A NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE AS PART OF NATION-BUILDING*

Jay: I think I'm beginning to see and hear what you're saying - the pattern of integration then also extends to the much forecasted integration between the seven different defence wings (Southern Africa Report January 1992: 17-20). And this also includes the integration of social workers from different defence wings and political persuasions. The challenge also then lies on a very personal level, as I see it. "The rainbow nation" has become a very popular image, and if I can take the image further, we can talk about a "rainbow defence force", a "rainbow social work team" and we're talking about a lot more than different colours here. The substance of the rainbow, the way it reflects light, where it's coming from and where it's going, what it symbolizes for different people, what signifies the pot of gold at the

end of the rainbow, the new patterns formed by the colours...goodness me, I think I can see the most intricate patterns like those decorating the homes of the Ndebele people instead of plain stripes!

JLD: Now we getting to a question that has been intriguing me: "How do we go about contributing to the building of a *National* Defence Force?" a "rainbow force" as you have painted it. How do we go about changing our own maps and even our own way of thinking, so that we, who share both common ground and differences in origin, such as different defence forces, different political persuasions and cultures, can form a "*National* team", with the same vision and commitment, to serve with other teams, a *National* Defence Force which serves the *Nation*? How do we go about developing a shared loyalty to a *National* Defence Force as we work side by side, improving human relations which includes enabling Defence Force members to develop a shared loyalty?

Ridenour (in Kaslow & Ridenour (eds) 1984: 3-7) describes the military as an extended family network in which a mutual military adoption process takes place between the service member or the family and the military, the military being the adoptive parent. If we extend this idea, we could ask a host of questions regarding how this mutual adoption is taking place to form a *National* military family, and how we can go about contributing to the well-being of such a family.

What I'm trying to say, is that change in definitions and boundaries concerning who and what are friends and enemies, is radical. These are clearly less definable and less certain for many people, and that takes me to what Southall has pointed out, about rethinking definitions, for example, perceiving enemies to be issues like poverty, rather than persons or groups of people. Let's hear what he says about this:

Peace in Southern Africa is forcing a dramatic rethinking of the definition of security...Today, with hostilities replaced by friendship, the major threats to states' stability are increasingly viewed as coming not from any military quarter, but from the common enemies of poverty and lack of hope, unemployment and massive economic migration southwards, environmental degradation, AIDS, drug-running and organized crime, the alarming availability of a massive supply of small arms in the wake of numerous wars, and so on. These are as much developmental as they are security challenges. (Southall 1995: 3-4)

Jay: On the other hand, as you've know doubt noticed, those who share more common ground than others, also don't necessarily share a common vision or values, for example. I notice that it's not so much the content of the answers to all the questions that you're thinking about, that intrigues you, as much as it is the issue of how we as social workers are going to think and work together to come up with ideas - how we are going to generate options, solutions, answers, call it what you may. Aren't you playing Devil's advocate now?

JLD: Mmmm...you're getting to know me well.

Jay: Well, I say let's continue with our exercise. I think this time *I'm* going to make up the rest of that first fairy tale, that one about the seven kingdoms (refer to 1.2 ***THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE (LENS)***), *with you!* It may be useful in helping us to see the benefits of looking with an ecosystems lens in social work. I've had an idea or two up my sleeve for a while now.

JLD: I can't wait!

3.4 ***THE USEFULNESS OF THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS FOR SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF***

Jay: Here goes:

The little children decided that while they were thinking about how this was all going to take place, they would talk to the children from the other islands, and find out how they saw things. The strangest thing began to happen. Some of the older people, seeing this, also began to talk to "foreign" islanders. Sure there was head-banging and fist-shaking and foot-stomping and arm-wrestling, but at least they were talking. Others shook their heads and warned that the talking would be in vain.

JLD: Let's see...

The many ideas they had of each other began to be challenged - it was uncomfortable yet at the same time liberating. Like finding keys that could

unlock great old oak doors, which lead to...who knows... It was sometimes difficult to know which feelings to listen to. They found that their feelings regarding the threat and the proposed solution were sometimes quite similar - fear, confusion, hope, uncertainty - like being in the same boat together on a fishing trip.

Jay: Hmmm...

Some became curious about the way others lived and endeavoured to make head or tail of this. For the first time it began to dawn on many islanders that things were not quite as they had been told in the past or as they had imagined things to be. They scratched their heads, pondered deeply about many issues, and drew pictures in the sea sand with their fingers.

JLD: What fun we're having!

Things began to make a whole lot more sense the more they talked and spent time together. And even more strangely, their curiosity and the effects of their conversations were like the ripples created on the mirror-like ocean surface by an islander's tree-bark canoe; the circles growing and growing.

Jay: Now we're on a roll here!

And the stories that were told - the tales that were spun! Tears streamed, roars of laughter bounced off the trees and rocks, puzzled frowns creased their foreheads. The stories evoked many reactions and steel links were forged between them. Even the shortest of stories or snippets of

conversation, could have the effect of a tiny mosquito daintily treading the polished surface of a pool of water.

JLD: I almost can't keep up with you! Uhhh...

And, the conversation became chameleon-like, undressing and dressing colours, as words rubbed off and expressions were swapped and borrowed and new ones sculpted, like the different shapes and forms the children moulded with beeswax found on the islands.

Jay: Yes...

Things not only began to happen between the different kingdoms, but also between the citizens of the same kingdom. Some old habits and ways that used to die hard, began to change; they felt more at ease and comfortable, and shared more, collaborated more, assumed less. It was no longer a case of too many cooks spoil the broth, and not counting their chickens before they were hatched! There was less finger-wagging and name-calling.

JLD: Aha!

They began to see others and themselves in a new light - different moving pictures played over on the screens of their minds, in which they were the actors, scriptwriters, and directors. They began to see that others were producing different movies in their minds. They respected that.

Jay: Ha! Ha!

And the curiosity - they could not ask enough questions - there was so much inquisitiveness. The lives of Sherlock Holmes and Marie Curie were seen with new eyes. And fun! Streams of laughter bubbled and gurgled as if from plentiful underground streams.

JLD: Mmm...

A steady deep river of time flowed - conversational currents shaping the course. The eyes of the islanders widened in disbelief when, one fine day, a little girl exclaimed to a friend, "The whirlpool has melted! It can't face us. We're too big for the whirlpool!" And lo and behold, the islands had slowly, without anyone noticing, drifted towards one another, and fitted into one another as if they were massive parts of a giant jigsaw puzzle. A new island. A richer, more resourceful island.

Jay: I'm thinking, I'm thinking...

Some could not hide their joy and were proud to be part of it, while others still experienced mixed feelings, and were still contemplating emigrating to other islands - things were no longer the same. But then things weren't at all as bad as they'd expected...

JLD: Wow! This works very well as a useful illustration of many concepts, wouldn't you say?

I can see the whole idea of how transformation of thought (Anderson & Goolishian 1988; Auerswald 1985: 5, Manrique 1990: 66), is possible through the evolving of fresh perspectives (Searight & Openlander 1987: 57), seeing new possibilities (Efran et al 1988: 34; Tomm & Lannaman 1988: 40), the provision of more choices (Tomm & Lannaman

1988: 41) or options. So looking with the ecosystems lens can challenge the social workers in such a way that it can lead to their thought being transformed.

Jay: For me those children are like a catalyst (Leyland 1988: 372; Tomm & Lannaman 1988: 37); they triggered change. So if I apply this correctly, the social workers can be catalysts, triggering change, but they cannot cause change. Being aware of this, can lead to different ways of working with each other that may be more effective.

JLD: There's the idea of the system becoming more adaptive through the connections being made (Keeney & Ross 1983: 377), the links being forged. There's a different perception of history, which becomes a resource for understanding people (Efran et al 1988:38). There's also the development of new pictures (Davidson, Lax, Lussardi, Miller & Ratheau 1988: 76, 77).

Jay: I notice there's a theme of an attitude of curiosity (De Shazer & Berg 1988: 43; Efran et al 1988: 40), which can enable neutrality to be maintained, prevent getting stuck and burn-out. It can be quite an "infectious" attitude, since it can rub off on others, and a far more desirable attitude, I think, than a critical attitude, for example.

JLD: The link between *what* we think and *how* we think, is brought home to me once again. The issues of values is addressed well, for here we have the active subjective role of the observer being highlighted, and the accompanying need to take responsibility for our constructions,

which will show respect (Davidson et al 1988: 45) for the perceptions, experiences, feelings and actions of others.

Jay: The description of the effects of small changes having far-reaching consequences (Searight & Openlander 1987: 59) works very well for me - I get a sense of awesomeness.

JLD: The forging of links, the relationship building opportunities that can be created through this kind of thinking, are rich and diverse.

Jay: I can definitely hear the development of a new narrative (Efran et al 1988: 39) shared by the islanders and their kings - they evolved a shared language (Searight & Openlander 1987: 59), and it's quite clear how important language (De Shazer & Berg 1988 :43) was in the transformation that took place.

3.5 *SUMMARY*

Jay: From what we've seen, the ideas have a lot of potential for transformation of thought, of applying new rules in thinking. I would even go as far as saying of entering into another dimension, of new realities. I'm very interested to see what would happen if the ideas that we've been exploring could be applied in social work in the organisation. I wonder what would happen. It's always different when speaking about something, as compared to

practising it. How would one go about applying these ideas? Are you thinking of practically exercising these somehow?

JLD: Yes, but don't ask me how, yet. I need to go and do a lot more thinking about that one!

CHAPTER 4

**AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE CHALLENGE OF USING THE ECOSYSTEMS LENS IN
SOCIAL WORK IN THE SANDF**4.1 *INTRODUCTION*

Jay: So what has been happening since we last talked?

JLD: So much has happened, I don't even know where to start telling you. And with you?

Jay: I've been doing a lot of thinking about my thinking and yours too, for that matter. There are some useful ideas with a lot of potential that are growing out of our conversation that I'd like to see come to fruition.

JLD: Well, then what I've got to share with you, you may find very exciting.

Jay: Let's hear it!

JLD: As you've said, some useful ideas are growing out of our sharing together, and after our last meeting, I decided to use one of the ideas. I've been thinking along the line of a "mobile" manuscript and inviting others, like you, to also take part in creating this research. I decided

that we need to continue with the team effort and I invited eight of our social work colleagues, to join me in a workshop looking at the challenges of change - specifically changing thinking in social work in the SANDF.

Jay: So how did you approach this in terms of research?

4.2 THE CHALLENGE OF NEW PARADIGM RESEARCH

JLD: I approached this with the idea of the co-operative inquiry group Reason (1988: 19-39) presents, participating in an introductory workshop with the possibility of their continuing the workshop, depending on their needs. I approached the group as co-researchers, myself being the initiating researcher and therefore a co-researcher as well.

Jay: How did you go about selecting the group?

4.3 THE SELECTION PROCESS

JLD: It's interesting that you should ask that because the group demonstrated a strong curiosity regarding this issue and we spent considerable time discussing this.

Jay: Did you tell them how you went about selection, or did you leave them to figure it out?

JLD: I reflected the group's curiosity and challenged them to share their perspectives on how it happened. But what's also interesting is that I had my own ideas regarding how I selected them beforehand. During the workshop, my ideas were challenged and my perception expanded to include other ideas that grew out of the day's workshopping. So the reality of how the selection took place *changed* for me.

Jay: You've got my attention.

JLD: During the selection phase before the workshop, I used the lens of diversity - diversity in terms of years of experience in the social work field and the SANDF, arm of service being served, seniority, defence force previously served, political persuasion, culture, language, and gender. Subconsciously, the lens of similarities was also used, but this I did not recognize until during the workshop and during my own reflection on it afterwards.

Jay: Why do you say this?

JLD: The group's construction regarding the criteria for selection included connections through diversity, connections through being "OK" with difference and each others' differences, connections between each other and myself, and the fit between us. To illustrate this, I'll read a small section of the transcript to you in a minute or two. Afterwards I recognized other connections between ourselves such as the need to work together in a team, the need for a different way of thinking, and so forth.

A group viewpoint that was fascinating for me, was that the group had already existed prior to selection, and that the selection had made this covert. Throughout the workshop a boundary between the group and the larger group of social workers was demonstrated in our discussions. In fact, some even decided that if they had to select a group that fit with them, it would have basically been the same people. There appeared to be quite a strong sense of belonging in the group.

Jay: So, how did you approach them - individually? As a group? Did they have a choice in the matter? What did you say?

JLD: I extended a verbal invitation to each person individually - The necessary information, or what I thought was the necessary information, was provided, for example, the size of the group, the topic to be investigated, the issue of confidentiality, and so on. During the workshop, the group members enabled me to see that by leaving out other information, this stimulated their curiosity and attracted them.

Jay: So it wasn't just what you *did* say, but also what you *didn't* say that drew them in. You also say it was an invitation - so they had a choice in the matter.

JLD: Yes, that was also very important, as I was to discover as the workshop progressed. One member arrived late due to a situation where choice was limited due to being outranked, and at one stage, another was called out to respond to a call - the choice being limited for the

same reason. The group reacted very strongly to these kinds of situations and I then realized how important it was for them to experience freedom of choice. This was one of many factors that indicated to me that the group preferred to make up their own minds on what they wanted to do and not have their minds made up for them - in other words, respect for the autonomy of individuals seemed to be presented as a group value. That's just my perception.

Jay: What else attracted them?

JLD: The idea of collaborating, of being part of a group with the opportunity for mutual support, the informal or casual manner in which the workshopping was to be done, the opportunity to share and learn from each other, identification with the theme to be investigated, my style of workshopping which was known to the members and the element of surprise. This seemed to connect with their needs. An excerpt of the conversation will illustrate the patterns we've looked at:

Z: I'd like to throw a stone...

G: Throw it!

Z: ...into the conversation and say that this system was selected before. You just made it obvious.

MvT: Probably, yes, I could identify with that. I think it was sort of the normal process that connected the group. You just made it known.

IJ: ...Can I use your sculpture?

Z: Yes.

JLD: Do you want to sculpt?

IJ: No, no, no, I'm just going to use exactly the same one. You can also look at it from an in-group out-group situation. In-group, I see it as you maybe didn't pick a group, you picked a lot of individuals and people that differ in very big respects. I mean, Zeno (Z), will tell you how much we differ, and how when you get into motion and you, your motion is social work, you can actually become an in-group with the outside group - the individuals in the inside when you do your social work when you become involved you get into a group from the outside...

MvT: Ja, I think it's true. She did select individuals but somehow without *any* words being said, the individuals link.

G: In their diversity, almost.

MvT: Ja, in their diversity.

G: I would see diversity as *the* link. That's how *I* see it.

Z: Ja, I would have liked to sculpt something that is also an expectation of me, but I can't because I don't have the resource. But I would have used that rope thing that you find in the show - the show-ground, that pushes you because of the velocity when you turn around - if you put a lot of people together in a container like that, and you see the moving of it as social work, the social work process, people can differ but as soon as social work starts

happening, they move around, they form one circle on the outside. Everyone moves out to the same place and forms a very definite kind of system and when it stops they fall back into diversity, but the process, I think it's an important thing.

JLD: What I'm hearing now is (writing on the blackboard) at this stage, the connection is difference.

MvT: Ja.

MM: But, I think also respect for difference. We disagree on aspects, perceptions...

G: *Weet jy wat, ek wil amper sê, that some part it's diversity, some part it's connections through, wat wil ek sê, weet sameness al, ek dink party het dieselfde goed, en ander weer die verskille.*

MvT: But I think that is what makes this a unique group. We *are* individuals. We *do* have the diversal factor. We do have differences and differences and the other word that we've jotted down there, each has got a different meaning. Some have got the same meaning too - they can be synonyms and antonyms. And yet, there is a *link* between them.

G: Ja.

Z: Being OK with differences.

MvT: Being OK with each others' differences, with each others' individuality, we are OK with each other.

G: But that's where I see some of the connections.

JLD: You also said something about *fit* - that you fit together because you're OK with differences.

Z: There is an interconnectedness.

Jay: How did you and the group go about investigating the challenging topic? Did you provide any structure or did you leave it up to them to decide what to do?

4.4 ***FRAMEWORK FOR THE INQUIRY***

JLD: I made use of something of the inquiry process referred to by Reason (1990: 19), involving a framework with a combination of reflection and action or experience - to provide some form of a vehicle through which the group could work out something meaningful, relevant and useful.

Jay: Meaningful, relevant and useful to whom?

JLD: You're asking some challenging questions here! To all of us - and hopefully, which will be meaningful, relevant and useful to others too. I went "in there" with the expectation of whatever was to happen, if anything was to happen, was unpredictable. No-one could predict that. And, whatever was to happen and not happen, would provide information that was not available before.

Jay: So you would learn something, no matter what. But what, then, about the group?

JLD: Well, I hoped that they would also learn something from the experience - the exercises I chose, as I was to realize afterwards, were connected to my perceptions of the co-researchers and what I believed would, in Duhl's (1983: 121) words "reach them in a connecting way, in order to get an idea across..." I also intended to listen to the needs of the group, of which I had a fair idea beforehand, and to use these to shape the guided action. When we commenced, they expressed the need for relaxing, for music, for playing and having fun, and for something different. The framework provided for those needs. We just had to bring in a source of music, which we did.

Jay: This framework that you've mentioned - what did you say...structure which could act as a vehicle - tell me more about that.

JLD: I used five activities which the group could work with. The first was the creation of the context of the workshopping and the presentation of the theme to be investigated for the day with the aid of collages exhibited in the workshop room. The second activity involved the group members taking on the idea and name of a character from a story, fairy tale, cartoon, poem, drama, opera, movie or musical, for the duration of the workshop. Thirdly, we portrayed our expectations of the workshopping through sculpting using each other as the sculpting medium. Then, we sculpted ideas using play dough or clay, which were then titled. The fifth idea I want to mention, is the use of reflection on each exercise.

During one of our conversations, we were looking at paradigms and how they are also metaphors. I decided that since sculpting is also a metaphorical process it could be a vehicle for thinking about thinking, in a way which could bring to the surface thought processes of which people are unaware.

Jay: I see a connection between the second, third and fourth activities; mind you, with the first and last activities as well. They're *all* a form of sculpting as I see it - the idea I get from these photographs you're showing me, is that you sculpted the context with pictures, words and cartoons. Then you introduced the idea of sculpting through the taking on of characters with which the members could identify. Reflection can also be seen as sculpting - sculpting meanings with words and non-verbal behaviour.

JLD: You know, I hadn't actually *seen* the connection until you *sculpted* it for me. It was a day spent in sculpting our different *realities* in different ways. That also reminds me - the dialogue was rich in metaphors, and what thrilled me was to see how a group metaphor evolved. Realities were also sculpted with the use of metaphors. These are all connected.

Jay: So how did the group go about workshopping? Did they first talk about something and then sculpt it - or, how was it done?

JLD: The framework provided for a constant recursive process of action and experience, and reflection.

4.5 *A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS AND THEMES WITH ILLUSTRATIONS*

Jay: Tell me about what happened in the group. What did they do with this framework?

JLD: The co-researchers expressed appreciation and enjoyment of the context, which, as we said, was sculpted of pictures, words and cartoons. They indicated that they felt the framework regarding the fourteen changes we looked at previously (under 3.2 *THE CHANGES CHALLENGING SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE SANDF*), to be comprehensive, and left it the way it was. Broadly speaking, each sculpting exercise was accompanied by much interaction between the co-researchers, and appeared to fit with them. Not all the members used people with the people sculpting exercise - some expressed that they did not feel as confident to use this physically, but they referred to the sculptings of others when portraying their expectations, therefore they used this verbally. Each exercise appeared to work as an appropriate vehicle for enabling members to think about themselves, others in the group, and the subsystem of social workers differently. Processes of which the members were unaware, were brought to the surface through the use of different mediums, multiple description or polyocular vision. There was a great deal of humour, mixing of languages, of playing with words, meanings and metaphors, of linking or connecting, also with the use of stories which the members related in the group. Another very important part of the process was that certain values emerged which were expressed in different ways by the group members. These we can look at later.

Jay: What happened in the group with the character sculpting?

JLD: Processes which I noticed were the development of an increased awareness of people's different perceptions, and therefore different experiences of the same character or situation, different links seemed to be forged between people in terms of ideas, the element of challenge was expressed and members challenged each other regarding their perceptions, and also expressed a respect for different perceptions. For example, one particular co-researcher chose a character which evoked a strong reaction from most of the group since they perceived the character in a mainly negative light, in contrast to her positive experience of the character. Let me illustrate this for you:

Z: I can't tell you the relationship doesn't jump into my head as an obvious one. I determined this by elimination. I would very much like to hear from you why you chose "Stephanie Forrester".

SF: Maybe the other people interpret Stephanie Forrester differently. I see Stephanie as somebody who is trying to keep peace and stability within the Forrester family and trying to please and keep everybody happy at all times, although she might end up being the sufferer emotionally.

M: She's going out of her way to see that the Forrester family remains intact, normally if there are any intruders she makes sure they stay at bay... and I think SF is like that.

The group speculates for a while on why the co-researcher has chosen the specific character.

Z: But why did *you* choose Stephanie? I mean I see you don't agree with that power plea.

SF: No, I don't agree with whatever she's saying. That's why I say it's a different interpretation.

G: No, I mean that's the thing - how she sees Stephanie is very different.

