Mindfulness and Awareness: Constructivist, Psychodynamic and Eastern Perspectives

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Abstract In this paper I develop my contention that reality is experienced polymorphically at different levels along a concrete-abstract continuum. At the more abstract and psychic level the internal representations of primary reality are, to varying degrees, verbally labelled. However, for various reasons, this verbal symbolisation is rarely adequate or complete—even in adulthood, and hence the persistent recourse to somatisation, acting out, projection and other psychological strategies and defences. This paper also examines, using both constructivist and psychodynamic models, how verbalisation can be helpful in clinical practice with somatoform disorders as both models are concerned with the "talking cure". Drawing on our understanding of meditation and mindfulness, the role of our psychological defences in limiting our consciousness is examined, in contrast to the practice of non-verbal mindfulness which aims at expanding our awareness. Potential problems with meditation are discussed, as well as limitations to the "talking cure"—as verbalisation can also be used as a higher order defence. However, it is concluded that all awareness expanding practices, such as mindfulness and psychotherapy, reduce the need to resort to somatisation and other primitive awareness distorting strategies. In this paper constructivist (Kellian) and psychodynamic (both Freudian and post-Freudian) perspectives are employed to develop my contention that reality is experienced polymorphically at different levels of cognitive awareness along a concrete-abstract continuum. At a more abstract (or largely psychic) level the internal representations of primary reality become, to varying degrees, verbally labelled as we develop and mature from infancy. However, this verbal symbolisation is rarely sufficient or complete—even in adulthood, and hence the persistent need for somatisation, acting out, acting in, and primitive forms of communication and psychological defence, such as hysterical identification, projective identification and/or other forms of basic communication typically found at the lower levels of awareness. This paper further goes on to examine, especially using constructivist, but also psychodynamic models, how verbal symbolisation can be helpful in practice with psychosomatic and hysterical disorders. Drawing on our understanding of concentrative and mindfulness meditation the workings of our psychological defences are examined. Constructivist and psychodynamic models are

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used to describe the distortion of consciousness by these defences—albeit from different perspectives. Both of these psychotherapy approaches are also concerned with the issue of increased awareness via insight, and are therefore complementary to the Eastern notion of enhanced awareness through the practice of meditation and mindfulness. Potential problems with meditation are discussed, as well as limitations to the "talking cure"—as verbalisation can also be used as a higher order cognitive defence, as observed in rationalisation—as well as in the higher service of the expansion of awareness.

Keywords Mindfulness · Awareness · Constructivism · Psychodynamics · Eastern psychology

The Role of Meditation

For individuals with poor ego-strength it is usually better to engage in psychotherapy prior to taking up meditation (DelMonte 1990, 2003). Meditation is more about "fine-tuning" than resolving serious emotional conflicts and deficits. One usually commences meditation with training in concentration ("Samatha") before moving on to mindfulness practice ("Vipassana").

In concentration meditation, by focusing exclusively and repetitively on one meaningless stimulus (for example a mantra), contrasts fall away and one's perception of the passage of time becomes distorted. As contrasts are necessary for ordinary sense-making one is left with little or nothing to construe or "no-thought" if adequately adept (DelMonte and Kenny 1985; DelMonte 1987, 2004). This is the nothingness of the via negativa. Sustained "nothingness" can lead to an ineffable and non-dualistic transcendental state of non-grasping and equanimity, in which one experiences existential "symmetry", in other words, undifferentiated unity, which for some is the Infinite (DelMonte 1995b). This is just one example of how meditation practice is embedded in mysticism and spirituality. Samatha means tranquillity or serenity in Sanskrit/Pali.

Having learned to concentrate it becomes easier to practice Vipassana. Mindfulness meditation promotes the characteristics of an elevated observer status in the here and now, associated with increased reflexivity, vigilance, circumspection and introspection. Put in sensory processing terms, mindfulness meditation involves increased awareness of exteroception (via the 5 senses), proprioception (via the musculo-skeletal system), and interoception (via the internal organs). In this way relationships may be noticed between internal and external events, as well as between one's behaviour, bodily processes and cognition, thereby facilitating the integration of the behavioural, emotional, cognitive and social aspects of our experience (DelMonte 2003, 2004). The enhanced mindfulness emergent from Vipassana practice is called "Sati". The knowledge (or enhanced awareness) resulting from Sati is called "Citta". Citta may lead to a form of non-dissociative awareness ("Satipatthana Suta") where one's consciousness is not split, but rather is integrated holistically, for example, by not "living in one's head"—split off from one's body or from one's surroundings. This is where healing ("making whole") takes place. But achieving non-dissociative awareness is not easy as consciousness is often split, distorted and reduced (Klein 1946), thereby affecting our level of awareness.