Z: I can see Stephanie as like a mother lioness, looking after her cubs and protecting them. I mean, Rich Forrester is worse than his mother, but she's prepared to look after him.

G: She made him what he is. This woman...I can't believe that you really mess up people's lives. That's one woman I don't really like.

Group laughs.

MvT: That's now again selfish Garfield.

G: She's really...

Z: Like Garfield.

MM: There's a truth now - one can interpret situations differently. The way SF interprets - we're know what she's thinking.

MvT: We read people differently.

JLD: Well it seems to me that SF's choice has done something to the people in this room.

The group laughs.

MvT: I have a friend and I used to work with her and a senior in our department one day said to me "I can't understand how you can be friends with her because she's so and so and so and so. She experienced it totally different from what I did. We were just about to bake our annual Christmas Season biscuits one Saturday together when this person said "How on earth can you manage to be friends away from work set-up?" So obviously, we had a totally different experience. So, although Stephanie is not acceptable to Garfield, she might be acceptable to others.

G: It's your perception... I'll respect that, SF. Ja, what I was going to say about Garfield was that I often get the message that I can be...

Jay: And the other characters which were chosen - were there any links between these?

JLD: Very much so. Common connecting themes which I have identified regarding the members' perceptions of their links to the characters chosen are:

- messenger or agent of change
- the ability to deal with challenges positively
- exhibiting challenging behaviour in relationships
- making a significant difference in the lives of others
- different or unconventional thinking
- autonomy of the individual
- changing perceptions
- need for stability

- love of adventure.

Jay: And the people sculpting? That could have required some close physical contact - how did they deal with that? What were the group's expectations of the workshop?

JLD: The sculpting was experienced as a challenge that some made use of, while others preferred to verbalize their expectations instead. A new awareness of each other which started to develop in the first exercise, grew with this activity. Let me illustrate this for you:

MM: I think my creativity is going to be *challenged* today.

G: (Involves the group members in standing in a circle with Zeno (Z) crouching down in the middle of the circle; the group members extend their hands over Zeno's head who then jumps up through the hands.)

K: A big surprise.

MvT: Ja. I can also identify with *that* one.

MM: Get out of the narrowness.

K: Waking up to what we're going to achieve. Like therapy.

G: ...the surprize in mine. I like surprises. I never asked Alice (JLD1) what was going to happen here, 'cause I thought I'll just come and see.

MM: And my motivation - I'd like to do something for Alice (JLD1)...

G: I actually like to do her a favour...

Z: I can really agree with that as well. I think what's achieved something for me, JLD, or Alice, by not saying anything is that *always* triggers me. When I don't know anything, I *must* know it. And I don't need a lot of structure and rigidness and I want to explore new things and do new things, so when you didn't say I *had* to come - that's the *best* trick in the book to get me somewhere. To keep something from me.

MM: I'll keep that in mind.

G: That's for me what I keep trying to explain - it must be a group effort as well.

MM: Also, the thing of something different, something else.

JLD: So you expected that there's difference.

G: I actually hoped for it

MM: Ja. This was the only day in this month that I had - well, I was looking forward to it. Wondering what's going to happen.

Here is another excerpt:

Z: I'd like to do something. Stephanie (SF), stand here, Khanyi (K), can you please stand here, Alice (JLD) and Garfield (G). OK, can you turn around facing the other way. Hold each other's hands. Then, Maria (von Trapp - MvT), can you please stand there,

Indiana (Jones - JJ), you there, Mzwakhe (M), please here, Makuna Matata (MM), there. And you also, the outer circle hold hands. No, not turn around - like that - OK, can you turn around this way - and you please turn around the other way. That is it.

The group carries this out with some laughter.

MvT: Does that refer to getting confused today?

Z: I don't know. Getting dizzy.

G: The word "co-evolving" came up in my head. Something's happening between us.

MvT: But perhaps also moving in different directions. Thinking in different directions - one in this way, one the other way around.

Z: If I can say the reason why I didn't partake is because I wanted to see what it looks like. For me the real effect was the important part. Also, the facing of each other, but to see it visually creates a lot of energy from that although there are systems moving in different directions, and for me, social workers always want to move in the same direction - it seems that, we are very, its important for us that we want to take the boat along in one way and sometimes that's the way of the least resistance and visually for me this created a difference in direction, it created a resistance but visually, it was pleasing - for me it worked. And that's what I would like to get out of this as well, not the same direction, but also different directions, different ways of thinking.

JLD: (To two of the co-researchers) Won't you please both swap spectacles because I saw something as well.

The two group members exchange their spectacles and comment on how it is to see through these. This is accompanied by much laughter in the group.

JLD: I saw that as your sculpting. There was almost like a taking out of your eyes and you standing back and looking at these.

Z: I think it links with my Zeno character who wants to explore something else - a different direction and there're two options - one's this way - one the other way.

Themes I've identified are:

- a reaching out beyond oneself
- the element of surprize
- need for and expectation of difference
- sharing, co-evolution of ideas
- thinking in different ways and directions
- exchanging lenses or perspectives
- mutual support, curiosity
- sharing in different ways
- relevancy of theme to be investigated
- getting direction in work
- determining a relevant vision and mission.

Jay: And the clay sculpting? From what I can see in these photographs of the clay sculptings, there is a wide variety of themes and ideas - some really novel and unconventional thoughts. How did the group start this process?

JLD: Each co-researcher had to roll a piece of clay into a ball as a starting point and from there, each one created something - what they created and how was entirely their choice. There was a high level of interaction with members telling the group stories as different thoughts and ideas became relevant. They showed their curiosity by commenting on what others were doing with the medium and how they were going about it. Much humour accompanied this curiosity. Connections were made between each sculpting and the sculptor's way of thinking. Similar and different thought patterns among group members were also identified, for example, what members made with the boundaries imposed by the materials used, the use of different senses, for example taste. Words and meanings were improvised or new ones created, for example, where one member had included a specific colour clay, after discovering that she had not used it at all, the word "stiefklei" was invented by another member. "Garfieldish" was invented by a member to mean behaviour shown by someone which is thought to be typical of the cartoon character, Garfield, which was another member's "character". Let's listen again to the group so that we can get the picture:

MM: *Ek het nie 'n bruin nie! Is daar nog 'n bruin...*

G: *Daar is nie 'n bruin nie.*

MvT: *Jy kan maar my bruin kry.*

MM: *Dankie.*

Z: *Ja. Los net myne!*

MM: *Ja. Dis weer net Garfield daai. Garfield in julle wat na vore kom.*

More comments come from the group.

MM: *Ek het bruin.* (Laughs)

The rest of the group laugh with the co-researcher.

MvT: *Waar't jy dit nou opgespoor?*

MM: *...My brein weet nie. Jy sien, dis my brein wat hier gelê het.*

Z: *Brein of bruin?*

MM: *My brein. My brein het my bruin weggevat!*

The use of the medium appeared to work in enabling the group members in their sense-making of something of their own and each other's rules of thinking. Relationship building also took place, as the following pieces of conversation around a member's clay sculpting will show us:

Z: " Reaching out". Yes. Yes. What is very interesting for me was to watch....is that you, Mzwakhe (M), started first. And you started with vigour and energy and you immediately started working with

that purple clay, making the legs and exactly know what you were doing. And, when I look at the end product, you *knew* what you were doing it seems to me because it works. And you're also the *only* one who dared to defy gravity. All of us sort of *ploeter aan op die grond rond* - we worked two dimensionally and you're the only one who *really* worked three dimensionally. Here is a Picassonian attempt also....

and:

M: If I'd like to link it, maybe I'd...OK, why I ended up doing this, OK why I gave it this title of "Reaching out" - OK, I just thought of this octopus lying, that can actually stretch out and get something and come back - so this was actually like this theme, sort of like the organization, our organization, the SANDF, and then I linked the whole thing to social work and it's a matter of we shouldn't actually isolate ourselves and that's why I put this other part where the land is so that we can actually stretch out and get something and still bring it in. So that's what, so that's why I put some fruit there just to resemble you can actually get something out and bring back to you. That's how I see it.

Z: What I see from that, Mzwakhe (M), for myself is if we think about, we talked today about what our social workers think and do and so. And I think inevitably one can say that how one thought this up means something about the way that one thinks. OK. And, what I realized is that there's a lot of you that I don't know. Because you think a lot differently to the other people who did things here. I mean, there's a similarity between this for me, we haven't spoken about this one, I'm going to leave it out now, but that one...we all worked in a certain way with our circles, and you

broke that boundary, like Alice (JLD) said, in a horizontal and a vertical way. Because, in terms of the area, it's conservative when you compare it to my getting out of the boundaries like this. And you've taken the other route. We're all breaking out of the boundaries in other ways...

Jay: Where did they go from there?

JLD: The group were then provided the opportunity to create a *group* model/picture together by including something from each co-researcher's clay creation. Patterns of thought that emerged were "both...and..." in contrast to "either...or...", for example, when the group found that they had two "suns" for their picture, they improvised and decided to use both. It was also decided that something new had to be created for the group effort and a new title and story was composed by the group - which for me says something of non summativity (the whole is greater than the sum of the parts).

Jay: How did the group go about deciding what to use and what not to? Who decided?

JLD: All the members collaborated on this one - a suggestion was made that each individual select a part of his/her creation, and the idea fitted with the group. Each person used different criteria for the selection of this component, as you will see in the illustrations. This also connected with what it was that triggered each member to share something of himself/herself. Let's listen again:

Z: I mean, the one brought a sun, and Makuna Matata (MM) said this is the *important* part of her painting. She said so. So I think was this I think in yours. My log was also quite important for me. So. The road for me was nice...

and:

MvT: I brought that which you *commented* on, that, the clouds in front of my sun, I got rid of it. I shared it . I actually passed it on to you...

and:

IJ: If you want to recycle something, you must put it back into it so you need to give something of yourself and that's everyone involved. For something, you must bring something of yourself. And that's why the tree's on top - something *new*.

Z: Some member's were even prepared to remould. Ja, and remodel, for the new effort.

JLD: What do you think that says?

Z: I think to me, it says something of working together, and synthesis, of creating something new, adding important things and creating something new from that.

MM: And a willingness to change.

The group agrees.

- JLD: Almost a willingness to be like a piece of clay?
- Z: Ummm!
- JLD: Or to have a part of you that's like a piece of clay?
- MM: Yes, but being in control of being the clay.
- G: If I think of it, I actually didn't take something from my picture, I made a new one, I left my picture exactly as it was.
- MM: *Ja, dit het my nogal opgeval dat jy wou nie jou prentjie verander nie.*
- JLD: And yet you're doing it in such a radical way.
- MvT: Ja, you're taking away the sun which is the essence of your picture. You're taking that away...
- MM: But her sun is still there. She didn't take anything from her picture.
- MvT: Oh, oh.
- MM: I recognized that. She says she doesn't want to do that. Can she take it back? Afterwards.
- G: I'll carry what you've taught along with me...

Here is an example of the development of multiple description through sharing different perceptions regarding the co-researchers' actions in the collaboration:

G: What's actually funny to me of my perception that Stephanie (SF) was actually the quietest. She was the quiet one, and she's been the radical in the signing of it. She's actually disrupted the picture almost.

The group laughs.

MvT: I see, to me it says "Take note of me. I'm not just part of some bundle. Take note of me. Here I am."

The group agrees.

Z: Let's check. There could also have not been enough room to write.

SF: Ja, I felt it was almost full because most at end there was not room for the signatures to follow each other.

An example of the complementary relationship between change and stability, as well of the usefulness of the medium for understanding thinking, is illustrated through the following example:

MvT: What is significant to me about working with clay, is the fact that you can mould it into many shapes, *any* shapes, and yet the *clay* remains the same regardless of the shape that it's in.

Z: It just sort of depends on your creativity, your audacity and how you want to defy whatever rule you've created before, for yourself.

MM: And a willingness to take risks. Part of a risk to change something.

MvT: And clay can *change*. You can change from day to day, from moment to moment into a different shape, and give *meaning* to something differently. I mean in the beginning there were what, seven, eight different colours, all sort of in a shape. Yet we created a wide variety of things. But the essence remains - it remains *clay*.

Z: I also saw when we were working is - that we all started with sort of a step one act - and that's how you work with clay and then you make a sausage of it. And that's the first thing one should do with clay when you're small. And then later we moved out of that boundary and get more involved with the medium and be more daring.

Jay: How did the workshop end? What did the workshop come to mean to the members? How did they react to the fact that it ended?

JLD: Woah! One question at a time. You talk like I think sometimes. I can't keep up! During the last reflective exercise, the group used this for drawing connections between happenings throughout the day, and their experiences of these. We posed questions regarding where to go from there and how to go about that. It was an opportunity for ventilating feelings, and expressing needs, and therefore had some therapeutic value for us. What was meaningful and beneficial to the members was:

- the idea of universality - of "being in the same boat"
- the growth of vision for the job
- the experience of collaborating

- the sharing of ideas regarding making a difference in different ways
- the creation of energy for going on
- the identification of an available support system
- * the foundation laid and being built on for something meaningful to the members.

Here are a few illustrations from the conversation:

JLD: I'm wondering - I'm just reading out a question that I've jotted down here - "To what extent is this group *now* the same group that started?" Would you say it's the same one, has it changed, what's changed?

IJ: For me, it definitely changed. I mean, with all these pictures, it's easy to, if someone started talking to go in that direction with them and talk in the same direction. But in building something, you cannot find someone to dump off. I mean I would look stupid if I built the same thing as Zeno or the same thing as Garfield, so I'll have to build my own thing, so I *must* share something of myself.

and:

G: I think what happened between us what made us what we are now, you know, to me the thing comes to mind that time is, irrelevant almost 'cause it seems like ...for me, but such a lot happened between this morning and now, and it's, I mean, it's a few hours.

Z: What I can say that I've always known I'm not on the road alone but I know there are people...

and:

Z: I'd say, if, the question you posed on how did the group change - I think what changed for me is that a lot of things were done in the group but they were shaken around and stirred and they got back into their spot. And for me, if I may use my road metaphor again, is that, being not alone on the road - you can walk in a bunch. If there's not someone giving temptation in front, then you can start to walk in a bunch, past those sitting under the trees. That is a comforting thought.

IJ: And to link with that, this morning was quite interesting actually, when you made one circle face this way and the other circle face that way, and when you went by and you had to make eye contact with each other, and that just made me think that one is a bit scared to make eye contact with your colleague in another sense. You keep reaching for external resources for your stability and your emotional comfort and what-not, but you lose track of the people around you. That you've got colleagues that can help you actually.

Z: That are available.

and:

G: What's just very comforting for me and that's connected to what you say is what Zeno, as well, said, is that we *know*, you *know* you're not alone. We actually stand in and not walk all over...And that makes it a stronger *effort*.

and:

MvT: I think what happened here today is the rediscovery of what Zeno has also said, that, there are, you're not alone. And that we should, actually you know, join forces, perhaps more...*meer bewustelik*.

Here are a few more comments which illustrate how the group's way of thinking evolved during the course of the day and which was expressed during the creation of the group model:

MvT: Well, I think, if you think in terms of mixing paint, mixing colour, you will need quite a lot of *yellow* to change the shade of *green* ...

MM: Into yellow.

MvT: Into yellow. You will probably get a totally different colour. Ja. You will get blue. If you look at those two - that green and that yellow, you will not - if you mix the two, you're not going to have either...or, you're going to have something totally new, and that's a totally different cup of tea.

Z: Maybe, that's *good*. Maybe that's good. Maybe that means...

MM: I think that's the only thing that's going to work is that new cup of tea.

Z: ...to run the road and rest under the tree, and run and rest and run and rest, and not run or rest.

MM: Ja, but make something *new*.

G: Both...and...

MM: Ja.

MvT: And actually in that process, assimilate the green into the yellow, and the yellow into the green.

and:

MvT: I was just looking at these plastics on the table. If you had pale yellow like this one and you mixed it with green, it's going to become green. It's not going to have any effect on the shade of green - it's just a pale yellow. But if you take a *forceful* yellow like that one, it's going to change the green into blue. So the more *forceful* the yellow group might be and the more *power* there is in the yellow, the greater the effect could be on the green.

Z: The larger we make the yellow, maybe the paler it becomes. Or the smaller you might make it the more intense it becomes. So it might be *enough*, but too light or intense but too small to change things. And, what do we do then?

Jay: Did everything go well? Wasn't there something that was not liked? Any limitations.

JLD: I experienced the time to be the most limiting factor - in fact I felt panicky at times because I realized that there was too much to do in too little time, so I kept asking permission to

move the time boundary. What happened was that three members had to leave before the workshop ended because of their circumstances. This was experienced as frustrating for all of us, I think. We did not end as we would have liked to - with everyone present. Comments from two co-researchers show different perceptions of the same incident:

MM: OK, but I still think it wasn't nice for them to leave, because it was also not nice for me to let them...you know, I was a bit frustrated that the group was ending off without it ending. *Ons het geëindig sonder om te eindig.*

JLD: What do you want to do about that?

Z: If I could look at my example I could make the best out of staying. For me there genuine was losing some which would probably had benefit to all. But it wasn't a violation from an external source...

Jay: So, did you follow up with these three people? How did *they* experience this?

JLD: We tried to get together as a group, but because of circumstances, this did not take place. I contacted the members individually and we tried to make the best of the situation. According to them, although they would have liked to have been present until the end, they did not experience this as a negative factor to the extent that the other co-researchers experienced it

Jay: To get back to values, I'm really curious as to what values were portrayed as being important to the members.

JLD: I think the value that stands out for me the most was the group value of respect for the autonomy of the individual. This I heard very loudly and clearly. It was also expressed in such a way that I heard it as a very strong need for the co-researchers to experience this in their working relationships outside the workshopping group. The need to be heard and respected, and to hear others, was evident to me. Something else which came out strongly was the need to belong to a mutually supportive and committed group, a team, and to make a significant and lasting difference in the field of social work, and in the organization (SANDF). Let the group speak for themselves:

MvT: Well, I would have gladly parted with my clouds but the sheer, the fact that you said you wanted to take photographs of it, kept me from ruining it. I, a long time before that I wanted to start rolling balls again. But apart from that, if we had to break that, it would really be giving part of *your* picture, part of *you*, part of the item that you identify with and that symbolizes *your* picture.

JLD: Ja, it's interesting how you decided what part of your picture you're going to contribute, and the fact that *you* decided as individuals.

K: I didn't want to bring my confusion here 'cause like in the end product, the end product would be together - it should be a positive

one - that's why I decided to take the...as part of, and the green block, and then it was taken too.

JLD: So you're didn't want any confusion here.

K: Ja. That's not...as a group...I wanted to leave the confusion here, and move onto the second phase.

JLD: You didn't want to bring the confusion into the group thing?

K: Ja. 'Cause I thought of it as phases - this is phase one, that is phase two.

Z: That makes me ruthless. Because I was prepared to bring temptation along!

JLD: It makes me wonder about what's allowed and what isn't allowed in the group. Is confusion allowed? Is temptation allowed? What do you do if it's there?

MvT: I think we dealt with the temptation rather positively. It wasn't as if we resisted it or rejected it at all, because it was an acceptable form of temptation. You know, being named the chocolate log, nobody seems to have resisted it. But confusion? We probably would have, even if Khanyi (K) did bring some of her confusion along we would have woven it into the process of getting from the start of the day to the end of the day. No cycle is *without* confusion.

G: I think, ja you're right. We...

MvT: We would have put it in somewhere.

Z: I think we would have moved it round a bit. So, here, or there, or where does it fit?

MvT: Ja, we would probably have, considering the shape, made a road of it or something. But, we would have fitted it into...

Curiosity, the will to learn from others, collaborating, sharing, empathy for others, taking risks, using creative thinking were also voiced by the members. I also noticed that these specific members were inclined to feel challenged to challenge the status quo, they were prepared to put hard work into something meaningful, that it was important to finish what is begun, and that incentives were abstract rather than material. They were prepared to go far to accommodate each member of the workshopping group somehow, but there were certain things they felt would be difficult to accommodate, for example, people not sharing similar vision, values, or commitment.

Jay: I'm also curious as to how you went about analysing what happened in the group. I do hear a lot of reference to ecosystems ideas, like patterns and so on.

JLD: Well, a very interesting thing for me was that while I was planning for the workshop, I read and discussed many ideas with you, but I hadn't yet found theory to back up my idea of the sculpting. Apart from having looked at Lewis' (1983) ideas on teaching therapists to use their "right" brains and having heard some of Duhl's (1983) ideas about metaphor, I mainly went on my own "gut-feeling", so in a sense, it felt as if I was going on the seat of my pants. Somewhere, somehow, the ideas must have illuminated something for me, because long after

the session, I managed to get hold of Duhl's (1983) work on the use of metaphors in training people to think in terms of wholeness. I then found more ideas in writing that I had not yet been able to express in words. That brings us once again to the idea of recursiveness - I can't pinpoint where the process started and what was caused by which act. I sometimes see this process more in the form of a braid of hair, with three strands of looking and seeing, thinking and acting plaited together in a way that they give rise to each other, and impact on each other. During the work session one of the co-researcher's referred to an artist who painted paradoxical pictures - I would like to see such a picture of this concept.

I think that using the ideas of ecosystems thinking has enabled me to begin to make sense of understanding - it has illuminated patterns and created a new reality for me. I find it a particularly challenging epistemology, especially since it is one that seems to take a lifetime to get to grips with!