Levels of Awareness: Kelly and Freud

For Freud the repressed unconscious lies, in normal circumstances, below our awareness (Freud 1900, 1912, 1930). The only two other awareness categories that he envisaged were

the conscious and the pre-conscious. George Kelly, a constructivist, saw the range from the unconscious to full consciousness in much more nuanced terms, that is, in terms of a continuous spectrum of levels of cognitive awareness (Kelly 1955). These levels of awareness were influenced by several factors. These include the degree to which the experiences, of which one is trying to make sense, are somatic, sensory, pre-verbal or have to varying degrees been verbalised as cognitive constructs in language. Some somatic functions may never become verbalisable (the non-verbal domain) and remain fully unconscious—namely the non-repressed unconscious. On the contrary, the repressed unconscious was once conscious but has been rendered unconscious defensively (Freud 1900, 1912). According to Schwartz (2000) only between 1% and 5% of our mental functioning becomes conscious, with the rest of it remaining below conscious access.

Moreover, reality is experienced polymorphically at different levels along a concrete-abstract continuum. At the more abstract, or psychic, level the internal representations of reality become, to varying degrees, verbally labelled. However, this verbal symbolisation is rarely adequate or complete—even in adulthood, and hence the persistent need for other forms of symbolisation such as found in the arts (for example with music, painting, sculpture and dance). Somatisation and "body language" also fill the gaps of incomplete symbolisation, but at a more concrete level. Somatisation, being a developmentally more primitive form of expression, is more common in childhood, but is also found in adults who have problems in developing symbolic representations, without which more mature mentalization, such as empathy, is impaired—contributing to a range of psychological disorders (Fonagy et al. 2011). Before exploring more fully these disorders it is useful to look more deeply at polymorphic reality.

Reality: Kelly and Lacan

In our daily lives the world can be dealt with at different levels of abstraction, ranging from a very concrete level to varying levels of subjective and abstract representation. Furthermore, George Kelly (1955) saw us as living in two realities—firstly the primary or external reality which lies beyond direct and complete human perception, and secondly our attempted interpretations, representations or internal constructions of this primary reality. Likewise, the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan (1966) theorised that we have to deal with three domains or registers—the "Real", the "Imaginary" and the "Symbolic"; Lacan's "Real" roughly corresponds to Kelly's primary reality, which is not directly knowable as it can only be perceived indirectly through our limited senses and cognitions; Lacan's "Imaginary" which is somewhat akin to Kelly's notion of attempted internal cognitive construing of this primary reality (the intra-psychic), and Lacan's "Symbolic" which pertains to the inter-psychic social domain, and to one's attempted adjustment to, and communication within, the external social order in which we are immersed. Such social intercourse is primarily conducted by means of language, but also by using other forms of symbolisation such as flags, art, sculpture, drawing, dress codes and so forth.

For Kelly (1955), we are like "scientists" developing speculative "psychological constructs" (or hypotheses) in order to make sense of the world by looking for repetitive patterns of similarity and difference among a series of objects or events observed through time. Even as infants, before we acquire language, we construe events dichotomously via bi-polar discriminations such as "milk versus not milk", "mother versus other", edible versus inedible, "thick versus thin", "hot versus cold", "fair versus unfair" and so on. These psychological constructs, or discriminations, are initially pre-verbal (pre-linguistic), but

the growing child comes to attach verbal labels to many such sensory discriminations. However, much of adult construing remains non-verbal and somatic. Throughout one's life, based one's experiences, one develops and updates one's personal construct system to be used in the anticipation of all types of events (Kelly 1955).