4.6 *SUMMARY*

JLD: If I were to summarize the exercise in terms of themes, I would say, to use Reason's (1990: 219) term, that a web of interconnecting themes - of vision, mission, behavioural patterns, areas of potential growth and values, evolved concerning different levels of relationships - the organisation, the social work system, the co-operative inquiry group, and the individual.

Jay: And in terms of the process, we could say that using metaphor to apply the ecosystems lens has the potential to be effective in enabling social workers to take a metaposition concerning their own thinking and thus introduce a different paradigm or even epistemology. Maybe it's now time to take stock of what we've explored and look at how this can be put to use to improve human relations in the social work group and field, and organisations such as the SANDF.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 *INTRODUCTION*

The aim of the chapter is to meet the fifth objective of the study, which is to evaluate what happened in this instance when the lenses of the ecosystems perspective were used to examine thinking. Furthermore, it is to make recommendations regarding the possibilities for using the lenses of the ecosystems perspective in social work practice in settings such as the SANDF.

The author will do this by stepping out of the shoes of the researcher to observe herself in the role of researcher and the research process. The conclusions and the recommendations that the author will be formulating will be, according to the ecosystems perspective, her own constructions and therefore inventions. There are endless possibilities for these.

5.2 *CONCLUSIONS REGARDING AIM AND OBJECTIVES*

The author's goal as researcher was to demonstrate and illustrate from an ecosystems perspective what happened when social workers in the SANDF, including herself, were challenged with exploring their own paradigms and/or epistemologies. Perhaps it needs to be mentioned that the context for the study could have been any organisation experiencing transformation, and that in this

instance it happened to be the SANDF. The author will examine the process used to reach each objective as set out in CHAPTER 1.

5.2.1 *Conclusion: The challenge of using the ecosystems lens for the author as researcher*

The first objective was stated as follows:

To demonstrate and illustrate what may happen when the lenses of the ecosystems perspective are used to observe the challenges involved in thinking about thinking, or understanding understanding, using the author's experience, as an example;

The tools which were used to work towards the objective by the researcher were each experienced as extremely challenging and useful to her thinking. The presentation of the contents of the research in the form of a conversation was an attempt to meet the challenge of addressing the topic on two levels, the *what* and the *how* of thinking, and this appears to have been successful in terms of presenting what may be familiar to the reader in an unfamiliar way. This required novel, innovative and creative thought of the author as researcher, thus challenging her to step out of a familiar framework. In the process new questions and ideas emerged and connections were created which challenged the researcher to move onto unfamiliar territory. It also proved to be very tricky since it required a leap in thinking of which, the author believes, only a beginning was made.

It was the author's experience whilst researching that it became a priority that whatever was to be produced must have the potential to "*talk with*" people and not "*at*" them. It must leave them with

a sense of having not only listened in on a conversation, but also having wanted to *join* in on it and share in it and be listened to. This is also indicative of an attempt to step out of a familiar framework. The author believes that this was illustrated and demonstrated.

The reader may be curious as to what extent the author experienced something of a paradigm shift or the creation of a new reality while she was “living” the research? In addressing this question, the author will refer to Dyer’s (1984: 3) observation:

“Almost everyone, at one time or another, wants to be a change agent - that is, he or she would like to influence someone else’s behaviour.”

The author started off researching with this idea in mind, but as the study progressed, a different idea evolved. Alice’s comment in her conversation with the Caterpillar (Carroll 1962: 65-66) can be used to illustrate her experience:

‘Who are *you*?’ said the Caterpillar.

This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied, rather shyly, ‘I - I hardly know, sir, just at present - at least I know who I *was* when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then.’

‘What do you mean by that?’ said the Caterpillar sternly. ‘Explain yourself!’

‘I can’t explain *myself*, I’m afraid, sir,’ said Alice, ‘because I’m not myself, you see.’

In retrospect, the author found that she had changed her mind! The researching became an exercise in making a paradigm shift in terms of the way thinking and understanding can be looked at. Sometimes a different rule of thought - a "both...and..." kind of perception rather than an "either...or..." perception, for example, would be put into operation, such as how to present the contents of the research in a way which could fit with the requirements for research yet communicate in a different way with the reader. The process of becoming more aware of the way the author thinks began to lead to a new reality being created for the author.

It is the author's opinion that a shift began to occur regarding how she operates in social work, such as social work research, as this conversation reveals. It was like standing with one foot in a lagoon of Positivistic research and dipping the other foot into the sea of New Paradigm research, which is an enormous challenge to one's thinking.

To summarize the experience, the author experienced the ecosystems lens to be very useful in making sense of the challenges involved in "shifting paradigms."

5.2.2 Conclusion: The challenge of using the ecosystems lens in social work in the SANDF

The second objective was formulated as follows:

To describe and illustrate the challenges involved in using the lenses of the ecosystems perspective in social work in the SANDF;

This part of the conversation was not easy for the author since it appeared to be a process of going over and over things and the small part of the conversation recorded here in no way reveals the endless mulling over ideas, and the many, many ideas that the author would have liked to include. The limited nature of the study made this difficult; it was therefore a great challenge to say much in "few words". It was not possible to present all the changes challenging the thinking of social workers in the SANDF, and the author resorted to presenting only one of the most significant changes - the integration as an example of nation-building, to illustrate a different way of thinking. The exercise of metaphoring was experienced as useful since it showed a way of generating different perspectives on issues being faced, and it provided the author with a useful background for the workshop with the group of social workers.

5.2.3 *Conclusion: Social workers sharing epistemologies through metaphor*

The third objective was constructed in the following way:

To demonstrate and illustrate what may happen in practice when a group of social workers encounter their individual and group epistemologies (world views of world views) by using metaphor;

A sense of the unfolding of the process can be experienced through reading the transcript. The author has offered her description only of the process and presented certain excerpts for the purpose of illustrating her ideas. The idea of metaphor as a vehicle for presenting epistemologies or world views of world views, which Duhl (1983) regards as a very effective technique for enabling people to learn systems concepts, appeared to unleash a spontaneous, rich, colourful, energetic and

constructive process. There was much laughter and good humour. The co-researchers appeared to meet with each other and with themselves in a way that they appeared to experience as non-threatening, relaxing and therapeutic. Perspectives in terms of the mission, vision, values, relationships, behaviour, and areas of growth of the individuals, of the group present, the social work subsystem and the organisation, seemed to be broadened to some extent. One of the ways that these issues were explored and new ideas generated, was through the evolving of a group metaphor. The co-researchers were comfortable, it seems, with challenging each other, and an attitude of curiosity which was stimulated and therapeutic processes such as universality, contributed to relationship building. The group was identified as an already existing system, the selection process making this covert.

The research could have been carried out in many different ways. The author is of the opinion that the method used by her as researcher in the workshop fitted well with the participants and herself and that it was useful in enabling a spontaneous meaningful process to evolve between people. It caught the attention of the participants, challenged them to think in verbal as well as non-verbal terms, and challenged them to use their creative and inventive powers.

In terms of the making of paradigm shifts, a beginning was made to introducing other ways of thinking to the group which could be further developed depending on the group's need and wish. The author believes that the objective has been reached in demonstrating and illustrating what happened when the group encountered ways of thinking with a difference, and that a new reality was begun to be created by the group.

5.2.4 Conclusion: Using the ecosystems lens to generate information

The author's fourth objective was the following:

To generate information by making observations, using the lenses of the ecosystems perspective, of the audio-taped workshoping of the group of social workers mentioned above;

The author transcribed the process, and then drew out what were perceived to be the main themes and connecting patterns according to ecosystems ideas, such as double and multiple description, fit and "both...and..." thinking. The photographs of the models created by the co-researchers were also used for this purpose. According to the ideas of the ecosystems perspective, the author presented her *map* of what took place with excerpts of the process as illustrations of concepts and processes. Should the transcript be analysed by others, different themes and processes will be identified, according to their world views. What the author endeavoured to present is therefore one view of what happened. There are other views.

The value of using the ecosystems perspective to examine what happened, lies in the fact that no one view is the one and only true and right view, but that different views of different observers could be compared and further information could be generated out of that process again, providing endless possibilities.

5.3 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The author intends here to address the question of what possibilities exist for using the ecosystems perspective/lens in social work practice in settings such as the SANDF.

5.3.1 *The recognition of the ecosystems perspective as a useful epistemology*

The first recommendation that the author would like to make is that the ecosystems perspective can be recognised as having the potential for being useful for several things. One aspect is the evolving of a more useful paradigm about something, or better still, a more useful epistemology, through the generation of new and fresh ideas and perspectives, the creation of new realities. The development of an awareness of the relationship between *how* one thinks and *what* one thinks, or the inclusion of the observer's observations in the observed system must be the most significant new idea. It has been this process which has enabled the author to begin to understand what we mean when we say we need to make a "*paradigm shift*". In addition, it has come to the author's attention that there are so many useful ways of thinking about thinking, so many creative and enjoyable ways, like sculpting, painting, dancing, drama and music, which may be used in applying this perspective.

5.3.2 *A conscious awareness of the values expressed by human constructions*

Recommendations can be made about the relationship between the ecosystems perspective or lens, and values. In embracing this perspective, a different concern about the values we express is likely

to develop. The importance of maintaining a conscious awareness that the values we express are dependent on our epistemologies, and that we need to take *responsibility* for the effects of this, is emphasised. Using the perspective not only brings us to the realisation of how important it is to show respect to people, but that the ways in we show respect can be experienced by others in ways vastly different to what we've intended. For example, there is a difference between an invitation and a command. And if a command needs to be given, there are also many different ways of doing so, some ways being experienced as more respectful than others. Also, the perspective challenges our belief that we can change other people, therefore impressing on us the different implications regarding our responsibility should we come to the belief that we can only trigger change.

The ecosystems perspective is not only a useful way of thinking about the approach to the people being served, but also about the way professionals, in this case social workers, think about their approach to *each other*. It is useful for looking at how to approach people with their need for dignity in mind.

5.3.3 *The application of the concept of wholeness and the technique of metaphor in social work practice and training*

Using the ecosystems ideas reminds us that talking is not the only way to explore issues. Activities such as sculpting can be used effectively for applying concepts like wholeness. Metaphor can be recommended as a useful technique for applying ecosystems concepts in social work consultation,

supervision and training. It can be a very effective way of generating ideas, especially in work sessions requiring innovative thought and creativity.

5.3.4 The use of the ecosystems perspective in building work relationships

The use of the ecosystems idea of respect for the autonomy of the individual brings home the need for treating *others* with respect. Not only is metaphor a useful technique for applying the concept of wholeness, but it is also a useful way of showing respect for a person's individuality. Since it seems to have had value in addressing this in the workshop, it could be useful in different settings, such as professional team building sessions.

5.3.5 The use of new paradigm research methods in social work

New paradigm research seems to be a way of researching which applies the concept of wholeness effectively in that it also provides a way of showing respect for all those involved in the research. The author recommends that this way of researching be used more in social work as it fits with basic social work principles and provides ways of addressing these. There is much potential for the generation of valuable and novel ideas and perspectives through further exploration of this area. Another vital element is that it provides a useful way of addressing the issue of accountability in social work research.

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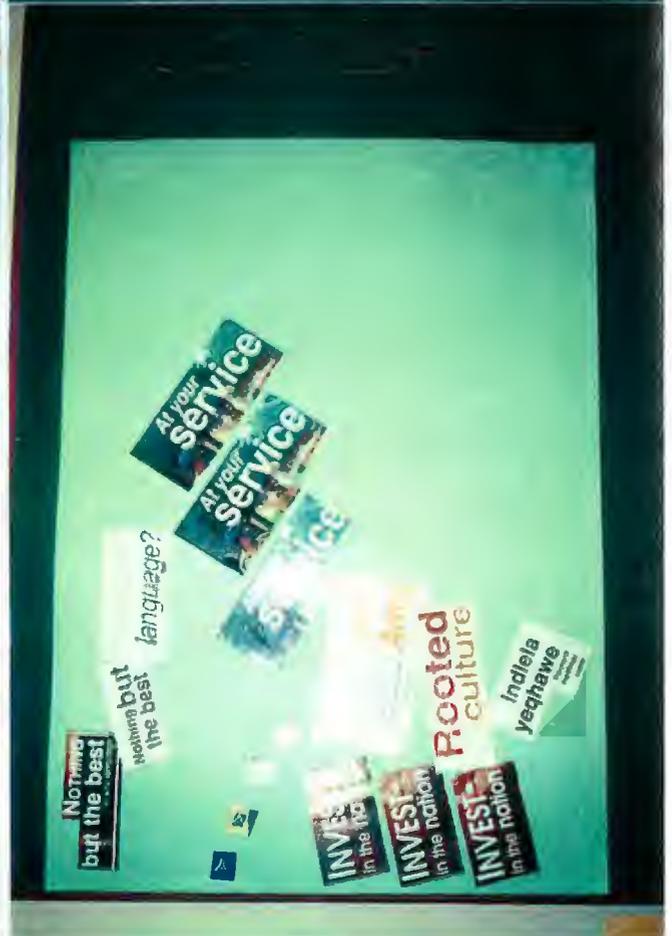
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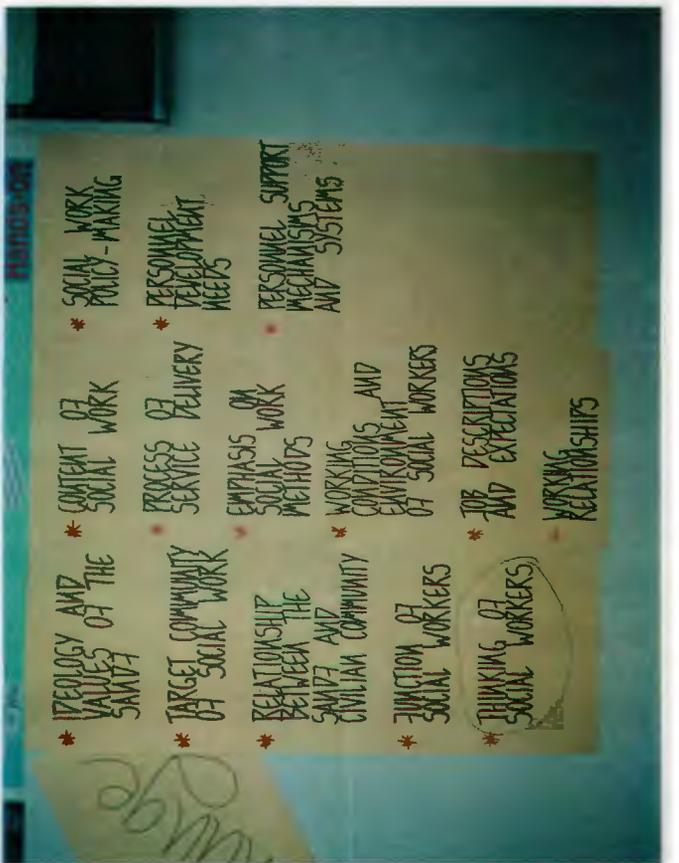
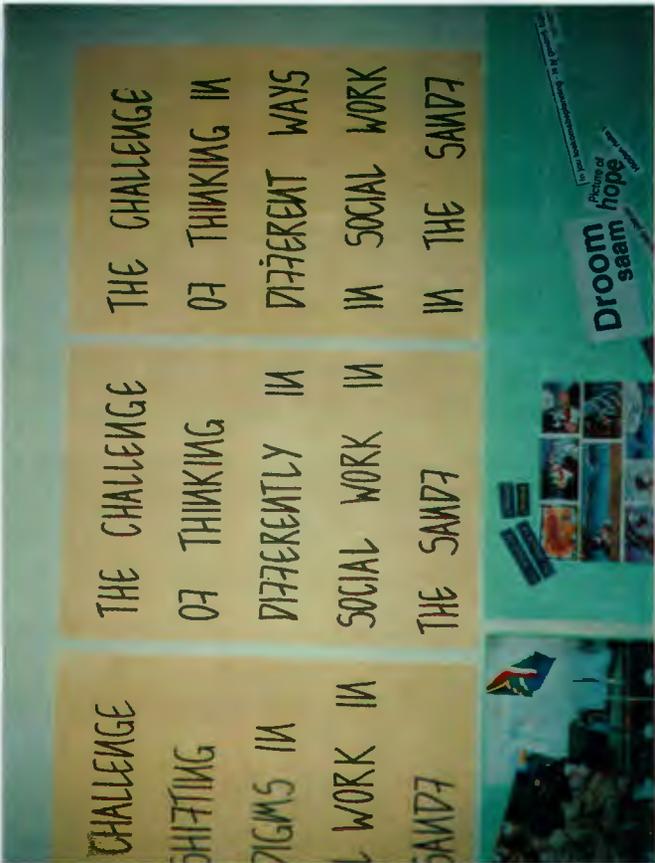
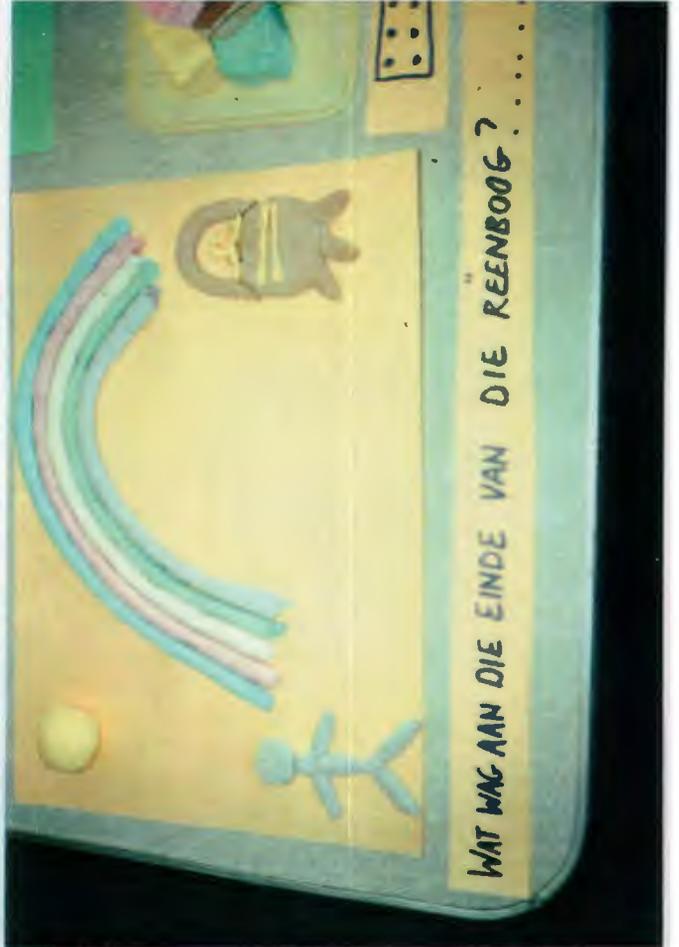
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APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHS OF ACTIVITIES USED IN THE WORKSHOP







APPENDIX 2 TRANSCRIPT OF THE WORKSHOP

The pseudonyms chosen by the group members are used in the transcript instead of their names. They are as follows: MM="Makuna Matata"; SF="Stephanie Forrester"; Z="Zeno"; G="Garfield"; K="Khanyi"; MvT="Maria von Trapp"; M="Mzwakhe"; IJ="Indiana Jones" and JLD=the researcher.

The group is in the phase of socializing and settling down. The initiating researcher (JLD) places the tape recorder in the middle of the group on the floor.

MM: *Nou moet julle nie verder praat nie. Chips!*

The group laughs.

JLD: So now everybody's quiet.

More laughter comes from the group.

JLD: Do you want to go ahead, or do you want to wait for K and IJ?

The group indicates that they want to commence.

JLD: Well, thank you for coming. It's very nice to see you. I have to admit I'm very nervous. I've never done a group with all my colleagues before. I first want to know what language you want to do this in? I've started in English, but it's up to you.

MM: You do it in English, *en dan kan ons maar Afrikaans praat.*

SF: (Says something about speaking in a Black language - the group laughs.)

JLD: Stephanie, you're going to have to help us a hang of a lot.

Z: I'll support that. Can you please translate that in English as well?

JLD: Are you all comfortable doing it in English?

The group indicates their approval of this.

JLD: Each one of you have received a contract that I've signed. Is that right? I think the best is that you keep that contract; it's your protection. As I've said, in terms of confidentiality, I'm going to just use what is said, but I'm not going to link it to your identity. The other thing is, do you mind me working from my notes? They're to help me keep on track.

The group indicates that they are satisfied with this.

JLD: I take it you've all had a look at what is on the wall.

Most of the group indicates the negative.

JLD: Do you want a bit of time to have a look at it, because that is the context of what we're going to be doing today? So if you could have a look at that.

Z: I wanted to, but I thought that might be premature. Especially the "Peanuts". I adore Peanuts!

G: Well, that I appreciate is the décor with humour.

The group studies the posters (see the photographs) and comment on these to each other, and have some laughs.

Z: Well, I can see there is a least one person who gets the "Paratus"... (Salut - the magazine of the armed forces which was previously named the Paratus.)

More comments and laughter from the group regarding the posters and during socializing. They return to their seats and settle down.

JLD: Do you find having the tape-recorder puts a bit of a damper on talking?

K and Z indicates that it is not a concern to them. The rest of the group agree.

Z: I just don't want to hear it again. It's weird to be hearing myself on the tape-recorder. That part I don't like at all.

G: You'd think I'd had pneumonia if you heard me on a tape-recorder. Like "The Nanny".

JLD: Those of you who want to listen to it afterwards, or...

MM: ...It's your problem afterwards.

The group laughs.

JLD: If any of you do, you're welcome to afterwards.

K: (Comes in to say she quickly needs to consult with a client before she joins the group).

JLD: Is it OK with you if we carry on? Because half of what you've been looking at forms the context that I've been looking at. And I'll show you specifically what I'm looking at. But another thing that I must tell you is that I don't see myself as *the* researcher or you as the informants or participants or whatever. I see us as a group of *co-researchers*, and that's the perspective I'd like us to work out of today if at all possible. As co-researchers, we're going to create something together. So we're co-researchers.

Initiating researcher uncovers the posters stating the topic and the changes identified by JLD. The group reorganise themselves to get a clearer view of the posters.

Z: This is what you call a hidden agenda.

The group laughs.

JLD: This is what I've titled my research which could have been titled anything, and there are two variations that I've thought of so far. So one of the titles is "The challenge of shifting paradigms." But you could also say "The challenge of thinking differently." or "The challenge of thinking in different ways in Social Work in the SANDF."

JLD further reveals the posters regarding the changes.

JLD: What I've also done is I've identified a whole lot of changes. So this is just my perspective; you might not share this. I've identified fourteen changes that the social workers, specifically, have experienced. As I say, this is just my perspective, what I've observed over the four years that I've been here. You're welcome to differ, you're welcome to add, you're welcome to subtract, if you want to. Do you want me to read them out loud or do you want to read them on your own?

The group indicates that they want to read them on their own, and proceed to read them.

JLD: The one we're going to focus on today, the one that I've been focusing on, is this one: thinking. That is also part of the context for the work today. Is there anything you want to change there, to add?

Z: I think it's quite a comprehensive list.

The group indicates their agreement.

JLD: I've picked up a need for relaxing, a need for fun and a need for music. I've picked up a need for something different, not the same old work session. Not the same old...

K: We want to...we want to be children.

JLD: You want to be children? What I have in store for you might fit with that need. The first thing I want you to do...as I say you're co-researchers, so you can also differ from me, you can say you don't want to do this, you want to do something else...I want you to think of - now I've got another hidden agenda - I want you to think of a character in a story, fairy tale, cartoon, poem, drama, opera, movie, musical, any character that you feel some association with or affinity with, because you're going to be wearing the name of that character in the group today. You're going to be addressed by that name.

The group sort out practical issues - much interaction with each other.

G: (Sighs).

MvT: *Wat sug jy so?*

G: I'm relaxing.

Z: She can't remember the kind of name and now she's stressing herself out.

Group show a high level of interaction characterized by much laughter. Co-researchers write down names and put them in a hat, which is then passed around again for them to choose a name.

JLD: Now, some of you might know who's chosen what name.

Much laughter from co-researchers and continued high level of interaction. Group members proceed to exchange and sort out names.

JLD: I want you to have a look at the names and then try and work out who identifies with that name and why you think they did.

G: I don't know what the name means but I think it's one of their people and I think it's Mzwakhe, but I don't know.

M: (Confirms this). It's that poet - South African poet.

G: Well I believe you chose it because you like the poems.

Z: Aren't they very sombre? His poems?

M: No, they are mostly linked to change and everything - he picks up each and everything that is happening and he makes a point. He feels as well. He feels a point at the same time. I like the message that he tries to bring. OK. It's very political. OK. It's linked to the ANC but I just like the message that he brings across.

JLD: So you're going to be him today.

M: (Indicates confirmation. The group laughs.)

JLD: So you're going to be a messenger of change?

G: And we're supposed to like the message...

M: ...that I bring. OK, I'm not as powerful as he is and he's got a garden. I think OK, I do like that.

Group: Why?

M: That's what I've wanted. That's what I like.

SF: Another part of it is that he's sexy.

M: He's a very tall guy. He will definitely dwarf me. I am tall, but, he's quite tall.

Z: I thought men are bad.

K: Why did you choose...

MM: Do you know that one?

K: ..."The Lion" ...Ja.

MM: Do you know that one?

K: Ja...I know this one.

MM: I think that the little lion went through a lot of things and there was also a promise made that he wouldn't become king at the end, that someone else will be in his place, and people feel that he will become the king at the end, but he knew that he wasn't worrying - if you don't worry at the end - it would work out for him. And I think that's what's helping me to go past the

worrying - and get on with the change. The worry will be there. Sometimes you feel that "I'm worrying now, but then I know I must get over it and do something about it and..."

JLD: Do you feel that's worrying you today?

MM: Ja, I think that we'll think about things to get to work again, 'cause there's a lot of questions at this stage, and to get the direction, get direction, in social work. Paradigms.

JLD: We've got powerful people here today.

MM: As you say that's who we wish to be.

Z: Aren't you really then the lioness queen?

MM: No.

SF: ...Khanyi...

K: OK, that's me. "Khanyi" is the suspended TV 1 and English news reader. Basically, I like her very much, I think because of the attitude that she has, you know, positive attitude, and she likes having it, and I like that. That's why I can identify with her. I think the way she has overcome many of her challenges, between her family, with her work situation. I can identify with her in a lot of ways, because she's sort of my model.

JLD: So you're out for challenge.

K: Ja...

JLD: Do you think that today you might experience some challenge?

K:Ja, especially in a lot of change. In a lot of things in terms of social work, in terms of being a woman, we should take the challenge, the challenge to change women especially in social work. Not immediately everything. Generally. Like we improve our English - if our English improves...penetrates all aspects of our lives. People get...and respect. Generally, social work is a very

good profession compared to others, I mean in terms of skills like if you're sitting, I've noticed it a number of times, if you are sitting with other professionals in terms of human relations, in terms of skills, we're far ahead of them but just that you don't get there, the credibility that we deserve. So that we could take that as a challenge.

JLD: You want the, if I could call it the image, to improve.

K: Ja, it has to because, right now...?

MM: The thinking of social workers themselves but also of the other professions, the community, towards the social workers, has to change.

Z: Yes, not only the thinking of social workers in the way that *they* think, but also the thinking of other people to think *of* social workers.

K: The image.

JLD: So that's thinking about other people's thinking.

Z: Ja.

K: And I think that if we can use that as a starting point, that can help our social workers. I would like to.

MM: But that will also change if social workers can change *their* thinking. I think mostly that is the problem - sometimes we lack to present us in a sort of a confident way, like if we've got the authority of doing this, most of the time social workers lack that.

Z: It can be very powerful to think in that circular way. Finding out what other people are thinking.

MM: Then you can rethink.

Z: I'm not sure of your name. I don't watch TV often, so the name is not familiar.

K: OK. She's Khanyi Dhlomo-Mkhize. She's Dr Dhlomo's daughter.

Z: How do you spell the name?

K: (Spells this).

Z: Oh, I see. OK.

K: It means "light".

Z: As opposed to "dark" or as opposed to "heavy"?

K: As opposed to "dark".

Z: To "dark". OK.

MM: *Ek dink ek het "Alice in Wonderland". Is dit jy? Ek het nou na almal gekyk, I think of you in that way, and tiny and strong, you're can be very ladylike and I think that you can also be a fighter for what you want. You're not afraid to say what you want to say but you can also...*

M: Are you "Alice in Wonderland"?

Z: "Alice in Wonderland" was one of the most rewarding books I've ever read, because of the character Alice, and when my brother told me that "Alice in Wonderland" is actually a physics book, and Lewis Carroll was a physics professor who wrote the book to enlighten his students on certain ideas, I understood it even more. Because of the change agent that Alice actually was, and I can see you in that role, as a change agent, especially in the way that people think.

JLD: Well, she's my model...

Z: Who was the Queen of Hearts for you?

JLD: I haven't thought that far.

MvT: Interestingly, when I saw this, I saw fairy tale and I wanted to write "Alice in Wonderland".

Group laughs.

MM: *Ek moet sê, jy was die tweede een aan wie ek gedink het.*

JLD: I can see you in that role.

MvT: I think I've got G's. Garfield. Garfield's a lot of fun, a lot of humour, and observer, makes a statement no matter how, eats...

Group laughs.

MvT: That's for compensation. Not being able to express everything. You have to take in and swallow it. That might be it.

G: (Makes a comment)

MvT: Ja, relaxed and casual and ...but I won't say catty.

G: No, I'm not a cat.

MvT: No. That's the second thing that I thought the cat bit, not catty. One of those...

G: Warm and lovable.

MvT: Those that you want to sleep on your feet or to cuddle up next to you.

Z: It's a specific kind of cat, because Persians are snobbish and Siamese are catty, and, but...

G: And actually I hate cats. That's the funny thing.

Z: I think you're a lasagna cat.

JLD: Who is Obie?

Z: Odie?

G: Odie.

Z: Odie's the dog.

JLD: I wonder who he is?

G: John you're thinking of?

JLD and Z: No, Odie.

G: I haven't thought about it.

Z: You see, I don't think Garfield thinks about other people.

Much laughter from the group.

Z: I don't mean it like that, but...

MvT: I meant selfish but not *that* much.

Z: I didn't mean it like that.

G: I haven't thought about John like Garfield has.

MvT: Lasagna is all Garfield thinks about.

G: Ja. People I don't like, is Odie.

Z: I also know why you chose Garfield or why I think so, because I'm always looking for you on Mondays for emotional support, and you're never at work on Mondays - just like Garfield. Garfield's never in on Mondays. He starts on Tuesday.

M: Maria.

JLD: Why do you think she chose that one?

M: I really don't know, but I, what I can say I once acted that part, that's why I could easily...I just knew it have been you.

MvT: Why?

M: OK. If I look at Maria, from the beginning she was very rebellious. I'm failing to link her with you! I fail to recall situations where you are very rebellious or...it's so difficult. I've known you for years but I don't know how I can link you to this...

MvT: Perhaps she's also in a dream world of her own.

M: She was, ja.

MvT: She's got other ideas apart from the ordinary, and also made things happen and function and, you know...

M: Makes...because it's from the time when she moved in into that house and there were so many restrictions that she started changing the rules from the way they did most of the work there, she did her own thing. I cannot link you with that character really. But every time I go and see you've got no-one, I know we rely on you and, I've thought that it's easy for me if I've got a problem that I'll phone and say, I want to speak to MvT.

Z: (Agrees).

M: I've never really seen you as someone who'd go astray or...

Z: A characteristic I can clearly see there, for myself, is, Maria is involved in this relationship with this very pompous person, and, but gets all the wind out of his sails by this very gut-feeling kind of world-like truthfulness. I mean, she can break through that pompous, theoretical nonsense, with just one true-to-life answer. And I can see MvT in that - there is definitely Maria in that.

M: And I see her as this classic person, sort of a ...

MvT: I've thought of Maria von Trapp as a free spirit. Not being limited by the rules and regulations of the Von Trapp household. She moved in there and yet she wasn't tied by anything - she still had her own thoughts and feelings of how it could work and somehow she established that with the family - it was possible for her to make a paradigm shift. And also the paradigm shift from - *wat is "klooster"* - from the order, from the order, the convent, and all those very limited, she challenged. She was in there and yet she rebelled against it.

G: But she was actually then also an agent of change, like Alice, and...

Group indicates agreement.

JLD: She was also a mother of many children that weren't biologically hers, but I can see growing understanding and seeing that she adopted a whole lot of children and that, I can see you in that role in our department.

Z: Ja, that's...sort of buffer between the late annual report...

Group laughs.

MvT: ...because my annual report hasn't been started yet.

Group laughs, and comments.

MvT: But at first, the very first moment when I read through those, after Alice, I saw one picture with Maria von Trapp on the hills - (sings) "The hills are alive with the sound of music..." and that's my dream. Get away and to fill the world with the music but that's also...

JLD: Very broadly minded. I've got "Zeno"?

Group laughs.

Z: "Zeno" is me. Who knows him?

JLD: I don't know him?

G: Trust Z!

Group laughs.

Z: "Zeno of Brugge" was a figure of the twelfth century. Can I give some history, background? Zeno was a friend of the De Medici family who ruled France for a very long time in the 1200's. And, I don't know if you saw the movie of Queen Margot? She was Margot de Medici and at that time the ruler of that time in France. And Zeno was actually a friend of this very powerful merchant family and they were actually in combat for whosoever going to be king between the Medici's and this brutal family. But Zeno didn't want to have anything to do with the monarchy and being the ruler and things like that. I've been reading this book called "Zeno of Brugge" written by Marguerite Yourcenaar, who's a French girl, and, there was a very particular paragraph in it that struck me that I could identify with. Sorry, M. It is about where one of the Medici met cousins of him and he's walking on a road and it splits in two, and he turns the one way and his cousin turns the other way, and he says "But why don't you come with me. We can meet interesting people on this road." And he says "No, I can't. I'm supposed to meet a very important person on *this* particular road." He says "But who is this person?" He says "Well, I'm meeting myself on this road. And you are actually taking this road as a life experience." And that struck me as quite a significant thing; to say that he's meeting himself. And that is where I'm at, in terms of change. I've been feeling that I'm making that decision. I've begun meeting important people in terms of the system or I'm meeting myself.

JLD: So meeting yourself is more important than meeting important people.

Z: Yes.

JLD: It also sounds like his thinking is quite different.

Z: Yes, he was a bit of a radical. He was expected to perform these duties as part of the elite of France. And he didn't. He died a lonely philosopher. But, he was extremely radical. And I think, if one looks at the history of that, the Medici family caused a lot of trauma, a lot of unhappiness in a country that started the persecution of the Protestants. I identify with him.

JLD: You're taking the narrow road in a sense.

Z: Ja. The road not taken. It links very nicely with that poem "The road not taken". I've always had a strong...with that.

G: Or the choice he had to make, I immediately thought about that.

Z: So, that's Zeno. I've got "Stephanie", and I think that's you..."Stephanie Forrester".

The group express surprise at this.

Z: ...interesting...

G: I've never seen SF as such a bitch!

Much laughter from the group.

M: You don't know her!

K: (Comments)

Z: I can't tell you the relationship doesn't jump into my head as an obvious one. I determined this by elimination. I would very much like to hear from you why you chose "Stephanie Forrester".

SF: Maybe the other people interpret Stephanie Forrester differently. I see Stephanie as somebody who is trying to keep peace and stability within the Forrester family and trying to please and keep everybody happy at all times, although she might end up being the sufferer emotionally.

M: She's going out of her way to see that the Forrester family remains intact, normally if there are any intruders she makes sure they stay at bay... and I think SF is like that.

The group laughs.

MvT: Like with her family?

M: Not her family but there are times when I find it difficult to approach her and she can come to a meeting she's got that face of "Don't even try!"

K: She doesn't say much.

M: She doesn't say much but she keeps that. Stephanie goes out and challenges. With you, it's people have to keep at bay. It's just that you have to keep your distance.

MM: SF also gives you what she wants to give you. She keeps a lot back.

Z: But why did *you* choose Stephanie? I mean I see you don't agree with that power plea.

SF: No, I don't agree with whatever she's saying. That's why I say it's a different interpretation.

G: No, I mean that's the thing - how she sees Stephanie is very different.

Z: I can see Stephanie as like a mother lioness, looking after her cubs and protecting them. I mean, Rich Forrester is worse than his mother, but she's prepared to look after him.

G: She made him what he is. This woman...I can't believe that you really mess up people's lives. That's one woman I don't really like.

Group laughs.

MvT: That's now again selfish Garfield.

G: She's really...

Z: Like Garfield.

MM: There's a truth now - one can interpret situations differently. The way SF interprets - we're know what she's thinking.

MvT: We read people differently.

JLD: Well it seems to me that SF's choice has done something to the people in this room.

Group laughs.

MvT: I have a friend and I used to work with her and a senior in our department one day said to me "I can't understand how you can be friends with her because she's so and so and so and so". She experienced it totally different from what I did. We were just about to bake our annual Christmas Season biscuits one Saturday together when this person said "How on earth can you manage to be friends away from work set-up?" So obviously, we had a totally different experience. So, although Stephanie is not acceptable to Garfield, she might be acceptable to others.

G: It's your perception... I'll respect that, SF. Ja, what I was going to say about Garfield was that I often get the message that I can be very untactful in a nice way and I've been receiving that message lately and that's another thing that Garfield can do, poor child, he can never win in situations.

Z: Ja. In that sense I'm Garfield as well but it seems that I'm just not tactful.

G: (Comments)

MvT: (Comments)

Z: I crawl my way around.

JLD: If you can write your names that you chose...

The group interacts, laughing and commenting, writing names on labels and wearing them.

JLD: Do you want to have a short break before we carry on?

M: No, we're relaxed.

Others also indicate that the workshop should continue. The group interaction continues.

JLD: One thing I'm very curious about is that I extended an invitation to each one of you to be part of the group and you all accepted. And I'm very curious about what you were expecting what's going to happen and what you were hoping to see happen. And I was wondering if we could do this in a different way. I need a volunteer who doesn't mind acting like a piece of clay.

Garfield responds.

JLD: Will you act like a piece of clay?

G: Will you mould me?

Group laughs and comments.

MvT: She's going to press you against the wall like Prestick.

JLD: I just need to illustrate to you *an* idea so that you can get the idea of what I'm trying to convey to you. I want each one to think of a way of portraying your expectations, your reason for being here, and what you want to see happen. You can use one or more members of the group. You can use the whole group if you want to. But I want you to sculpt whatever your expectations are, what you hope to see happening, using the people in the group. Garfield, I want you to stand up here, and I want you to open your legs like that and keep your arms like that, and keep your face just like that, and jump up and down.

Garfield responds and the group laughs.

JLD: OK, what do you think I'm trying to portray - one of my expectations?

Group: Reaching out.

JLD: Also having fun.

Z: You can achieve a lot with Garfield.

MM: You grab things... You still don't know what you really want to grab, but you're wanting to grab things.

JLD: So this is an idea that I want you to use.

MM: I think my creativity is going to be *challenged* today.

G: (Involves the group members in standing in a circle with Zeno crouching down in the middle; the group members extend their hands over Zeno's head and he jumps up through the hands.)

K: A big surprise.

MvT: Ja. I can also identify with *that* one.

MM: Get out of the narrowness.

K: Waking up to what we're going to achieve. Like therapy.

G: ...the surprise in mine. I like surprises. I never asked Alice (JLD) what was going to happen here, 'cause thought I'll just come and see.

MM: And my motivation - I'd like to do something for Alice (JLD)...

G: I'd actually like to do her a favour...

Z: I can really agree with that as well. I think what's achieved something for me, JLD, or Alice, by not saying anything is that *always* triggers me. When I don't know anything, I *must* know it. And I don't need a lot of structure and rigidness and I want to explore new things and do

new things, so when you didn't say I *had* to come - that's the *best* trick in the book to get me somewhere. To keep something from me.

MM: I'll keep that in mind.

G: That's for me what I keep trying to explain - it must be a group effort as well.

MM: Also, the thing of something different, something else.

JLD: So you expected that there's difference.

G: I actually hoped for it

MM: Ja. This was the only day in this month that I had - well, I was looking forward to it. Wondering what's going to happen.

G: A bit of garlic, ag garlic! What's that drawing up there about the garlic, garlic, garlic...

Z: It's not your paradigm.

G: A bit of Garfield selfishness - I've been thinking if I've got something to do with my thesis, I'll have to rely on people as well and that's another thing that made me come.

The eighth co-researcher, who had been required to be at a previous appointment, enters the room.

Z: What also triggered my curiosity was a group - it's a long time since I've been in a closed small group situation and I like group work, I like doing group work and being involved in it. So, you caught me with that as well when you said group.

MvT: I'm taking notes.

Z: Don't misuse it. I might get...

G: Zeno and I will change.

IR: You can also do that.

G: I think he feels like being Garfield.

MvT: OK. I'm going to illustrate what I think.

Z: Can I just say something at this point which is quite upsetting for me, is that we don't know IJ and I'm sure IJ doesn't know where we are.

JLD: I'm glad you brought that up.

Z: So, I'd like to involve him.

JLD: How would you like to involve him?

Z: Well, I'd like to tell IJ what we've done so far because I think he wonders why we've got funny names and...

IJ: Very interesting.

G: Can't we have IJ tell us why he thinks we have these names?

JLD: You're putting IJ in the hot seat now!

IJ: MvT, you felt like Maria or something. And JLD, you're Alice in Wonderland or something - you identify with that character. Zeno, that's some kind of coffee, but...

Much laughter and comments from the group.

G: None of us knew who Zeno was! Keep trying.

IJ: Garfield, your husband's pet cat or...

Much laughter again from the group.

Z: We know who's John now!

G: Trust IJ to bring the difference in here. That's a version we haven't had.

IJ: OK, so was the idea to write...and for the duration of the group you would actually stick to that name? You want to call each other on that name. Not Z, but Zeno?

K: Would you like to choose a name?

G: We need an explanation.

Z: IJ just came from ... So I don't know how we're going to get him to relax.

IJ: It's actually very relaxing because I know of a few people who's going to get things for work.

MvT: *...die gedagte vinnig laat verbygaan.*

IJ shares briefly about the happenings during his previous appointment. IJ decides on the name "Indiana Jones".

IR: What makes you see Indiana Jones as living on the edge?

G: ...'cause I see him clinging to that bridge.

Z: Ja, Indiana Jones' quite adventurous.