Our constructions, or internal representations, of external reality are not just "personal" or construed in isolation. They are also social in that we develop our construct systems in the context of significant others, such as our parents, siblings, friends, lovers, colleagues, etc. In other words, the social "Symbolic Order" into which we are born (Lacan 1966) plays a pivotal role in the development of our internal representations of external events.

Group Construing

So it is not just isolated individuals who construe. Kelly (1955) in his "Social Corollary" acknowledged the social aspect of sense-making. Nor is it just humans who need to make discriminations. In the absence of language a capacity for collective identification allows groups of animals to behave as if they had a "group mind" (McDougall 1921), as found in shoals of fish, flocks of birds or sheep, and hives of bees and termites. In this way they can share perceptions and feelings—for example of food and danger. Humans, although retaining this capacity for "collective cognition" (Couzin 2008), do not need to rely on either group or "hysterical" (affective) identifications in order to share information and feelings, to feel empathy or to show compassion and sympathy. They also learn to use language in a social context. In order to talk about experiences (for example, feelings of anger, envy, fear or nausea) we need to use symbolic labels by putting verbal form on feelings. The usage of such labels means that much primary sense-making acquires a secondary (cognitive or more abstract) overlay. The emergence of this cognitive overlay, or internal symbolic representation, facilitates the emergence of empathy—an essential feature of mentalisation (Fonagy et al. 2011)—and thus of adjustment to social reality.

The Kellian dialectic of pre-verbal construing versus cognitive construing has considerable overlap with the Freudian dichotomy of primary process versus secondary process mentation, with primary process being characterised by non-verbal id drives, instincts and raw emotions, and secondary process involving our more rational and language-based ego functioning (Freud 1912, 1930). Another parallel is with Bion's (1970) raw "beta" elements and the more processed "alpha" functioning, with the former largely corresponding to Kelly's pre-verbal construing and the latter more to his cognitive construing. As already mentioned, Kelly (1955) sees the individual as initially constructing his or her own reality at the pre-verbal level and then increasingly going on to construct a sense of reality at the level of (social) linguistic symbolism—namely by developing cognitive constructs (or secondary process mentation in Freudian terms). Hence, in a social context, the "talking body" is seen to be emergent out of a more primitive sensory-affective condition.

In evolutionary terms both projective and "hysterical" identification, as well as "languaging", are adaptive insofar as they facilitate communication, the difference being that speech operates at a more abstract level of symbolism and represents an adaptation into the "Symbolic Order" à la Lacan (1966), whereas both hysterical and projective identification operate at a lower level of cognitive awareness and tend to remain pre-verbal and less rational.

However well Lacan's "Imaginary" domain is implicated in our intra-psychic imaginative construing, and the "Symbolic" in our inter-psychic communications, they can never fully overlap with the "Real" domain ("the territory") beyond our sense-making.

Maps and Territory: Kelly and Piaget

For Kelly (1955) our personal construct systems act as templates or "goggles" through which we perceive and experience the world. Thus, there is no fully objective perception of the world, that is, of primary reality. As people move along the dimension of time they modify their personal constructions of reality so as to be able to anticipate more accurately the cutting edge of the present as they move into the future. In a sense, psychological construct systems are akin to personal "maps", or schemas, that (ideally) are up-dated from time to time to produce a better fit with the external world (the "territory"). In other words, the construct systems of psychologically adapting individuals are constantly being revised (or rather "accommodated") in the light of newly "assimilated" evidence from the ever-changing world of primary reality (Piaget 1967). Such perceptual "assimilation" and cognitive "accommodation" à la Piaget of our construct systems allows for a better fit with the flux of primary and social reality. However, such adjustments to our internal worlds, namely to secondary reality, are far from straightforward, and are complicated by what we will not or can not readily face or comprehend, and by what is not yet in our awareness—the unconscious.