G and MvT and Z: (Make comments)

Z: And "Camel" man. He's very practical. He can do things that social workers can't do like fixing cars.

MvT: *Hy kon selfs 'n bottel "Oros" in lug aftrek.*

MM: Why did you choose it? *Hoekom het jy dit gekies?*

IJ: I wouldn't say I like the image, but it is descriptive of me. I like working with my hands and all that kind of thing and adventure. Basically not...

Z: Mr and Mrs Indiana Jones.

Group laughs.

JLD: Zeno, you want to help Indiana Jones relax, it sounds like.

Z: Indiana Jones is doing a lot better already. It's up to his own devices now. If he wants to relax more, we can organize it.

IJ: I think I'm a bit relaxed now. And any case, luckily for me I was not the only one at ... so that's...

IJ talks some more about work issues.

JLD: (Responds to him).

The group laughs.

Z: You see, the good power strategy is always the eye one, but you can't reach quite there...

IJ: At least, I was there to answer the questions, but I was not there to do the job. The other people are going to do the job.

IJ: Can I tell them...(asks the group permission to tell them and proceeds to tell the group of the assignment)

IR: Do you want to inform Indiana Jones of anything else or...before we carry on?

G: I think we just need to tell Indiana Jones that thing. Alice (JLD) has the agenda for the day and that all behind you's mostly looking at change and thinking in social work.

MM: And also thinking of other people about social work - image of social workers. Thinking how other people are thinking about social work. And we're doing now our expectations of the day.

Z: We're actually sculpting, and Garfield already did hers and Alice (JLD) also, and I wasn't a lot in the rear.

G: And Maria from "The sound of music"...

MM: But also the other people saw her as Maria. The mother.

G: Why did you chose the "Lion King"?

MM: "Makuna Matata". *Dis die liedjie se naam, in elk geval.*

G: No, I'll just call you the "Lion", the "Lion King".

MM: *...hy kan the "Lion King" ook wees.*

Z: Well, that's the cat boss, you better give stick.

Z: It's not really a cat. It's a cat-dog.

MvT: OK, I was just going to do my little sculpting, very primitive.

MvT hands JLD something and JLD responds by accepting it.

MvT: I handed her something.

MM: The give and take. You're going to have to give and you're going to get something out of it.

MvT: And sharing.

Lots of laughter in group.

Z: What impressed me is the silent negotiation of the process out of it. She didn't say anything and still it worked.

MvT: Ja, but somehow, we have this effect on each other. We start with a clue, Alice (JLD) and I, and generate a lot of ideas from that, without, you know, I can still be busy talking and she will already have another idea following on that and she will share with me and as she's talking, another one is generated here, and we do a lot of work like that. We can share a lot and understand what we are sharing. We actually stimulate each other by...and sharing.

Z: I'd like to do something. Stephanie, stand here, Khanyi, can you please stand here, Alice (JLD) and Garfield. OK, can you turn around facing the other way. Hold each other's hands. Then, Maria (von Trapp), can you please stand there, Indiana, you there, Mzwakhe, please here, Makuna Matata, there. And you also, the outer circle hold hands. No, not turn around - like that - OK, can you turn around this way - and you please turn around the other way. That is it.

The group carries this out with some laughter.

MvT: Does that refer to getting confused today?

Z: I don't know. Getting dizzy.

G: The word "co-evolving" came up in my head. Something's happening between us.

MvT: But perhaps also moving in different directions. Thinking in different directions - one in this way, one the other way around.

Z: If I can say the reason why I didn't partake is because I wanted to see what it looks like. For me the real effect was the important part. Also, the facing of each other, but to see it visually creates a lot of energy from that although there are systems moving in different directions, and for me, social workers always want to move in the same direction - it seems that, we are very, its important for us that we want to take the boat along in one way and sometimes that's the way of the least resistance and visually for me this created a difference in direction, it created a resistance but visually, it was pleasing - for me it worked. And that's what I would like to get

out of this as well, not the same direction, but also different directions, different ways of thinking.

JLD: (To two of the co-researchers) Won't you please both swop spectacles because I saw something as well.

The two group members exchange their spectacles and comment on how it is to see through these. Accompanied by much laughter in the group.

JLD: I saw that as your sculpting. There was almost like a taking out your eyes and you standing back and looking at these.

Z: I think it links with my Zeno character who wants to explore something else - a different direction and there're two options - one's this way - one the other way.

M: What actually motivated me to come. I think it was because I wanted to do research - and it's frustrating just to get people just to respond to your, to your questionnaires - when you said you are doing research and you wanted help from us, I wouldn't want what happened to me - it becomes so frustrating, that time. I knew it would be frustrating for you as well if we said we cannot help because we'd like to get this thing done - I wanted to help you to achieve your goal, because I once had problems with mine and I would expect the same if I...

MM: And it *miskien* that very...

M: ...relates to us...

MvT: It's relevant.

G: Very relevant.

MM: (Comments)

JLD: So for you, you wanted to be part of something that touches you.

MM: I relate with it. I must believe in what I'm doing. I can't do anything that I don't believe in. So in the first place, it was because of you, but then I wouldn't know if it was something I couldn't relate to.

JLD: And for you (M), it's almost like I heard some empathy - it's almost like you put yourself in my shoes.

M: And anyway, I've worked with you previously, I've had some previous encounters with you and I've...

SF: ...social work. I thought maybe this is going to be something dynamic for us social workers because it will be moving in a direction and we don't know whether we're going like west - or south. Maybe after this, we will have direction for to share with our colleagues, or come up with a programme or with something. And the other thing is that when you said we should wear jeans and be casual, I was just asking myself what was going to happen. And when I saw Maria von Trapp, I said "Help, today I am not feeling well and today we are probably going to play like hell."

JLD: So for you it's almost going to be like a signpost?

SF: ...get direction, maybe come up with a statement for social workers if possible, whether are we going...or are we stationery. Because I think most of us are thinking we don't know our future. Whether do we, are we still going to be recognized as professionals in the long run, more especially now that emphasis is on community development and when you enquire, they tell you that community development doesn't need a social worker...And some more problems is involved at our level of community.

K: It makes me think of...social work is recognized...better trained...

SF: They don't have to have a professional...

MM: They're community workers now. Medical doctors...

K: (Comments)

MvT: Very productive.

MM: They're much more cost effective because they're trained very well...

JLD: So you've got great expectations.

SF: I don't whether it's emotional. Seems this maybe interpreted the paradigm shift in social work, like maybe I thought it's just a work group for the day and we will end up there.

K: Maybe to add on what I have to say, no, I can't sculpt...Garfield's exercise I mean I could identify with, 'cause I think, also ties up with the time since I came to the command, you were helping me, I realized, at some stage as though I really wasn't...

G: (Comments)

K: ...ja, so coming here is number one part of ...and I like, like I said also to learn from other people how do you think as well as... Alice (JLD) is a very kind person, so it was part of...I mean I haven't known you long, but your personality and your ...of me as well, so part of my coming here was also to help you as well as learning how people do think differently, 'cause I like learning from other people.

JLD: So you're here for sharing.

K: Ja, the sharing. But meeting...being in a group, you know, maybe I could also try link up with Zeno there, like, also like discussing issues, you know and looking at things from different perspectives.

Z: If I can link to that and, maybe get a bit more technical, I was impressed by your courage to select from the larger group, and I know there are probably very theoretical reasons for that as well, with your own agendas which I'm not going to go into now, but, I think in terms of systems, to select from a system and to establish a new one, can create second order change although it can change a lot of things. And I was interested to...it can change a lot of things...

One of the co-researcher's pager beeped and the group was temporarily distracted.

Z: So, I think that for me was something interesting as well. To have the courage to select. I think, and if I can bring that back to my sculpting, it's a courageous friction kind of thing to do, to select a couple of people from the group, and I like that.

G: I actually wondered about that a lot. Why am I in? Who is in? Or who's out? and all that.

JLD: I would've been surprised if you hadn't have wondered about it.

The group members request the JLD to indicate how selection took place.

JLD: Maybe the group can think about it, what...but you also, I have to add, selected yourselves, because it was just an invitation. You could have said you don't want to or you're not interested. So you actually selected yourselves as well.

Z: But it is a structural selection, isn't it? I mean a certain individual could decide.

MM: But it's very interesting that the people here can connect with each other...some people...

G: ...would have had some problem.

MM: I don't know but I think that...

G: I think what Zeno said about almost creating a new system, I can believe that 'cause we always have a connection. Now. I think so. And then, it just seems to me that everyone here has some kind of positive connection with you (JLD).

Z: I would like to...

G: Because that's what I've picked up among a lot of people...sorry Zeno.

Z: I'd like to throw a stone...

G: Throw it!

Z: ...into the conversation and say that this system was selected before. You just made it obvious.

MvT: Probably, yes, I could identify with that. I think it was sort of the normal process that connected the group. You just made it known.

IJ: ...Can I use your sculpture?

Z: Yes.

JLD: Do you want to sculpt?

IJ: No, no, no, I'm just going to use exactly the same one. You can also look at it from an in-group out-group situation. In-group, I see it as you maybe didn't pick a group, you picked a lot of individuals and people that differ in very big respects. I mean, Zeno, will tell you how much we differ, and how when you get into motion and you, your motion is social work, you can actually become an in-group with the outside group - the individuals in the inside when you do your social work when you become involved you get into a group from the outside...

MvT: Ja, I think it's true. She did select individuals but somehow without *any* words being said, the individuals link.

G: In their diversity, almost.

MvT: Ja, in their diversity.

G: I would see diversity as *the* link. That's how *I* see it.

Z: Ja, I would have liked to sculpt something that is also an expectation of me, but I can't because I don't have the resource. But I would have used that rope thing that you find in the show - the show-ground, that pushes you because of the velocity when you turn around - if you put a lot of people together in a container like that, and you see the moving of it as social work, the social work process, people can differ but as soon as social work starts happening, they move around, they form one circle on the outside. Everyone moves out to the same place and forms a very definite kind of system and when it stops they fall back into diversity, but the process, I think it's an important thing.

JLD: What I'm hearing now is (writing on the blackboard) at this stage, the connection is difference.

MvT: Ja.

MM: But, I think also respect for difference. We disagree on aspects, perceptions...

G: *Weet jy wat, ek wil amper sê, that some part it's diversity, some part it's connections through, wat wil ek sê, weet sameness al, ek dink party het dieselfde goed, en ander weer die verskille.*

MvT: But I think that is what makes this a unique group. We *are* individuals. We *do* have the diversal factor. We do have differences and differences and the other word that we've jotted down there, each has got a different meaning. Some have got the same meaning too - they can be synonyms and antonyms. And yet, there is a *link* between them.

G: Ja.

Z: Being OK with differences.

MvT: Being OK with each others' differences, with each others' individuality, we are OK with each other.

G: But that's where I see some of the connections.

JLD: You also said something about *fit* - that you fit together because you're OK with differences.

Z: There is an interconnectedness.

JLD: How's that? (Indicates on blackboard) You also were talking about, well, the views that came out, you were talking about different levels on which selection can take place. The individuals, or the group, or individuals and group?

MvT: Perhaps, we're not always aware of the fact that, I mean we're, how many, 23 social workers, and we do, we're deliberately put into different groups, different now to our small groups - *that* small group - *that* small group. But that does not really mean you're, for specific persons,

you're part of that group, but that does not necessarily mean you're in that group or that you're *really* part of that group because you're part in terms of other ways of thinking, in terms of other concepts that you have in common with other people. I think that is where the *fit* comes in.

Z: Structural criteria.

MvT: The structural criteria, not necessarily because you're in that group and you're in that group. And it can be a totally subconscious fit where you're not aware of the fact that "I fit" or you don't necessarily make a decision "I want to fit into this group". It happens that you fit or you don't fit.

Z: What's for me very weird is that I 've been thinking lately on a practical level that if I have to start making telephone calls, the chances that it will actually go out of this group, take out SO1 (Staff Officer 1), is very small. If I start phoning around, it will probably be someone in this group, in my work.

MvT: Ja, if you have to consult with somebody or share with somebody. This is what I'm talking about. It's subconscious things, its not deliberate, but it just *so* happens. Almost a natural selection.

JLD: Well, what was for me amazing is that, the first eight people that I chose to be you and all came and you all showed interest in this, because it very often happens you choose a group and then you might choose a back-up. You might choose say sixteen and then you think "If I can get eight out of these sixteen, then it's OK". But you were the first eight, and you're all here!

Z: What is interesting, is that we didn't know who was the others you selected.

MvT: That was the surprize that day when we met in there - I said to...I'm excited by it.

G: Now I wonder. If we actually had to choose the group we would have chosen a lot of the same people that, if I think about myself choosing a group, I think a lot of you would've been there.

MvT: I think so too. If I had to choose a group, it would probably be exactly the same group of people.

Z: As I say, it looks like my telephone list. Except for Indiana who never answers his telephone.

G: I even have managed.

Z: And as for Stephanie who's...phone. Every time I want to phone you, I have to phone...!

MM: (Comments)

G: Ja, Zeno gets *me* to phone *him* to tell *him* where *I* am.

Z: I'll just have to leave you with a number.

JLD: OK, I think we can break for lunch and we're going to carry on with the next session. Are you happy with that?

The group indicates their approval.

The group takes a lunch break.

JLD: One of the needs I heard, was the need to be like children. So I think I've got the thing for you. I've got play dough. So, I want to ask you to each take...I've cut it into segments or I've marked it...each to take a segment of each colour.

IJ: Can we eat that?

JLD: I'm sure you can try but I don't know if...

IJ: Oh, OK.

MvT: *Dis meel en sout.*

Z: The colours are pretty.

JLD: My children had great fun helping me with this. I don't know what you want to work on. I've got paper plates, I've got ice-cream-lids and I've got cardboard for the model that you're building.

MM: Ahh, Alice (JLD), I think I'm going to discharge myself from the group.

JLD: What do you think will work better? The plates...

High level of group interaction involving all the co-researchers.

Z: We need aprons on.

MvT: *Moet ons nou elk een...ons moet seker net dit vat wat ons wil gebruik?*

JLD: No, you can take one of each colour.

MM: And you integrate it?

Z: This one looks like a chocolate log.

Each co-researcher takes pieces of play dough in different colours (pink, blue, green, yellow, white, brown and purple). There is a very high level of interaction, with the co-researchers commenting on the activity and materials and helping one another.

MM: What do we have to make?

JLD: I want you to pick any colour you want to. Choose a colour and to roll that into a ball.

More group interaction takes place.

JLD: OK, now you can start creating anything you want to. It doesn't matter how big it is, how small it is, what colours you want, if it's one colour - anything. It's up to you.

Z: Why did we roll the ball?

JLD: That's, that ball has got to fit in somewhere. The ball can be your starting point, or it can be integrated.

MM: *Dit lyk ...nou sense maak.*

Z: It's got to keep this shape - this spherical shape?

JLD: Ja, if you decide later you want another colour to rather be the ball, you can also swop.

MM: But there must be a ball. And, anything in mind?

G: We can do anything.

Z: Must it stay in one...it must be this big? Or can it become small "ballies"?

Much laughter from the group.

MM: *Maar nou moet ons al die kleure gebruik? Ons moet nou al die kleure gebruik? Julle moet nou al die kleure gebruik, né.*

G: Can it become a flat ball?

JLD: OK, if you want to make it flat, or you want to make it "ballies", you can do that.

Group sets to work.

MM: I think it must be nice to be your children, Alice (JLD).

JLD: My children can't wait 'till I get home. They want to play with this.

MM: I thought so!

JLD: But I said to them, well it depends what it looks like when it comes back.

MvT: JLD, must it only be **one** object that you make?

JLD: No. It can be several if you want to, it doesn't have to be one. It depends on **you**.

MvT: *Wat sit mens op jou statistiek? Bollas rol?*

Much laughter from the group.

JLD: Research!

MM: *Werkgroep.*

G: ...wonder what the Colonel will think if it's such a lot of research...

MM: *Ek het nie 'n bruin nie! Is daar nog 'n bruin...*

G: *Daar is nie 'n bruin nie.*

MvT: *Jy kan maar my bruin kry.*

MM: *Dankie.*

Z: *Ja. Los net myne!*

MM: *Ja. Dis weer net Garfield daai. Garfield in julle wat na vore kom.*

More comments from the group.

MM: *Ek het bruin. (Laughs)*

The rest of the group laugh.

MvT: *Waar't jy dit nou opgespoor?*

MM: *...My brein weet nie. Jy sien, dis my brein wat hier gelê het.*

Z: *Brein of bruin?*

MM: *My brein. My brein het my bruin weggevat!*

Z: OK.

MvT: *Dit lyk soos daai soort broodjies. Almal ronde...*

Z: *Ek maak nou maar soos ek maak met my rekenaars ontwikkelings...*

More commentary from the group.

MM: *Maar dit wat ons nou doen het nie nodig om te doen met wat ons doen nie?*

G: *Nee.*

MvT: *Jy sal mos nou nie...*

MM: *Want ek hoef nie...*

G: *Ek wil nie eintlik weet wat ek doen nie!*

MM: *Nee, ek weet. Maar ek doen dit nie van 'n vakkundige oogpunt nie.*

G: *Nee, hoorie, ek het ook geen vakkundige intensies nie.*

More commentary emerges from the group.

MvT: *Ek wil net vir julle vertel na daai dag wat ons hierbuite so rondgehardloop en gesing en speletjies gespeel het, en tekere gegaan het (referring to a workshop on creativity and use of games for the whole group of social workers in the command, presented earlier on), het ons 'n versoek van die verpleegkundiges gekry om dieselfde met hulle te doen. En toe, verlede week,*

voor verlede week, ons so 'n speletjies dag - so "revert-back-to-your-child" met die verpleegsters en al die susters gehad.

Group: (Comments)

MvT: *Weet jy, met 'n eenvoudige ding soos daai wat ons die balle gooi en (giggles), weet jy, jy kon nie iemand uitvang nie. Ek het alles geïnterpreteer vir hulle. Ons is so kunsmatig dat jy kan absoluut jou emosies "Tjoeps!" afskakel, jy kan jou smile aanvat and afskakel. Jy's nou vriendelik met pasiënte, skakel jy net so af want hulle kom net nie los nie. Eers toe ons begin simpel goed speel soos "vrot eier" en daai, hulle bietjie rondhardloop en so, het hulle bietjie ontspan.*

Z: How can you cheat us by not supplying the primary colour red?

JLD: The pink was supposed to be red, but it came out pink.

Z: Alright, you'll miss primary red. Then you'll just have to imagine the purple...

JLD: Pretend it's red.

Z: Oh, OK. Still the wrong colour.

MvT: (To Zeno) *Wat is jy so difficult?*

The group's commentary continues.

JLD: I thought while I was driving here that I want to ask your permission to photograph - I wanted to actually photograph you but then I decided that won't work with confidentiality. I haven't got my camera here, but I want to bring it tomorrow if it's OK with you.

MM: *Wat van tomorrow?*

Group laughs at the member's confusion and further commentary continues.

G: *Ek en Zeno, ek en Indiana Jones probeer kyk wie kan die meeste vormpies maak.*

JLD: *Julle is 'n kreatiewe klomp.*

The group share experiences and thoughts both humorous and touching in which the following themes are evident: creativity, sculpting, difference, difference in meaning between people eg. what dignity means to different people.

JLD: When you've made your model, please give it a title.

The co-researchers show curiosity and comment on each others' creations. They think a lot and write titles for their creations.

JLD: Ja, if you want to give it more than one title, you can also do that.

Z: How much time do we have for this? Can I restart?

JLD: Well, I promised you all that we'd try and end by 15:00. But if you want to carry on longer then it's fine with me.

More commentary and laughter evolves in the group. The members continue their endeavour to understand the creations of other group members with curiosity.

JLD: What would you like to do now?

G: I'd like to know what everyone's sculpting is about.

MM: I'd like to sit. I can't stand.

The co-researchers draw up chairs around the table and sit so that they can discuss the creations.

MvT: *Persepsies.*

JLD: Does the rest of the group also want to know what each one's is about?

Group indicates agreement.

JLD: Maybe then if the group could then sort of wonder aloud what each one's is about and then the person who's made it could explain it.

Group show curiosity regarding Zeno's creation ("Paradise reframed").

MvT: *Iet's word verlei daar.*

Z: Why is *mine* so important?

MvT: *Wat staan... "Paradise".*

Z: "Reframe".

MvT: *Ja, nee, kyk so in die plek van appel is dit nou lekkergoed.*

G: *Die slang grinnik.*

Z: *Beledig jy my slang? It changes, you know.*

Humorous comments are made by the co-researchers and there is a lot of laughter.

Z: *Dit is 'n nuwe Suid Afrikaanse, nê, "a new South Africa technicolour"...*

G: *Dreamcoat.*

Z: *Dit is 'n amandel praline - 'n sjokolade - want eintlik is dit die mees verleidelike ding wat daar is ...*

MvT: *Verduidelik hoekom.*

Z: *Dis die 2001 version van die Paradys - daar's nie appels in die bome nie - ek het 'n pers rol gehad - ek moes dus 'n alternatief skep.*

MvT: *Dis 'n technicolour snake daai.*

Z: *Dit is 'n technicolour snake, ja.*

MM: *Dit was 'n slinkse snake so hy wou verlei...*

MvT: *En die ding is wat hy daarmee...wat ek hier lees...die statement wat hy daarmee maak is...“the snake can come to you in any colour”.*

Z: *Ja, jy sien, en ek bedoel - ek het nooit 'n vrou mislei met 'an appel nie.*

Co-researchers laugh and comment further.