The Unconscious

It is interesting to note the lay person's lack of enthusiasm for the Freudian concept of "the unconscious". Many go on referring to the "subconscious". This may be indicative of a preference for a concept which is more nuanced, less sharply delineated, or less "black or white". Popular views of the "subconscious" tend to be confused with repressed unconscious material à la Freud (1912). Hence Kelly (1955) emphasized the importance of "levels of cognitive awareness" in his Personal Construct Theory. These levels of cognitive awareness can be seen as an elaboration of Freud's notion of the pre-conscious, but also as including layers within the unconscious. Others (for example, Epstein 1983) have followed Kelly's lead in emphasizing the importance of the pre-conscious, which is a complex area much in need of descriptive elaboration. Freud's view of the unconscious and, especially, the pre-conscious is thus replaced by Kelly's (1955) usage of the following theoretical counterparts, among others, "pre-verbal construing", "suspension", "constriction" and "loosening".

Pre-verbal and Somatic Construing

Kelly used the expression "pre-verbal construing" to cover a broad spectrum within all non-verbal sense-making. Non-verbal constructs are those perceptual-emotional discriminations that one makes which have not been verbally labelled. Consequently, they are often at a low level of cognitive awareness, and are largely sensed by us as "gut-feelings", intuitions, vague elusive sensations and fleeting impressions—whenever one tries to become more aware of them. Examples of non-verbal construing are psycho-physiological, kinaesthetic and unverbalised emotional discriminations. They also include what Polanyi (1959) encompassed within the concept of "tacit knowledge" (as opposed to formal knowledge), and are typified by the phrase "we always know more than we can tell". For example, the tacit knowledge required to perform certain skills such as riding a bicycle is often more complex than we can readily express in terms of formal knowledge. Silent meditation can be seen as a deliberate attempt to experiment with non-verbal construing.

Knowledge (including memory) which has to be "acted out" in order to be communicated is usually at a relatively low level of cognitive awareness, as, for example, with the disturbed behaviour of those people who were sexually abused in childhood, but who have repressed or suppressed the memory thereof (DelMonte 2000, 2001).

Although non-verbal construing tends to represent a low level of awareness, it is not to be equated precisely with the unconscious. Some non-verbal construing may be communicated (often unknowingly or at the borders of consciousness) by means other than words, as through behavioural "leakage". Such analogical communication stands in sharp contrast with the more usual digital (or verbal) communication. People often sacrifice precision of description in order to communicate elusive feelings which may otherwise elude expression. Analogical communication can also be conceptualized as a variant of psychological projection, and is often picked up by its recipients as vague intuitions and so forth. When the recipient of such projections reciprocates in the prompted and desired manner, then we can describe this mutuality of feeling and behaviour as "projective identification". It tends to be a pre-conscious (i.e., a "sub-conscious")—or even an unconscious mutuality. It is commonly found in mother-infant relationships and among lovers, but often also, as transference, in psychotherapy dyads and in group therapy.

Pre-verbal constructs are those non-verbal constructs which have not yet been verbally labelled but which, in general, are potentially capable of labelling. Insofar as most non-verbal constructs arise in pre-linguistic childhood and remain poorly verbalised (that is barely symbolised) they can also be referred to as sub-verbal constructs. When our sense-making discriminations become verbally labelled through speech they can be seen as cognitive (or verbal) constructs, whereas somatic construing tends to remain relatively unverbalised. Basic aspects of somatic construing include posture, balance, osmo-regulation, thermo-regulation and the like. Somatic construing also includes the discriminations which one makes in terms of one's instincts and drives, such as is found with a range of compelling attractions. In order to talk about our emotions (for example feelings of anger, envy or disgust) we need to use verbal labels. The usage of such labels means that much of our construing (ego functioning) has both somatic and cognitive components. For Freud (1900, 1912, 1930) the ego is primarily a bodily ego.

By now it should be clear that in understanding Kelly's (1955) theory it is important not to confound construing with mere verbal formulation. Whilst some construing becomes formulated in symbolic speech, this is only the "tip of the iceberg". Much of non-verbal construing or discriminating can be seen in psycho-physiological terms having to do with phenomena such as pain, blood pressure responses, neuro-muscular effects, endocrinological secretions, immune responses, gastro-intestinal reactions, kinaesthetics and the like. Such non-verbal processing has already been referred to as somatic construing. It literally plays a "vital" role in our self-organization. Here Kelly's position is remarkably close to Freud's who, as already mentioned, saw the ego as being primarily a somatic ego. The sense-making of most sub-human animals is largely confined to primitive somato-sensory construing, which in perceptual terms can be referred to as proprioception, interoception and exteroception.

As already mentioned, pre-verbal constructs originated mostly in infancy in order to make sense of those elements of life encountered by the infant in its growth and development. When people get into difficulty using their adult constructions, their first defence typically is "hostility" to invalidating evidence (Kelly 1955). However, a later defence is often regression to the pre-verbal constructions of infancy, for example, to extreme dependency. Hence, we often find psychosomatic sypmtomatology accompanying strong

unfulfilled dependency needs. Hysterical sypmtomatology, on the other hand, often symbolises strong unconscious conflicts and identifications (Freud 1900, 1912, 1930).

Ontogenetically (developmentally), and also phylogenetically (in evolutionary terms), the "thinking-body" is secondarily developed out of the sensory and feeling body (DelMonte 2005, 2011a). This implies that, in both a developmental and evolutionary sense, imagery and feeling are primary to thinking (in the non-causal way). In other words, in our evolutionary history we were sensing, imaging and feeling creatures long before we acquired a capacity to think and speak. This developmental order also applies to our personal histories in that language skills take time to develop in a sensate infant. In this way our personal history recapitulates our collective history—ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.

Suspension

This notion is used by Kelly (1955) to encompass defences normally referred to by a broad range of terms such a "forgetting", "repression" and "dissociation" in Freudian theory. Suspension (holding in abeyance) normally means that certain experiences or "elements" are temporarily placed outside the scrutiny of one's conscious construct system because of incompatibility with the overall system a person is currently using. Hence defensively suspended elements are usually at a relatively low level of cognitive awareness and are not readily tested out against reality.

But not all suspension is defensive as it can also be adaptive. In terms of the detached attitude that Samatha meditators learn to take towards the various elements entering their awareness one may describe this concentrative practice as a deliberate, short-term, adaptive suspension—or adaptive dissociation in Freudian terms. Such a suspension of habitual cognitive construing has also been described as "de-automatisation" (DelMonte 1990, 1995a, 2003).

In Kellian terms de-automatisation implies the construing of reality afresh without our biased "perceptual goggles" or psychological filters. For Kelly (1955) this would have been well-nigh impossible as conclusions are likely to be arrived at according to one's perceptual prejudices and expectations. Such biases are likely to be associated with resistance to invalidating evidence (Kellian "hostility"). On the other hand, mindfulness meditation (Vipassana) is ostensibly characterised by enhanced receptivity, or to use construct terms, by an increased openness or permeability of one's construct system to new ideas (or "elements" à la Kelly). Mindfulness meditation can provide an opportunity for post hoc falsifiable experimentation (Popper 1959) in which old constructs are more open to the validational fortunes presented by the experiential flux of reality. Hence, mindfulness ostensibly fosters reality testing while temporarily holding one's habitual prejudices (pre-judgements) in abeyance—in so far as this is possible. The suspension referred to during mindfulness practice is volitional and potentially adaptive. Habitual construing is suspended, including our more conscious defensive constructions. As a consequence previously suppressed (suspended) material may come to the fore during meditation, and this has been referred to as "unstressing" (abreaction) when it is emotionally laden.

With mindfulness practice, meditators see themselves and their thoughts as elements which are observed in a detached or rather a non-attached and non-judgemental way. This can be described as "bare-witnessing" when one practises observation without an internal running commentary. Moreover, the non-evaluative free-flowing attention, or "choiceless

awareness" (Krishnamurti 1991) of mindfulness meditation involves, rather like in free association, the unhindered and spontaneous flow of images, thoughts and emotions without internal censorship (DelMonte 2011b). During mindfulness meditation one is asked to look upon all experience as novel. In this sense one's attention is de-automatised, which is another way of saying that the meditator views the contents of his or her awareness as novel events free from one's usual biases. In other words, habitual, logical and verbally labelled construing (or Freudian secondary process mentation) is temporarily suspended. As habitual cognitive construing (thinking) is suspended there is often recourse to sub-verbal, pre-logical and somatic construing, with the possible liberation of unprocessed emotion (or Freudian primary process material).