JLD: What does it say about Zeno's thinking?

MvT: Totally different. New. Fresh.

MM: *...different perception. Maar mense is uit die agter ontlok. Jy wil mense half skok, nie skok nie, jy weet wat ek bedoel. Jy wil hulle challenge. Ja, ek bedoel nie skok nie, soos in skok nie maar sal 'n statement wil maak om 'n statement te ontlok - jy wil hulle reaksie kry.*

Group interacts.

Z: *Nee, ek weet nie of dit rêrig is om mense te challenge. Dit word nie so bedoel nie. Wat ek doen is ek moet die mediums begin werk en create soos ons aangaan. Hierdie was nie deel van dit en hierdie was ook nie deel daarvan nie. Dit was apart. Dit was aan die einde. Toe sit ek die slang hier. Dis 'n aparte projek, want toe's daar klei oor.*

MM: *So jy laat jou deur die omstandighede lei?*

Z: *Ja, want het maar gemaak wat dit my gebied het. Daarmee het ek gewerk.*

MM: *Ja, en jy't een dag wat jou toekom. Ek bedoel jy sal iets maak met iets wat vir jou kan werk.*

Z: Ja, there is a possibility there.

MM: *Ek moet sê, jouné lyk baie lekker.*

MvT: *Nee, kyk, daai sweets aan die kant fassineer my.*

Z: *Ja, wel, dis nie te sê 'n appel moet net nie rooi wees nie.*

MvT: *Veral as hy pienk gaan wees nie.*

Z: Ja, who's next? *Daai "Picasso balls" (referring to LJ's square shapes) fassineer my.*

Group laughs.

IJ: Man, ja, *Garfield sê julle dit* - it's sort of symbolizes me, square-like... but the actual thing behind it is that I've tasted your...

G: Man, let's guess some more.

IJ: OK, sorry, sorry.

Z: *Ek dink jy's 'n Kubis.*

The group members comment about LJ's creation (titled with images instead of words).

Z: To me it's just form. I enjoy it for form, because its got texture, its got structure, its got colour and what I like about it is that it's elegant and simplistic, and I *like* simplistic. So *that* draws my attention *very* much, together with that one of MvT. Because it's so clear and simple if it's focused, to me. I like that which is really very much I like it, it's not focussed enough, but it's very simple. That's what it is to me. And it's probably a lot like you, because your approach is clear. You present yourself and I think that is a very strong point. You don't have hidden agendas and schemes and...

IJ: Thanks, Zeno.

Z: I have.

G: Ja, that is completely true.

MvT: And he got away with it not to have a ball. Hey?

MM: No, he didn't. But the small...

MvT: Only one...the little circles in the...

G: I wonder that means - the title?

IJ: Hmm. I wonder myself.

MvT: A domino, a mike...lips.

IJ: OK, this is...this is lips. And especially when it's my wife's, it's sweet so...

MvT: Is that a domino or a dice?

IJ: A domino. Sorry, a dice.

Z: It's so surrealistic that one can possibly say...there's some ...it's a statement about war.

Much laughter from the group.

Z: But I know that wasn't intended.

MvT: *Ek dink nie hy't aan sulke goed gedink nie.*

IJ: *Miskien moet ek my bril opsit en mooi kyk so dat almal kan weet wat daar aangaan.*

Z: Now I understand.

M: I see a dice in it, I'd like to see it with games. At the same time I see something to do with gambling. It's a gamble. Something is a gamble. That's as far as I can get. I don't know how to go any further.

IJ: OK.

MvT: But why does the dice have the same number on all the sides?

IJ: It's actually the colour that's - it makes the difference.

MvT: It's only the colour, not the number.

G: (Comments)

K: (Comments)

IJ: No, they're individuals.

Z: Were you in *any* way involved in the architecture of Stone Henge in 1100?

Group laughs.

G: That was just before you were born.

Z: That's why I ask.

IJ: Very simple. I've tasted your clay and it's very nice, so I decided to make each one into a different sweet. Now, I throw the dice and, the colour it lands on...I eat that first. Basically, there's it, ja.

JLD: I hope that you know its got some alum in it.

IJ: No, I used to eat this a lot when I was small.

JLD: Interesting that you used another sense - the sense of taste. And going back to Zeno, I need to mention that it's interesting that the group started with yours.

MM: Also the taste, the... - it looked so...

MvT: It sort of looked so appetizing.

JLD: So maybe the group's sense of taste is very important.

IJ: Well, I think I'll give them that much.

Z: I think something else. Everyone knows that your kids would like to play with the clay, so they're not mixing them up. I *dared* to mix it up.

G: I mixed them up too, but it came out purple.

Z: I can tell you, I had some brown left and I didn't know what to do with it, that was before the chocolate cover. I mixed all the other colours into that to get a different colour. So then I had a chocolate log.

IJ: But I would like to know Makuna Matata's.

Z: Striking.

MM: *Myne het twee. Hierdie het 'n clue...*

G: I'm puzzled.

MM: *...met waar ek verlede week was.*

Z: Lohatla. Sahara.

MM: *Ja, in die Karoo en hulle wil nie daar deurry Kaap toe nie of niks nie. Dis vir my die mooiste wêreld en as ek dink daaraan, dan dink ek aan...dis skape die...*

Group laughs.

Z: *Dan is hierdie sekerlik hase.*

MM: ...dit is ek en my twee sussies en my boetie.

IJ: *En hierdie is lammetjies, né?*

MM: *Nee. Dis 'n...*

IJ: *O, ek sien.*

G: Modern art.

Z: *Nee, nee, wag kyk, dis op 'n plat horison hierdie, en dis drie dimensioneel.*

G: *Wat is die?*

IJ: *Dus 'n lugfoto.*

Z: *Ja.*

MM: *Dis die modderdam en dis die waterskilpad in die dam.*

Z: *OK. Het hy 'n naam?*

MM: *Die grote...skilpad. Hy't ons tone gebyt van die kinders.*

Z: En jy dink...jou mannetjie en die reënboog...

G: *Ek dog dis 'n krokodil ...*

MM: *Hy's baie groot.*

MM: *Dit is die belangrikste van die Karoo.*

MvT: *Die...(son?)*

MM: *Wel, nie heeltemal oranje nie.*

G: *Sy't nie baie hard probeer oor daai ding te...as jy my vra.*

MM: *En dis die berge in die Karoo.*

Z: *En die wit agter is die sneeu.*

MM: *Nee, ek het gesien ek het nie wit gebruik nie, toe voel ek skuldig. Ek het dit gebruik om almal te laat goed voel...om wit te betrek. So ek het toe nou besluit dat...die Karoo is maar net so, die mense wil hom nie aanvaar nie, en altyd, en as jy net agter hom kyk, net agter sy foute dan leer jy hom ken, en jy kom agter, dan kom jy agter hy is gehard en hy het karakter, en hy's baie mooi en hy't goeie mense wat...en die son en al sy berge.*

Z: *Weet jy wat baie interessant vir my is as ek nou - keer my waar ek moet stop - maar, die wit het oorgebly en dis toe nou die "stiefklei". Toe kom die hele "stiefklei" in die prentjie in né, maar dit wat aanvanklik gebruik is het oorgebly. But they were....*

MM: *Ek het vir jou gesê dat ek 'n groot deel vir lug gebruik het.*

Z: *Wat ek meen, blou kon ook lug gewees het.*

MM: *Ja, maar dis sonsondergang. Toe besluit ek nou die son het begin te ondergaan.*

Z: *Dan sou pienk of pers beter gewerk het. Wat ek probeer sê is jy het toe die wat oorgebly gesien en toe werk jy dit alles in. Maar hierdie het ook oorgebly maar jy was OK daarmee dat jy van die gebruik het en van daai en van daai en van daai. So die "stiefskaap" word nou heeltemal gebruik en dis nou partykeer soos wat jy is.*

MM: *Ja. Ek sal my nogal ontstel het oor die een wat uitgesluit is.*

Z: *Die wat funksioneer gaan goed. Maar, if you're not coping then you'd get 100%. Soos die wit.*

MM: *En dis...Ek's baie lief vir die Karoo en ek kon vandat ek getroud is 14 jaar terug nog nooit naby die Karoo bly nie of so daar bly dat ek ...het en dit was vir my baie lekker om alleen daar sonder my gesin of my kinders so dat ek op die plaas kon gaan kuier en berg geklim het en kind gewees het, en alles gedoen het wat ek gedoen het amper toe ek amper klaar getroud was.*

Z: *Ken jy die kortverhaal van die diepe dors. Van hierdie mense wat deur die Karoo ry en as hulle so dors is en hulle ken nie die Karoo nie, en dan stop hulle by die huis en vra water by hierdie vrou by haar huis, en gee sy vir hulle water, en so, maar eintlik het sy self 'n tekort maar sy gee nog vir hulle, en as hulle ry dan gee hulle vir haar varkore, wit varkore, en dan is sy so bly oor iemand wat dit kon waardeer wat die Karoo vir hulle kon bied, dat sy die varkore in haar laaste water sit.*

MM: *Weet jy, daar's verskriklike mooi boeke oor die Karoo, ...droë kuns en al daai dinge, weet julle hoekom is die Karoo mense so gasvry? Dit was vir ons so lekker as mense arriveer dat hulle hulle pak goed... Ons het baie min mense gesien. Die plase is te ver uitmekaar uit. So, die Karoo mense is ...*

Z: *Is dit hoekom hulle so vriendelik is julle skape?*

MM: *Hulle het nou vreeslik lelike skape in die Karoo...hulle maak nou geld en hulle sê dis net die lelike skape wat geld maak...*

JLD: *Klink my daar het mens 'n waardering vir mense en wat om jou aangaan.*

MM: *Ja, en die mense is nog hulleself. Mense daar is nogal soos Garfield, net om by 'n teken van Garfield te sluit, van opregtheid maar reguit. Hulle het 'n lojaliteit teenoor mekaar maar hulle hoor wat hulle sê vir mekaar as hulle goed moet sê ...So dis maar my mense daar en my skape...Mens tog nadenke is my waardering vir dit. Ek dink nie jy besef altyd as jy grootword om dit wat aan jou behoort, dit so te probeer waardeer as wat jy ouer word nie, en hoe ouer jy word hoe meer en meer waardeer jy. So dit is vir my die stof tot nadenke. En die horison...*

- Z: *Dit het my altyd laat dink aan hierdie of my laat baie wonder dis die feit dat dit internasionaal bekendste landmerk in ons land is, as gevolg van die aangrypend moet dan interessant wees.*
- MM: *Maar weet jy dat dis die gedagte ook van die Karoo is dat hy..., want daar's die lieflike fonteine en watervalle en... Die Karoo is regtig iets wat - jy moet kan stap om in sy hart te kom, want jy sien hom net as 'n...aar daar's die lieflikste Boesman tekening, en...en grotte...Mense wat soveel moeite doen om by hulle grotte uit te kom... Maar nou kan ons na 'n ander toe gaan. Netnou begin ek nou na die Karoo te verlang.*
- G: *...Maria se prentjies - vrolikheid.*
- IJ: *Maria kruip hier weg, onder die wolk.*
- Z: *Wat is die naam? Ek dink dit is baie toepaslik - vir die tyd, die seisoen.*
- G: *Dit spreek van vrolikheid en so 'n gevoel van, van net lekker...die blommetjies wat hardloop.*
- MM: *Mens sien so lekker wye...om...persone deur hol...*
- MvT: *Dis ongekompliseerd.*
- Z: *Ek sien hierdie, né, kom baie maklik in Maria se kantoor soms, dit laat my baie daaraan dink. Dis altyd vrolik daar as jy daar inkom en so. 'n Prentjie wat opwindend is of een of ander iets is wat vrolik is. Dit sluit nou aan by wat ons vanoggend gesê het, van dat mens moet kan skakel en...*
- IJ: *Ek dink eenvoudig, maar tog ek wil nou amper sê opgevoed eenvoudig in die blomme se vorms en die blare. Dis nie net square nie, dus 'n ander vorm. En dis hoe Maria is.*
- Zeno: *Dis baie...dis verskillende talente daar.*
- G: *Nie dat jy en Zeno verkeerd was, maar dus totaal 'n persepsie verskil, die son is agter die wolke.*

MvT: *Ag, hy het probeer, net die ou straatjies wat deurkom.*

G: *Ja, maar dit laat my dink daar is tog, tog 'n seerplek.*

M: *A cloudy day!*

MvT: *Ja, wait for *that* day!*

Groups laughs.

G: *Maar dis wat ek probeer sê, daar kan so 'n dag wees.*

MvT: *Ja.*

G: *Die wolke's nie ver nie.*

MvT: *Ja. Maar die sonnetjie breek darem deur.*

Z: *Watse blomme is dit?*

MvT: *Non-spesifieke blomme.*

Z: *Hierdie...hulle is so **pompous**, né, en groot. Hulle laat my dink aan hierdie blomme wat so wieg as Bennie Boekwurm...*

Group laughs.

Z: *Ja, dis die back-up girls. Die Ossewania. Maar hierdie lyk soos blomme wat lekker kan ruik. Lyk hulle nie so nie? Hulle lyk maar soos sulke lekker sulke spring flowers.*

MM: *Ja, soos lente blommetjies.*

MvT: *Dis net die klein persetjies wat nou...wat spesifiek...*

G: *Heuningblommetjies.*

Z: *Heuningblommetjies. Ja en...ja, hulle lyk so.*

MvT: *Daai een is net pompous omdat ek die bol klei moes behou. Ek wou hom nie rêrig so gehad het nie en toe lyk hy so afskuwelik, dis hoekom ek maar die kringetjies gemaak het.*

Z: *Dit lyk...soos 'n pienk sonneblom.*

MM: *Ja, dis ook sonneblomme daai, blommetjies wat so sing.*

Z: *O. Ek dog dis daisies.*

MM: Hulle kan dalk...

MvT: Ja, but I think that's basically me. Nothing, no hidden agendas. Straightforward.

JLD: ...Both you and Zeno went outside the boundaries of your "dish". And part of yours as well.

K: ...like I think that exercise earlier on - you like think beyond the confines of your job whatever.

JLD: Ja, you go out of the framework.

K: Ja.

MvT: Perhaps, that's when, why the clouds move in front of the sun. But there's nothing complicated to that. It's very plain.

JLD: I just want to fall in here - it's now 20 minutes to 15:00 and we've got another part of the exercise. So I want to know from you if it's going to be a problem if we carry on after 15:00?

The researcher switches tapes here - the group indicates that they prefer to continue.

Z: I'd like to if I may move away from Spring here, move there...

G: I'm at Picasso.

Z: Huh?

G: I'm at Picasso now.

Z: You met Picasso?

G: I am *at* Picasso now.

Z: No, Bokkie.

G: You want to move past Picasso.

Z: Oh, sorry. I actually want to start on that side.

G: OK, it doesn't matter.

Z: But this is not Picasso.

MM: Can you read?

Group laughs.

Z: "Reaching out". Yes. Yes. What is very interesting for me was to watch...Is that you, Mzwakhe, started first. And you started with vigour and energy and you immediately started working with that purple clay, making the legs and exactly know what you were doing. And, when I look at the end product, you *knew* what you were doing it seems to me because it works. And you're also the *only* one who dared to defy gravity. All of us sort of *ploeter aan op die grond rond* - we worked two dimensionally and you're the only one who *really* worked three dimensionally. Here is a Picassonian attempt also...

Group laughs.

G: Zeno ...

Z: But those are the *only* trees who can actually have their apples fall to the ground, and say "Newton, there must be gravity!"

Group laughs.

G: It's just an incredibly large monster.

MM: What ...

M: It's an octopus.

MvT: But I thought it was this movie with this, *wat was daai ding*...that gory thing with all those huge things...

MM: *O, daai monsters en...*

Z: It must be before my time.

Group laughs.

MvT: Why do you think so? The past five years. A terribly big thing...

MM: *'n Aaklige ding.*

MvT: A monstrous thing.

MM: *Of 'n video...*

MvT: *Wat se park?* Jurassic park.

Z: Oh, but that's with dinosaurs. I thought you're talking about the ...going crazy.

MvT: What does the yellow stuff mean?

M: The fish.

MvT: O, the fish. I see that one's got a pink tail. It's the pink mouth or the pink whatever.

G: What actually is very interesting for me is that it's actually almost a frightening picture but the sight of it reaching out...

Group discusses this further.

MvT: Shaped like an octopus - it's just reaching out to bring a fish or person and everybody gets frightened.

G: It seems like such a *soft* title for such a *hard* picture.

MM: But everything else is very soft.

Z: Ja. Is it an unfriendly monster, or is it just big?

M: It's just big.

MM: But everything else is very friendly. It's a friendly environment. Everything is friendly. I think it's friendly.

Z: You know, Mzwakhe, I *do* see some of that in you, and again beat me with a stick, but I know in the unit where you've been, you weren't happy. OK? I don't think that is a state secret. But, for me there's change in that, in terms of that reaching out of things getting off the ground. I remember when I just came here, you said to me that you can't get things off the ground because people are preventing you in your unit, but *there* you've attempted very nicely to get things off the ground. It's so wonderfully three dimensional.

M: OK. Thank you.

- JLD: You also went out of the boundaries, but differently.
- M: You see what happened...OK, this is sort of the sea and this is land - they're two...
- Z: It's two levels. Ja. You see because, your trees are *impressive*.
- M: They've got fruit.
- Z: Yes! They've got fruit. They're smaller than my *humungous* tree...They're even smaller than these *pompous* flowers, and yet they're trees that stand up and they trees, I mean.
- M: I like being creative and I just felt like doing something. I don't think it reflects back to me or what, I just felt like doing something...
- IJ: But what Zeno means was not in a sense that you give of yourself and you reached yourself - you try a lot to reach out.
- M: If I'd like to link it, maybe I'd...OK, why I ended up doing this, OK why I gave it this title of "Reaching out" - OK, I just thought of this octopus lying, that can actually stretch out and get something and come back - so this was actually like this theme, sort of like the organization, our organization, the SANDF, and then I linked the whole thing to social work and it's a matter of we shouldn't actually isolate ourselves and that's why I put this other part where the land is so that we can actually stretch out and get something and still bring it in. So that's what, so that's why I put some fruit there just to resemble you can actually get something out and bring back to you. That's how I see it.
- Z: What I see from that, Mzwakhe, for myself is if we think about, we talked today about what our social workers think and do and so. And I think inevitably one can say that how one thought this up means something about the way that one thinks. OK. And, what I realized is that there's a lot of you that I don't know. Because you think a lot differently to the other people who did things here. I mean, there's a similarity between this for me, we haven't spoken about this one, I'm going to leave it out now, but that one, ...we all worked in a certain way with our circles, and you broke that boundary, like Alice (JLD) said, in a horizontal and a vertical way. Because, in terms of the area, it's conservative when you compare it to my getting out of the boundaries

like this. And you've taken the other route. We're all breaking out of the boundaries in other ways. Stephanie, ...can I see, all these goodies here.

G: Cool...

MvT: You've got to keep cool. That looks like a chocolate ice cream with a blob of cream on top of it.

Group comments on creation.

Z: Help us, Stephanie.

MvT: Relaxing?

K: Ja...

MvT: Ja, that one's very relaxed.

K: Ja, keeping cool.

JLD: It almost seems like you find it a bit of a mystery.

G: Interesting with the cream on top, on top of it, I don't know on top of *what*.

SF: Should I comment on it?

Z: Yes.

G: Please do.

SF: No, this picture is of a social worker, 'cause lately I realized you can't get somebody in office - it's answering machines all over. It seems to me we are getting burnt up and we are too busy. Because always when you call, it's an answering machine.

G: I play...I actually...I ...

MvT: You plead guilty.

G: ...am guilty.

SF: As ... said, it's not things or whatever. It's social workers "Keep cool!" Because don't rush, we'll crush.

Group laughs.

MvT: Is that the ice-pack on top of them to keep them cool?

SF: Ja...and don't be in a hurry thinking they that will solve all the problems within a period of time.

G: Well, that means something to me, actually, Stephanie. Thank you.

MvT: And the pink one?

SF: It's a social worker. It's somebody sitting on a chair.

Z: Is that a social worker already relaxing?

SF: No, she's saying social workers should relax.

Z: Oh, I see. I thought it may be a Loggy (Logistics) or a Finny (Finances) or someone relaxing and that's why *we're* not sitting on it.

IJ: You should have included a computer "Patience" in that - all army people play that game when they relax.

SF: Is that correct?

Z: Ja.

G: Ja. Play "Blackjack" on a computer. But maybe they play "Uno" at lunchtime.

MM: They have time to do that?

G: You'd be surprised.

Z: So you wanted to make a definite statement?

G: Well actually someone had that.

Z: Ummm. I see you mean like that in a statement because there's an exclamation mark at the end of..."Keep cool!". It's like in giving an order.

SF: A warning.

Z: OK. A warning.

MvT: What is important to me is what you've just said that social workers *should* relax and accept that they cannot change everything, now. In a short period.

SF: I think we think of everything to please somebody, all the people in a period of time, not thinking about ourselves...

M: And how to...

SF: No, it's just an office. It's social work environment. But we should be we should try to be...

MM: More available.

M: But why are the tables, chairs and everything...