Depending on what is in his or her sub-verbal reservoir, the meditator becomes in touch with different aspects of the self through experiencing emotions such as fear, anger, anxiety and sexual arousal, or even momentary "no-thought" if the sub-verbal material has been adequately "worked through". The meditator may also experience temporal and spatial distortions and so forth. In this way this "uncovered" or unsuspended self can become part of the conscious self.

Constriction and Dilation

With constriction the boundaries of one's perceptual field are deliberately reduced so that fewer elements are left for construing. Incompatibilities in one's construct system may thus temporarily be minimized. Dilation, on the other hand, involves the deliberate enlargement of one's perceptual field so that more elements are encompassed (Kelly 1955). This may facilitate a re-organisation of one's construct system at a more comprehensive level. By the way of clinical analogy, one can say that depression is largely characterised by cognitive constriction—as there are restrictions in activity level, socialising, appetite, libido and the like, whereas elation has features of dilation à la Kelly in that there is an expansion in all of the above listed reaching out to the world activities.

In meditation, the re-organisation hoped for is variously termed "enlightenment", "nirvana" or "serenity". Dilation, as in mindfulness meditation, involves an expansion of the perceptual field, opening up the mind to new phenomena, flowing from one topic to another, and trying to find new connections between this increased range of events. By taking a more distant perspective on these varieties of experience, one may be able to abstract or perceive similarities and differences among them, and thereby build bridges between the events by making new connections. In the opposite direction, namely that of constriction (as in concentration meditation), the person limits his or her focus of interest, tending to deal with only one issue at a time, often in the form of a mantra. The person here is dealing with a much reduced psychological universe.

From a Kellian point of view concentrative meditation is a deliberate experiment with constriction of the perceptual field. What are the consequences of reducing the number of elements to be dealt with to one bi-polar element which needs little construing—as with a mantra versus no mantra? In this form of meditation a deliberate attempt is made to disrupt and displace usual logical sense-making. Continuous focusing on only one element means that construing is very focused, concrete, repetitive and controlled. As a result verbally-labelled cognitive construing (more typical of the left hemisphere) is blocked, disrupted or curtailed so that the mind resorts to sub-verbal and pre-cognitive sense-making. Put psychodynamically, if secondary process mentation (as in rational, verbal or adult-like cognition) is blocked then there may be recourse to the more elementary primary process

mentation. Primary process mentation, which is mainly non-verbal construing, tends to be visual, spatial, kinaesthetic, emotional, somatic, vegetative and so forth and is more typical of the right hemisphere (DelMonte 2003, 2004).

The constant monotonous repetition of a mantra, when coupled with reduced sensory input, may enhance regressive mentation or a trance-like condition during which one's repression barriers are weakened by a reduced ability or desire to marshal the cognitive or intellectual defences of a more alert state. This can lead to "unstressing" (or abreaction) as the meditator experiences a range of emotions (such as anger, sadness, or fear) which emerge from his or her reservoir of past experience, which may include what can be referred to as "somatic memory" or "organ speech". Put in sensorial terms, if exteroception is severely curtailed then there may be recourse to proprioception and interoception. Other outcomes of perceptual fixation and monotony may be spatial and temporal distortions or reconstructions of the perceived world (DelMonte 1990).

When novices engage in very intensive concentrative meditation (Kellian constriction) the outcome is unpredictable and largely depends on the meditators' covert historical repertoires and on recent events ("day-residue" in psychodynamic terms). They may experience "unstressing" as emotional pre-verbal construing takes over (DelMonte 1987, 1990). Occasionally, they may experience hypnogogic reverie, surrealistic imagery and increased suggestibility if they become relaxed and drowsy (DelMonte 1981). The more adept meditators may experience "no thought" at will during practice. "No thought" is characterised by cognitive quiescence while remaining alert and restful. This may be achieved, in part, because the meditator had "worked through" or cognitively processed defended-against material. It may, however, also be the result of adeptness in using concentration techniques. "No-thought" indicates that functions associated with both brain hemispheres have been deliberately inhibited resulting in a non-dual state where no cognitive discriminations are made. Without dualistic discrimination we have experiential "symmetry", in that there is no discrimination of opposites or contrasts. This is also a feature of the unrepressed unconscious (Matte Blanco 1988).

Submergence

I have already referred to the fact that Kelly (1955) sees construing as being bi-polar, for example, love/hatred and weak/strong. However, for some people only one end of the pole is cognitively elaborated—the other end being submerged (often somatically) and therefore largely unconscious—for example, with the covert sadistic tendencies of a masochist, and the manipulative power of weakness. Submerged poles also feature in Freudian "reaction formation" when, for example, a homophobic man denies his own homosexual undercurrents. In Taoist philosophy there is always some "Yin" buried in "Yang" and vice versa. In this sense a submerged pole is also akin the Jung's (1958) notion of the "shadow", especially when the submerged pole is seen to be undesirable. Although influential, the submerged pole is temporarily safe from any direct confrontation with social reality, and is thus unlikely to be tested out. However, "submerged material" may also abreactively emerge during concentrative meditation.

It is worth pointing out that before Kelly's time, both Jung (1958) and Freud (1900) showed interest in duality. The Freudian position is that opposites lie close to each other in the unconscious: In other words, the deeper the unconscious the weaker the duality (Matte Blanco 1988). With decreasing cognitive awareness our capacity to construe contrasts and make discrete discriminations weakens, and thus the greater

the similarity between the poles. This, as already mentioned, is also referred to as unconscious symmetry (Matte Blanco 1988).

Similar ambivalence often emerges during dreams, meditation and depth psychotherapy, as these may release the dynamic interaction of our polarities; for example, as with confusion between dependence and independence, isolation and fusion, male and female, and so forth. Suler (1991) saw a correspondence between psychodynamic views on the human propensity for bi-polar thinking and the ancient Taoist philosophy evoking the Yin and Yang principle in all human discriminating.

Loosening and Tightening

A "loosened" construct system is one marked by degrees of vagueness, diffuseness and uncertainty. A loose construer is someone who cannot "make up his mind", because, in the personal construct sense, much of his or her mind remains vague and elusive, and hence at a relatively low level of cognitive awareness. Such looseness is not very good for making firm predictions. Examples of loose construing are to be found in schizoid thinking, free association, dreaming, hypnogogic reverie, and imaginative play; whereas tight construing tends to be logical, analytical, judgemental, legalistic, numerical, computational, scientific and so forth. The essence of loose construing is that it cannot readily be "pinned down" and invalidated. When one thinks loosely, one is protected by a type of elasticity, or resilience, in the face of a threatening reality which might shatter our constructs (i.e. hypotheses) were they any tighter. This is because tighter construing can be more readily pinned down, put to the test and invalidated. Such invalidating effects, when testing reality, can be devastating and provoke extreme anxiety. Loosening therefore offers a "shifty defence" (Kelly 1955, p.1030) against a world which one cannot face. Schizoid thinking appears to be an example of such a defence.

Schizoid thinking, being to some degree cut off from external reality and from internal feelings, is relatively "unanchored". It allows one to make rather loose connections between one's imagination (Lacan's Imaginary register) and social reality (Lacan's Symbolic register). On the other hand, obsessional thinking is unusually tight and dichotomous ("black or white"), in so far as there is a particularly narrow focus of attention on specific mental constructs, e.g. clean versus dirty. With both schizoid and obsessional thinking there is distorted and thus impaired consciousness. The essence of creativity, according to Kelly, involves a *to and fro* between loose and tight construing: The looseness allowing for new associations and the tightness for testing these out against reality. This to and fro is wanting in people locked into either schizoid or obsessional defences. Obsessional thinking, being rather tight, often lacks imagination. Schizoid thinking, being too loose, is untestable. Tight and loose construing both have their value. In education we tend to focus on tightening, as, for example, in science and mathematics. However, creative imagination requires a Yin-Yang type of interplay between looseness and tightness—usually commencing with the former (Kelly 1955; DelMonte 1987, 1995a, 2003).