JLD: It could be that this one and that one and your one - what's your name (metaphorical) again?
I can't remember.

Group help JLD with name.

G: Lion King.

JLD: Ja, Lion King. It seems to me there's a connection between the three in the sense that yours is we keep cool, yours is that we need to reach beyond the boundaries of the organization to sustain ourselves, and that one is to get away to get in touch with ourselves. It's just *a* connection that I see.

M: It's an escape zone.

Much laughter from the group and comments.

G: A burn-out session.

MM: *So, as jy te veel ontspan kan jy ook nog meer burn-out he. Dit is nie 'n te nie. Jy moet so tussen die twee wees vir ontspanning.*

G: Can I satisfy my curiosity down here?

MM: *Daai goed waarmee jy swem. Daai noedels waarmee die kinders in die poel swem...*

G: I see form here as well.

Z: I think it's definitely a Kugel in the Health and Racquet Club aerobics swimming pool getting entangled into one of these swimming gear.

Group laughs.

G: How can we survive?

Z: These sausages just make me want to - I just see them every day, these huge plastic things and where they battle to get into the pool there - they knock each other dead with them and so on.

MvT: Why the squares in the middle?

K: OK, it's for me like confusion, that's why work in our Department and everything even in the organization here. Like these are building blocks - OK, and we are trying to build organization at the same time these are ... - it symbolizes confusion. There is no direction here.

G: But it seems to me, I don't know, is that there is *some* direction because these almost keeps these in place - these ...

K: They're pillars.

G: Ja, it seems like it's keeping that - you know, we're trying to keep it in a direction. There're some blotches on it to try and prevent it...

IJ: Ja, and it's going up all the way.

?: Like a bit of ...

G: Method in the madness!

The group laughs.

G: Like method in this madness.

Z: It's a very interesting title for me.

K: (Comments)

Z: Because of..., I don't know too much about art but Picasso was a Cubist...and...who studied art here, help me, he was a Cubist and he's very organized and structured, and so confusion would seem like the other side of the continuum of that, and, there is another artist by the name of Escher who made similar things to these which are actually unrealistic - they're lies. He, for instance painted people or a stream of water, and if you really follow it, you see it's flowing upwards, but you can't see it really when you first look at the painting. It looks real until you

start looking at all the little devices in there. And this makes me think of *that*.. So, I see more of Escher in here in that kind of organized disorganization because it's very elegant and so...But they're not connected in a real sense of the word to make...to... Ja, I see the chaos in this.

K: Chaos and confusion.

JLD: Ordered chaos.

MvT: Ordered, ja.

Z: It's very much like our organization.

MvT: Ja, I was just about to say I think we can identify with that. It's not organized disorganization, it's disorganized organization.

Z: Yes, I'm working on an idea in my head to have our own organization classified an organization that's schizophrenic.

The group laughs.

Z: This is very much like for instance the things a schizophrenic is right. When you look at it, it makes sense, but when you look at the content it's unorganized, it's chaotic. But the sentences seem to grammatically seem to make sense. until you look at the content. And this is very much like that. The elegance sort of loops in thin space - when you look closer they're not really connected.

MvT: And there's no purpose in their elegance.

Group laughs.

G: I'm just wondering - it seems to repeat itself. Can you see that? This one and that one - because of that loop and that - and this loop does exactly what this one does.

Z: Yes.

MvT: What is the purpose of those blobs on these pillars towards the sides?

K: The small pieces on top. Oh, it's...got no direction.

Z: So it could have been a bird?

K: So it could have been anything.

Group laughs.

MvT: OK, Garfield.

G: Hey, hey, hey!

K: ...I forgot to say that like you said the round ball is somewhere, which means it's not there, like a sign of defiance and then...

Group indicates agreement.

MvT: Ag, it's there. You just gave the round ball - you just made it round like *this* instead of *like* this.

K: ...like our organization is strict as well. I mean its got its own sense of ...as a soldier, you know - right now you might defy tradition...

M: Garfield, I see a rainbow.

K: Ja.

IJ: And this is a pot of gold.

G: Only a putu pot.

Z: Yes, what I also see in here is that it's very serene and so but it defies physics because blue should be there and ...

Group laughs.

IJ: For me, there's a link between this and this. Between finding your favourite husband is like a pot of gold.

MM: Vision.

M: Not this pot of gold.

MM: Moving towards the vision.

G: Agrees.

M: As long as that's not gold when you say the gold lies beyond the...the pot of gold.

MvT: The end of the rainbow.

Z: What is that?

G: The title is actually...

Z: I mean we all know what's at the end of the rainbow.

M: Do we know that?

Z: Ja. The thing is we can't get there. It eludes us forever. Just because it moves and I wonder what kind of statement you make with that? There's a goal which can *never* be found - it's logical - it can't be achieved - it's only a dream. It's something to hang on but...

G: It's in the travelling.

Z: Ha, ha, ha, ha. That's *very* interesting. Because if I take it back to Zeno because meeting a person is for him in the travelling, there is no person, I mean, like the story I told this morning. He won't, he'll never meet that person he's waiting for, but it's in the road. What I find *very*

interesting apart from the fact that your *mandjie* is bigger than your sun, is that if you take this away, everything should disappear.

MvT: So, if there's no sun then there's no rainbow.

Z: And there's no pot of gold. And the *seuntjie* wouldn't become 'n *dogtertjie* and...or *whatever*...by example...OK. I didn't want to guess it's 'n *dogtertjie* 'cause then you'll say it's a man because it's purple...

G: ...*dit gemeng het*.

Z: No, what I want to say is you took it very seriously that the round should stay there and also make it in a sense the most important part of the picture - because this is the *creator* of that.

K: And the colours she has chosen.

JLD: It's also interesting that Garfield is the only one who took cardboard - she decided to hang with the ice cream lid.

Z: Yes.

JLD: She wanted a bigger surface.

G: I need...my personal space is quite big.

Z: What is also interesting is that she's got the only living thing without eyes.

Group laughs.

IJ: Or maybe a dream world - the bigger picture.

MM: *Jy sien sy agterkop, man.*

Z: I see.

G: If I were more talented it would've looked more...

MM: ...a pot of gold.

G: *Jy moet ophou om my prentjie te...hierso.*

Z: OK. OK, I get the message. I'm still wondering about this purpose. Because *this* is the purpose. This is the cause of the rainbow. This is where it starts. The sun is important, and you say it's in the travelling. For me that will make the travelling worthwhile. So I wonder what this is.

JLD: What do you think it might be?

Z: I don't know.

MvT: The light...

Z: I think it's too personal to guess that. I don't think I should do that. This is a *higher* purpose.

G: *You* know what it is.

JLD: You don't want to get too personal?

Z: No, I don't think it's my position to say it. All I can see is there is a purpose which makes the travelling worthwhile. That must be a very important purpose. And it's good that it's there.

JLD: Do you want to move on or do you want to...?

Group indicates positively.

JLD: I'm sorry I keep looking at the watch but I'm just worried about the time. We've got 25 minutes left and we've got to have at least a piece of time where we reflect on what happened

today. The last part of the exercise, I want you to as a group create something, using at least one thing out of everybody's creation.

MM: *Sal ons 'n plakkaat...?*

JLD: I can only give you...well OK, it depends on you, but you've got 25 minutes left which means we've got about 10 minutes for this one.

Group sets to work - they discuss how and what they want to do. One member wants to know if they could put the pieces back into their pictures. One suggests the reconstruction of objects with leftover clay.

Z: OK. Let's decide. Let's quickly chose from each one, one thing and move it and then construct the painting with that.

G: OK, but if it's OK with that person. OK. Alright.

MvT: You can use my cloud if you want.

MM: *En jy kan my son gebruik.*

K: What colours do you want?

IJ: Anything. Does it matter what?

Z: I'm going to include my chocolate log.

G: I'll include my sun.

Z: It actually has marzipan on.

MvT: We'll put that one close to that. That will help.

Z: Yes, your Turkish Delight.

G: Yes.

MvT: I'll put my cloud in front of the sun.

G: No!

Z: OK. I think everyone must maybe choose that one thing from him and let's go there.

All the co-researchers chose one item from models.

Z: We've got two suns. Can we...

Group discusses this.

Z: What else do we have? We've got a chocolate log. What else do we have?

IJ: One block.

Z: Ah, more sweets? OK.

The group continues to interact.

Z: And a tree!

G: Can we use the smaller one?

Z: M, where do you want your tree?

M: Anywhere,

Z: Place your tree.

MM: On Indiana's block.

M: Is that a mountain there?

MvT: We could always have one sun coming up and one going down.

G: That's a very good idea.

MvT: Have the sun come up in the east and let it go down in the west.

Z: OK, and in the west you eat marshmallow and in the east you eat marzipan.

The group discusses.

MM: And the tree? Where do you want the tree?

IJ: Shouldn't this one go with the sun that's coming up and this one going down?

MvT: This one's coming up and this one's going down...There.

MM: *Onder.*

MvT: When the sun goes down it should be down.

IJ: This one?

MvT: This one is coming up.

IJ: Well being three-dimensional, being creative, you must begin to be like that and start, stop being...

MvT: ...creative.

G: The tree's in the middle of the day.

MvT: And what about that?

K: What's that?

Z: Our picture's completely surrealistic.

G: *Nee, maar ons is nog nie almal daar nie.*

MM: *...ons het agt mense. Kan jy dit vat. So jy't twee van joune gegee. Nee, nee, jy kan.*

G: Can't we put the tree on the block?

The group discusses further.

Z: Let's make a mountain of the block, and then stick the tree on it.

The co-researchers agree.

G: Would you?

K: Ja.

G: Who's going to do it?

MvT: Make a mountain of it. First. Give it the shape of a mountain or something.

G: A mountain you won't recognize anywhere else except on this picture.

Z: I think our perspective is going to climb like that.

MM: We can get on top of the mountain.

The group agrees.

Z: I just knew this is too big. Changes the whole picture

He removes part of his contribution from the group model. The group laughs.

MvT: Ja, not to eat that much sweet early in the morning.

G: OK. Amen. Are we happy with our picture?

The group confirms this.

MM: And what's the title of the picture.

K: "Grace for daily food" - "The colours of deception"?

Z: I think it's a day. For me it makes a cycle - a beginning and an end.

The group indicates their liking of this.

MvT: " Getting on top of the day".

G: What about "Full circle"?

Z: Ja, "The circle".

MvT: "The cycle".

Z: I think we should sign our painting.

MM: I think we'll cycle it.

MvT: Recycle it.

Z: Shall we sign our painting?

G: Write the title.

Z: OK, well I can't write titles.

G: What is the title?

MvT: I don't know.

Z: In a nice quarter circle.

G: OK, are we going to sign it?

Z: Ja. What, are we're signing our title now?

The group agrees to do this.

Z: I don't like this asking permission thing.

MvT: I'm sorry, man.

G: We ask the group's permission.

MM: Ja.

G: That alright.

Z: OK.

G: The group created it. Pass the buck (passes the pen onto another co-researcher).

The group laughs.

Each co-researcher signs the picture/model and passes the pen to the next one. The group tease one of the members who recently married.

JLD: Maybe if we can have look at this and reflect a bit on it.

MM: Alright, what do you feel?

JLD: That's what I'm asking *you*.

G: ...we've come full circle.

MvT: Ja, today starts, you get on top of the mountain and relax.

MM: And another day is still coming. It's not ending. It will continue.

Z: I see participating. Because for me, this is how the road that Garfield spoke about. It was not so much in the, about the picture, than it was in the road, and in the process of how we put it together. Everyone brought something from the previous creation and put it in here and I think everyone selected, if I can say for me, I think my chocolate log was the nicest, and I brought the whole *log* along. Later, I changed it to the smaller ones, when they looked a bit big. I think everyone was prepared to bring something along. And, I don't think they stinged on what they brought.

M: ...a tree.

Z: Are you stingy, hmmm? You brought a tree. Your tree was important for me.

IJ: Ja.

Z: I mean, the one brought a sun, and Makuna Matata said this is the *important* part of her painting. She said so. So I think was this I think in yours. My log was also quite important for me. So. The road for me was nice.

JLD: Some of you are looking at me with big eyes.

Z: That means you've got the answer.

MvT: I brought that which you *commented* on, that, the clouds in front of my sun, I got rid of it. I shared it. I actually passed it on to you.

G: No, we actually brought two suns and we didn't ...too near the ...

MvT: Near the clouds.

G: Ja, that's interesting...interesting clouds.

IJ: If you want to recycle something, you must put it back into it so you need to give something of yourself and that's everyone involved. For something, you must bring something of yourself. And that's why the tree's on top - something *new*.

Z: Some member's were even prepared to remould. Ja, and remodel, for the new effort.

JLD: What do you think that says?

Z: I think to me, it says something of working together, and synthesis, of creating something new, adding important things and creating something new from that.

MM: And a willingness to change.

The group agrees.

JLD: Almost a willingness to be like a piece of clay?

Z: Ummm!

JLD: Or to have a part of you that's like a piece of clay?

MM: Yes, but being in control of being the clay.

G: If I think of it, I actually didn't take something from my picture, I made a new one, I left my picture exactly as it was.

MM: Ja, dit het my nogal opgeval dat jy *wou* nie jou prentjie verander nie.

JLD: And yet you're doing it in such a radical way.

MvT: Ja, you're taking away the sun which is the essence of your picture. You're taking that away...

MM: But her sun is still there. She didn't take anything from her picture.

MvT: Oh, oh.

MM: I recognized that. She says she doesn't want to do that. Can she take it back? Afterwards.

G: I'll carry what you've taught along with me...

MM: *Maar wat het wat jy gevra is dat ons die klei gedeel 100% van my dink, dit is nogal 'n kuns om behoue te bly van jou beheer oor die klei vorm maar steeds the willingness to be changed and I think one must be - to just use like sheep in one direction of getting the change from one side and not make your own prediction also about the change, and your perception of the change. Get out of the boundaries but be objective, get by the tree.*

JLD: I think what you're saying is interesting because if you look at the signatures...(indicates on the model).

MvT: I noticed that difference.

JLD: What does that say to you?

G: What's actually funny to me of my perception that Stephanie was actually the quietest. She was the quiet one, and she's been the radical in the signing of it. She's actually disrupted the picture almost.

The group laughs.

MvT: I see, to me it says "Take note of me. I'm not just part of some bundle. Take note of me. Here I am."

The group agrees.

Z: Let's check. There could also have not been enough room to write.

SF: Ja, I felt it was almost full because most at end there was not room for the signatures to follow each other.

G: So you didn't sign over there?

MvT: Or down there?

SF: I felt more comfortable to sign there and I was nearer that part.

JLD: You wanted to be nearer *your* part?

SF: No.

MvT: What is significant to me about working with clay, is the fact that you can mould it into many shapes, *any* shapes, and yet the *clay* remains the same regardless of the shape that it's in.

Z: It just sort of depends on your creativity, your audacity and how you want to defy whatever rule you've created before, for yourself.

MM: And a willingness to take risks. Part of a risk to change something.

MvT: And clay can *change*. You can change from day to day, from moment to moment into a different shape, and give *meaning* to something differently. I mean in the beginning there were what, seven, eight different colours, all sort of in a shape. Yet we created a wide variety of things. But the essence remains - it remains *clay*.

Z: I also saw when we were working is - that we all started with sort of a step one act - and that's how you work with clay and then you make a sausage of it. And that's the first thing one should do with clay when you're small. And then later we moved out of that boundary and get more involved with the medium and be more daring.

JLD: I'm wondering two things. The one is - if you'd had more time, how different would this have been, if at all different? OK, that's the first question. Or do you think it would have come out exactly the same? That the time isn't an issue?

G: I think we all felt like moving on. I don't know. It seemed to me like we all wanted to set the sun now. I think even if we had the sun we'd have done it fast anyway.

JLD: Do the rest of you feel the same?

MvT: Ja, I don't think we would have come to the point where we sat down and, you know, thought about what kind of picture do we want. It was also sort of a spontaneous thing. I give my sun, you give your clouds and somehow we put the energy together and there it was.

Z: There was however a intention to take the leftover clay and use that. It was put down. So I think if we say it was exactly like this it would not be entirely true. It might have been similar.

MM: I thought we talked about our own pictures.

G: No. About this one.

MM: That doesn't matter. But this one did.

G: Perhaps we would have actually, ja, if you can use the leftover clay.

MvT: But, we *did*. You did because you didn't take your own sun and I didn't take my own clouds. I created new ones. So, we did use, most of us used leftover clay.

JLD: What does that say to you?

Z: Nothing.

MvT: Well, I would have gladly parted with my clouds but the sheer, the fact that you said you wanted to take photographs of it, kept me from ruining it. I, a long time before that I wanted to start rolling balls again. But apart from that, if we had to break that, it would really be giving part

of *your* picture, part of *you*, part of the item that you identify with and that symbolizes *your* picture.

JLD: Ja, it's interesting how you decided what part of your picture you're going to contribute, and the fact that *you* decided as individuals.

K: I didn't want to bring my confusion here 'cause like in the end product, the end product would be together - it should be a positive one - that's why I decided to take the...as part of, and the green block, and then it was taken too.

JLD: So you're didn't want any confusion here.

K: Ja. That's not...as a group.... I wanted to leave the confusion here, and move onto the second phase.

JLD: You didn't want to bring the confusion into the group thing?

K: Ja. 'Cause I thought of it as phases - this is phase one, that is phase two.

Z: That makes me ruthless. Because I was prepared to bring temptation along!

JLD: It makes me wonder about what's allowed and what isn't allowed in the group. Is confusion allowed? Is temptation allowed? What do you do if it's there?

MvT: I think we dealt with the temptation rather positively. It wasn't as if we resisted it or rejected it at all, because it was an acceptable form of temptation. You know, being named the chocolate log, nobody seems to have resisted it. But confusion? We probably would have, even if Khanyi did bring some of her confusion along we would have woven it into the process of getting from the start of the day to the end of the day. No cycle is *without* confusion.

G: I think, ja you're right. We..

MvT: We would have put it in somewhere.

Z: I think we would have moved it round a bit. So, here, or there, or where does it fit?

MvT: Ja, we would probably have, considering the shape, made a road of it or something. But, we would have fitted it into...

Z: What I see in terms of another cycle is that we sort of started the day by sculpting people. We were sculpting each other inside the group here. And it finishes the cycle in terms of that we sculpted other things as well. I actually wonder to what extent we sculpted what our expectations were this morning. I don't remember back so well - but, it might be interesting to look back on those things by comparing them with these.

K: Please excuse me. Thanks.

The co-researcher had to leave because of travelling arrangements at that specific time.

JLD: Sorry, I keep pushing this boundary of the time. I'm also wondering...if we did sculpt other things?

Z: Other things?

JLD: I'm just reflecting what you've said. You've said we first sculpted ourselves and each other, and then we sculpted other things. What I'm saying is, does it mean that this that I've sculpted, is disconnected from me or from the rest of you?

G: I think, actually, we've said a lot about each other when you looked at the sculpting that you've made actually and well, we actually commented on what people said about your sculpting and it was a part of you. I think it means the same thing - the sculpting and you.

Z: Ja, I see that as the kind of automatic conclusion we came to at the end of our peoples' sculpting session where we drew together how the group was selected and why certain members were selected and how we link all these things to get the groups difference and diversity, and I also see that in that, because everyone sculpted individually their expectations and then again sculpted individually and then brought it together in a *togetherness*. And for me, the same synthesis that we' ending up, for me this is a confirmation of this.

JLD: The other thing I was wondering about was, that each one of you decided what you're going to bring. *You* decided what would work or fit with this group picture, and you also chose *one* thing.

MM: You told us to.

G: *We* decided.

Other members agree with Garfield.

Z: If I can just say something. If this is, if *this* is this group. And I can say that by sculpting something you also intentionally don't sculpt something else. It's implied in that paradox - if you make something, you automatically deny something else, if you go into a door you deny going out - OK, that kind of thing. By making this, we're also *denying* something - if I accept this is the green stuff (points to green cardboard surrounding the yellow) - if say this is the synthesis of our group's selection (points to the yellow cardboard with group "picture") - this is the synthesis of group non-selection (points to the green again) - what I want to know, is how do we get *this* in sync with *this*, and *can* we do that? If we didn't do *this*, if I had to bring my chocolate log along and place it here, would I rather have selected something else? Or would I have maybe brought the snake or the tree, or...

JLD: You can also take it back to your sculpting with the two circles moving in opposite directions.

Z: Yes.

JLD: Paradox seems to be important to you, Zeno.

Z: Yes, yes. If you want to call Hayley insignificant? (Group laughs) No, paradox gives me a major.....understand the world better and it's just maybe a tool, if I can put it like that. To think of this, the paradox. But for me it's very real, that, if I may be so bold as to say that I don't think I would have brought the chocolate log or marzipan along to this group. And that's exactly what I'm doing in my work every day. I bring it along to certain places but not any, not everywhere. At work, it would not be *wanted* everywhere. It would be too much of a temptation.

MvT: To *that* group you would probably have brought a snake.

Z: Yes.

JLD: But that also depends on the group that you're part of.

MvT: Isn't our work, isn't the background against which we do social work, a paradox, between behaviour and behaviour, acceptable and less acceptable, functional and non-functional. Don't we have that paradox all the time?

Z: I think so. If we talk about "*think*" - what we think of ourselves and what we think about others, what eventually will prevent us from bringing *this* along to *this* group, is what I think *this* group *thinks* of me. OK, because I don't know what they think, I can only wonder, think what *I* think they think about me and *that* makes me behave in a certain way. If *this* was the larger paradox, what I say is might take this along ...to this area, I might take this along to the psychologist, that I work with everyday, but I might not take it along to this colleague working with me, but I might take it, I *will* take it along to *this* group.

JLD: But *you* decide.

Z: But *I* decide. See. So what I'm saying is the only way I will probably take *this* into *there* is if, what I think this group thinks of me, it's confirmed, then I won't take it along. If it gets challenged, then I will take it along. That's what I'm saying.

JLD: So challenge is for you the criteria.

Z: Yes.

JLD: I'm sorry I've pushed you all so much with the time. I just want to know if any of you need to go now.

Two more members indicated that they needed to leave.

JLD: How does the rest of the group feel? The last little bit we need to do is just to reflect on the whole day.

The rest of the co-researchers chose to continue, whereas the two members left.

JLD: Before we move on, just one last question and that is , if you look at the group creation, whose creation most closely resembles this?

MvT: I don' think it resembles a particular person because there's a lot of...I don't have the idea, that anybody in particular impressed their sort of...on that - it's a *sameflansing van ons almal se...se input*.

G: But...it depends on how you punctuate because you can actually see a few pictures in here if you think about the Lion King, it seems like a day as well with the sun going down and the day's activities...

MM: But not one person in particular.

G: No. No.

MM: I think that's what Alice (JLD) means. I think...

G: But you *could* see that actually, then if you look at, well if I look at mine, I also see it in there, the beginning of the rainbow and the end of the rainbow. So, I think it's a punctuation.

MM: I think it's an individuality getting together can make something out of their individuality which you can see in a group picture.

MvT: I don't really see yours as the beginning and the end. Your whole picture is the sun. If you take that away there is no beginning or end.

G: But that's what I'm saying. It depends. Some *could* have seen it as that. Whatever.

IJ: I see Zeno's and Garfield's and the whole picture in one as well. For me to get to the end of the rainbow, you need temptation, and that's where his comes in, but, I don't think we'll ever complete the full cycle, It' always a temptation again to roam, here, here.

MM: And that's why there's never an end of the circle.

Z: For me, that wraps very nicely what I think I wanted to say just, what my last comment was. That is, I think the binding factor if *I* interpret it for me is the road. For me the connectedness is from the enjoyment from the road, and that's what brings the connectedness. I think that's what's missing on the green space is the road. There's not a road to travel that can get me involved in the connectedness. The route there is for the pot of gold, for the money, or whatever. Its not in the road. And in my work, I mean I'm not looking at pot of the gold, because it's simply not enough, it' in the road, and that's what will make me stay, or leave.

JLD: Interesting, it's almost, well, this is one connection I see, the spiritual or the abstract need or idea, seems to be very strong here.

Z: The need for abstraction.

G: No.

JLD: Ja, or...

Here the tape ends and some of the conversation is not recorded.

IJ: The last stage, you know. And I think that's what happens to people as well. They only pretend to give a lot of themselves...not the whole box of dice. So that thing that stays behind goes into that green area that we're talking about, and it blocks it from other people's input.

Z: My hypothesis is that the green will never disappear. The green will never be engulfed or taken over by that yellow, and that will *always*, for me, get enough *energy* to maybe take the temptation along. To try and make it bigger, and, because that's my tool, to a certain extent, is stir, and knowing that it will never work 100%. And it's very Garfieldish, you know, to

expect that the yellow will take over the green, and it's unrealistic, it's nonsense, it's childish. It's still, it's like throwing a temper tantrum if you can't have it that way.

G: It's like climbing the highest hill and hoping you're not getting there.

Z: Some people don't want to go with.

G: And the thing is it will actually to me be such a disappointment to *get* there. That's the trouble. What then. I don't want to get there.

MM: *Maar weet jy dit is so, nê!*

The group agrees.

MM: Not nice to reach the end. There must always be an end. An unreachable end...

G: ...I always have high horizons...

MvT: And I think one, in every bend, moves the pot of gold further on.

MM: It must be like that.

G: That's what I said, I positively tense to me when you've arrived.

Z: I try to imagine that some people walk the road faster than others, and some slower to try and incorporate the green - to say that, but, no, they're not green, they're only walking slower. But I continually get the idea, that they're *not* walking. They sitting under the tree *next* to the road, and I'm just passing them by, and inviting them, but they don't want to come along. They say "No, I'll rather sit here under the tree". You see, so, and I'm so...to sit down next to them and say "Well it's nice and shady and so comfortable".

JLD: What do you think, or, from what I've seen here, you would use some temptation to tempt them out from under the tree, or am I wrong?

Z: Yes, yes.

The group agrees with this.

Z: As I say I'll invite to come along, *completely* from *my* perspective because I can't *expect* them to come along. They *expect* me to come sit under the tree and I've seen now that's wrong but I see one as really irritating me for me, and frustrating on turn.

MvT: I'll probably use the force of the clouds - first giving shade and comfort, but then if they don't move, as you say from the green, then the clouds start packing up, it can become a thunderstorm. That might also be a tactic to, in an attempt to draw more people towards the yellow.

Z: But...what if I'm so selfish that I don't want to use that tactic?

MvT: That's got to do with your individuality. If you don't want to use that.

Z: So you mean about that, I should be honest? I haven't got second strategies like flowers. I don't even want to walk slower. But I think I'm saying too much of myself.

MvT: But I think it's unfair to be like that. It's OK just to have the temptation but not be that, sort of, forceful. Because the clouds can be *accommodating* in providing shade. The clouds can also become extremely *forceful* and once it turns into a thunderstorm, it can actually wash them away completely. It can wash the green *further* away from the yellow. Which is the *other* extreme.

Z: But what I'm wondering is, for me, maybe this is the ultimate of my persuasion, is that as a *young* person on the road, I'm a *novice* on the road, I don't *know* the road, and I can get hurt *on* the road. I'd *expect* someone to walk in *front* of me with the temptation to keep me going. I don't want to be the *leader*, and I get the idea that that person is the one under the tree that should be in front of us.

MvT: I hear you clearly.

Z: So, what I say is the most scary part, and it frightens me to such an extent that I'll get *out* of the profession, is that I might also end up under the tree because there was no-one put in front of me to say "Mind that stone." or "Mind that. There's a downhill."

JLD: So you're looking for a leader?

Z: No, not really a leader. I'm looking for an example.

MvT: Or guide.

Z: Or a guide.

G: The people you expect to be there aren't there, I mean they're...

Z: They're under the tree.

MvT: Then you don't need somebody to hold your hand on the road but you want somebody whom you could follow where the road twists or where it goes uphill or downhill or whatever, and...

MM: Instead they're under the tree.

MvT: Not reading the signs. Not reading the need.

JLD: I'm wondering - I'm just reading out a question that I've jotted down here - "To what extent is this group *now* the same group that started?" Would you say it's the same one, has it changed, what's changed?

IJ: For me, it definitely changed. I mean, with all these pictures, it's easy to, if someone started talking to go in that direction with them and talk in the same direction. But in building something, you cannot find someone to dump off. I mean I would look stupid if I built the same thing as Zeno or the same thing as Garfield, so I'll have to build my own thing, so I *must* share something of myself.

Z: Whereas it's very easy to agree...

IJ: That's right.

Z: It's quite acceptable.

G: I think what happened between us what made us what we are now, you know, to me the thing comes to mind that time is, irrelevant almost 'cause it seems like ...for me, but such a lot happened between this morning and now, and it's, I mean, it's a few hours.

Z: What I can say that I've always known I'm not on the road alone but I know there are people...

The session is interrupted - a senior wants to speak to a co-researcher over the telephone - the co-researcher leaves the room.

Z: I must say for me this is quite a difficult thing, to have...

JLD: What is difficult?

Z: To have some people.....feels to me like someone's sitting in the room.

G: It's a violation.

Z: Yes, I'm very frustrated now because it some...

JLD: You mean the group member or the person outside?

Z: The person outside.

The other co-researchers agree.

IJ: I had the same experience this morning I mean, the appointment that we had was fixed for two weeks for this very early in the morning so I can come to the group and...that was changed.

G: And it actually would have worked out perfectly.

IJ: Ja, no problem.

MM: Ja, but *that's* the thing. Must we do, perhaps we must accept it but I think sometimes one must have the thing to say "Well, this is the programme. We can't change it." or so. Why is it that one must always fit in with...I mean, would it be much worse to do it on a later stage, a bit earlier, when?

Z: You see, I feel like *shouting* to the person, but it's not acceptable. I can't shout...the people on the road tend to get feedback of what actually happened, the people under the trees also talk.

G: You know what's actually funny to me what's happening here now, is that we're actually are shouting because there's one person less, but we didn't shout when some of the other persons left.

JLD: Ja, that's also true...

IJ: But it's quite strange that you can shout with the people, I mean. I had the experience this morning, we were discussing something and one of the ... made a conclusion herself and didn't include someone else in it, and it's a person that's actually OC (Officer Commanding) at that specific unit and she didn't consult, so I said "Does he know?" and she said "I *think* he should know." So I said to her "No, I asked you does he know. I'm not interested in do you think he knows. It saves us running about." And there was no negative connotation to that. They actually experienced it the same way we would', so I don't think we should be *too* scared to shout at people.

MM: That's what I mean that we must think about, that we...

JLD: Garfield also brought up an interesting point of...

MM: OK. I think the difference is that they went out of their own wish and part of their own reason. The difference is it was external factors that make this people leave, and I know that this member didn't *want* to leave at this stage, the same as Indiana Jones. I think that makes the difference, that's why, I know that for Khanyi it is a problem. She must go. She's going to ... every day, so. But it will still not...

G: But...it's still a choice. Even if I'm, even if I had something important to do...

MM: OK, but I still think it wasn't nice for them to leave, because it was also not nice for me to let them...you know, I was a bit frustrated that the group was ending off without it ending. *Ons het geëindig sonder om te eindig.*

JLD: What do you want to do about that?

Z: If I could look at my example I could make the best out of staying. For me there genuine was losing some which would probably had benefit to all. But it wasn't a violation from an external source...

MvT: Ja.

Z: ...whereas this came as a demanding violation. Not only do I violate, but I also demand when I want to do so, and that for me is terrible.

The co-researchers agree.

Z: So, my problem is now, if I meet that person under the tree what do I say to that person when walking past. To state very practically, "My ... is not in yet but why should I respect that...when it comes? That person doesn't respect the professionalism.

The co-researcher who left the room returns.

G: Ja, it's a pure waste.

Z: I think we've sort of ended up with a different dynamic now.

MvT: Fill me in.

Z: Ja, well, we felt it's a bit of a violation on our members called out on command.

G: Not a *bit* of violation. We actually felt *violated*. Raped.

Z: Ja, we felt violent.

MvT: Ja, I'm very sorry about...

MM: But it wasn't about the group's members, it was external factors that can influence, ja...and...and command one another...

G: You know, we're just to make it nice till the end and have a happy ending.

MvT: Ja, we want to conclude in a happy way.

G: I'd rather conclude in the words that we actually had before...

Z: Yes, I think so too.

G: I have a need for that. Because it actually was a nice day for me.

JLD: How do you want to conclude?

G: I think we perhaps we should make...

MvT: OK. This is, I think this is part of my frustration. Zeno was talking about his frustrations and *this* is constantly sort of part of my frustrations, that you think you're on a road with something, with a task or with a something and then this *command* is simply - it's like a vulture coming down - take you out of that or take something away from you that's very important at that moment and then you sort of just dropped somewhere else, and it's expected that you will follow a road or a process again there and you still busy with that then the vulture comes and grabs you again and drops you somewhere else. So it seems, I get the feeling that I'm sitting with a lot of unfinished business in so many *areas*, and in the end it reflects on not on the system, but on you as a person. You take up tasks and you can't finish it. But it's never mentioned that the system actually causes that. The other thing is that you're busy with *too* many things simultaneously, and it's not related tasks. It's totally unrelated things that's imposed on you and you, sort of, they play with you like this - take you out, put you down, take you out, put you down. This was a lovely day. It was a lovely experience. It was sort of

moving *towards* each other, more than we've ever *been* before and now again the vulture says "Tchooo - out you get. Do something else." And it has, it does have an effect on the group and the process that was going on with the group, but also very much so on my state of mind right now.

JLD: Ja, you all seem to have very strong feelings, I mean you're talking about violation, vultures, rape. It's very strong feelings that you have.

Z: I'd say, if, the question you posed on how did the group change - I think what changed for me is that a lot of things were done in the group but they were shaken around and stirred and they got back into their spot. And for me, if I may use my road metaphor again, is that, being not alone on the road - you can walk in a bunch. If there's not someone giving temptation in front, then you can start to walk in a bunch, past those sitting under the trees. That is a comforting thought.

IJ: And to link with that, this morning was quite interesting actually, when you made one circle face this way and the other circle face that way, and when you went by and you had to make eye contact with each other, and that just made me think that one is a bit scared to make eye contact with your colleague in another sense. You keep reaching for external resources for your stability and your emotional comfort and what-not, but you lose track of the people around you. That you've got colleagues that can help you actually.

Z: That are available.

MM: Why do you think that?

IJ" Well, I've been here for only now ..., no, no, no ... months, and I'm not excluding myself from what I'm going to say, but it's, you're so busy with your own stuff that you *must* look in your own direction or you *must* look beyond the group and just focus on your own direction. Like for instance now, that thing that ... just said, there's no way that you can consult your colleagues really. You must now go into a *definite* direction. And I think by giving you the direct thing things from the top, they *make* you focus on your own. There's no project and no stuff that actually makes you work as a group. Nothing.

MM: That's what I - this managing plan - if we're going on with the way that we're working at this stage, each one on their own route and *not* getting to think in a paradigm way of doing things together in a "out-of-the-boundary" way, it will never be possible to reach those, that issue. Makes you think. The other thing I wanted to say is that we must, also make use of the colleagues for things. Then I think about ..., ... is the one person that always spoke about, she'd talk about her problems at ..., as a thing that is really difficult, everything. But what *happened* about that? The day when we wrote our letter, they said that we mustn't even mention anything about burnout or anything, because that's *out*, but now then in supervision again there's something about burnout. Then you thought well...? (Shrugs shoulders) People must tell their own and keep track of their own thing and do their own thing. And just keep on track and do the thing. And I know that's not right but that's what I'm doing.

JLD: Ja, I think what you're saying is it doesn't make *sense*. How does one understand the message?

MM: And I think that's why most of the social workers have this image of "I can cope", and "I cope and I cope and I go on, and I'm getting along and everybody's just doing it on their own." Go on the journey all on their own circle. *En ek wil hê 'n mens moet daai sirkel verbreed. Ons sal dit moet doen as ons by ons missie wil uitkom.*

Z: My worry is, how much of the green will get involved? How much of the green would like to get involved? Because my way of thinking is...if it's wrong, I'll have to challenge that and my colleague will have to help me, because I think between the green and under the tree, the vision won't get done, the vision will stay a vision. So...so, in my opinion we will have to get the green to change together, to do something and...

MM: That will be difficult.

MvT: Well, I think, if you think in terms of mixing paint, mixing colour, you will need quite a lot of *yellow* to change the shade of *green* ...

MM: Into yellow.

MvT: Into yellow. You will probably get a totally different colour. Ja. You will get blue. If you look at those two - that green and that yellow, you will not - if you mix the two, you're not going to

have either...or, you're going to have something totally new, and that's a totally different cup of tea.

Z: Maybe, that's *good*. Maybe that's good. Maybe that means...

MM: I think that's the only thing that's going to work is that new cup of tea.

Z: ...to run the road and rest under the tree, and run and rest and run and rest, and not run or rest.

MM: Ja, but make something *new*.

G: Both...and...

MM: Ja.

MvT: And actually in that process, assimilate the green into the yellow, and the yellow into the green.

IJ: Shouldn't one chop down the tree?

Garfield laughs.

IJ: I'm being *serious* now.

Z: I've dreamt it. I'm too scared to chop.

IJ: Why?

G: What's just very comforting for me and that's connected to what you say is what Zeno, as well, said, is that we *know*, you *know*

Z: What I'm just scared of, is say the road is so big to conquer, that you can come with people who run the road and the rest sit under the tree. Whether you eventually *die* because of running the road, too broad a road with too few people? So if the effort should be *chop* the tree not run the road, can we afford to *stop* running the road and chop the trees?

G: That's a good question.

Z: Do we have enough time to be able to...

G: Especially those who are running, do they have the *time* to do that?

Z: Or, should we invite people from somewhere else to run the race, who runs the road, who *runs* the road *already*?

MvT: Should we not invite somebody else to chop the tree?

Z: Well, does the organisation not roll up the road and keep the people under the trees?

IJ: Ja, my experience, and I talked to one of the guys that's got experience of different armies as well, in, I'm not saying, I'm not being racist or anything, but I think we are going to have time to chop down trees...because I don't think social work is on the track any more, but even before we have to *get* on that road, we have to chop down half the trees in the *way* of the road.

Z: In terms of transforming the organization, my fear is that they'll rather roll up the road.

MvT: The road.

IJ: Ja.

Z: ...and, end your race...tempting...challenging...

JLD: I hear so much frustration, and I wonder what's going to...what you're going to do with it?

MvT: I was just looking at these plastics on the table. If you had pale yellow like this one and you mixed it with green, it's going to become green. It's not going to have any effect on the shade of green - it's just a pale yellow. But if you take a *forceful* yellow like that one, it's going to change the green into blue. So the more *forceful* the yellow group might be and the more *power* there is in the yellow, the greater the effect could be on the green.

Z: The larger we make the yellow, maybe the paler it becomes. Or the smaller you might make it the more intense it becomes. So it might be *enough*, but too light or intense but too small to change things. And, what do we do then?

JLD: OK, it's one minute to go. It seems like you...

Z: I think we keep inventing the metaphor now and playing it over and over and over.

G: And I think, ja, in a way, well, something's happened here today. I really do believe that. And if it's only that it's started, then it's good enough for me at least until...

Z: For me it means that I'm going to utilize forces moi and I'm not going to extend invitations any more to people under trees. I'm going to extend it selectively. What I mean is that if I'm going to scream the roof off and I need company, I won't invite people under the trees. I won't extend invitations in *small* groups to go and drink tea. I'll phone...to go.

JLD: I've mixed feelings about today in the sense that I saw something like an iceberg - we're looking at one aspect and we're only just looking at it about this much. (Draws an iceberg on the board and makes a tiny circle on this). And it could've caused a lot of frustration or it would get people involved but people might not want to get involved because they can't backtrack, you can't go back to square one with people. So I'm just thinking about it, on the one hand I thought it could serve as an introduction to something, maybe. It can be '*n klip in die bos*. I wonder how it would be if we'd had ten sessions together, or twenty. Which is still possible for you. But it was a drop in the bucket, '*n klip in die bos*.

Z: I see what you mean with that but for me it was a 100% feeling in the sense that there was an atmosphere of that one can create.

G: And I just think small is beautiful. Don't count that out.

MvT: Less is more.

The group agrees.

MvT: I think what happened here today is the rediscovery of what Zeno has also said, that, there are, you're not alone. And that we should, actually you know, join forces, perhaps more... *meer bewustelik*.

G: Ja, I just think people should actually be jealous of the ones running the race. You should actually have a lot of people, should actually want people to come out. Actually invite them themselves.

Z: I think we should run the race in such a close-knit bunch that people would want to come and join us because they're jealous. And not because we're inviting them to come.

G: They should be so jealous that they should *want* to be invited. And I think it's quite fine - there might be a very different reaction to what we want, but there's more rejection or whatever - but it's still possible. We don't know.

Z: I would be OK if we end the session with this kind of taste in the mouth.

The group agrees.

MM: There's enough energy for something...

The group agrees.

MM: ...to happen. And the identifying of support system and to make use of the system.

JLD: Do you feel that this can be a support system for you in future?

MM: Ja.

JLD: I'm very tempted to give you homework. Another *klip in die bos*.

MM: Well, we still have a choice.

MvT: Ja. If we can hand it in at a later stage.

JLD: You don't have to hand it in. You can think about it.

G: OK.

JLD: Just a question. You can do with it whatever you want to. It's not the homework that I mean...It's just a question that's absolutely intrigued me - one of those questions that if you hear it, you can't get it out of your mind ever - you can't go back to being as though before.

JLD writes on the board "What colour is a chameleon sitting on a mirror?"

JLD: I hope the question bugs you as much as it does me, or intrigues you. I just want to say thanks very much that you were here today. If I had to really go into what it meant to me it would be a very long "schpiel" and we've run out of time. It was also symbolic to me in a sense because of leaving. It was for me a very good ending, an ending on a very high note. So, it's a day that I won't forget. I really appreciate you being here.

MvT: It was a brave effort. In the first place, I think the choice of your theme for your thesis was a very brave choice.

JLD: Thanks. I hope that what's happened here and the rest of the stuff that I've written can be used by, even if it can be used by one person who's here, then to me that will have been worth the effort.

Z: I think we'll have to get...so that it can automatically not get lost.

MvT: The process has not just started, but I think the foundation is being laid and the process is building on already.

G: I think we need to stop now.

MM: But we'd also like to wish you luck with the new job.

The workshop ends here and the co-researchers continue to chat with each other as they leave.