In psychotherapy, there are a number of ways of producing loosening, including the use of relaxation techniques, free association, dream work, and by the non-judgemental acceptance of the patient (Kelly 1955). It is postulated that mindfulness meditation also enhances loosening (DelMonte 1995a). Speeth (1982) suggested that mindfulness meditation resembles free association in that both concern the uncensored or spontaneous flow of ideas and emotions. The same phenomenon occurs during concentrative meditation on a more limited scale if one temporarily "forgets" to repeat the mantra or to count one's breath. During

mindfulness meditation one is encouraged to adopt a neutral, or "de-automatised", stance towards all material which comes into one's awareness (as in Kellian suspension of construing). Meditation often, but not always, involves a degree of relaxation (DelMonte 1990) as well as reduced exteroception. The monotonous repetition of a mantra (as in concentrative meditation), when combined with reduced sensory input and a shift towards para-sympathetic functioning, may encourage hypnogogic reverie. Hypnogogic reverie, like dreaming, relaxation and free association may be characterised by loosening of one's personal construct system.

The psychoanalyst's attentive non-judgemental acceptance of the patient in psychotherapy is paralleled by the mindfulness meditator's non-selective and non-judgemental attitude towards the contents of his or her own mind. This is also ideally required of analysands in "free association", which, when proceeding well, is also a form of mindfulness practice DelMonte 2011b). Moreover, mindfulness meditation appears to be characterised by factors which, according to Kelly, produce a loosening of one's personal construct system—namely a degree of "relaxation", "free association" and "non-judgemental acceptance".

The value of tight construing, as in physics, law and computer programming, is widely acknowledged. However, loose construing also has several important functions in the psychological life of the person. In general, it facilitates an increasing awareness of hitherto excluded elements. Hence loosening is often encouraged in therapy. For example, in psychotherapy it helps the person to remember forgotten events. Loosening also helps us to perceive "old facts" anew; that is, in a different light. Moreover, loosening tends to expand the construct's range—through increased diffuseness and elasticity. Hence loosening can admit new experiences. By shuffling ideas it can recombine them into new patterns and also may facilitate the person in coming to verbally express pre-verbal discriminations.

From the above one can see that loosening has a large role to play in producing new experience. Perhaps in mindfulness meditation (as with free association and relaxation) it is the loosening procedure which puts the person in the way of having an experience (often emotional) which he or she has not had before, maybe via catharsis, or an experience which has the quality of a great "insight". This may be the same type of "flash of inspiration" which creative people are often known to experience—especially while relaxing, for example, Archimedes and Einstein (Kenny and DelMonte 1986).

Thus, meditation may be construed as a creative enterprise. The loosening process facilitates an important connection between intuitive creativity and pre-verbal construing insofar as it may lead to approximate verbalizations for difficult-to-verbalize feelings. As already mentioned, Kelly (1955) tied creativity to a cycle between loosened and tightened construing. The loosening which often occurs during mindfulness meditation may be followed by tightened construing after meditation. In this sense loosened constructs emergent during meditation can be firmed up as testable hypotheses after the practice of meditation and then subjected to reality testing. Reality testing may confirm or disprove some of the constructs flowing out of meditation practice. In this way meditation may be seen as a dynamic process where the person's own self is the material which is being innovatively transformed by using material emergent from the unconscious. Here the unconscious is being viewed in the Jungian sense; that is, as potentially nourishing and adaptive, and not just a reservoir of primitive and disavowed material à la Freud's repressed unconscious. Concentrative meditation may facilitate "creative emptiness" in which "benevolent depersonalisation" is fostered, characterised by the discarding of unhelpful id impulses and super-ego and controls (Moncayo 2003).

It may be that at a certain stage of loosening the person begins to lose his or her system's structure (including one's defences), and it is this loss of structure which Kelly

(1955) calls anxiety. Thus it is common for many people involved in loosening techniques, like meditation, to experience sudden bursts of anxiety, and this indeed may be a measure of the degree of their loosening behaviour and their sense of impending loss of structure. This phenomenon may help to explain other reports of paradoxical anxiety/arousal during relaxation (Heide and Borkovec 1983, 1984; Norton et al. 1985). The anxiety experienced during loosening techniques such as mindfulness meditation and relaxation may reflect the degree to which the techniques in question have loosened one's cognitive defences.

It may, by now, be apparent that there appear to be similarities between the cathartic release of emotional material found during meditative unstressing, and that found in the abreaction of free association. Both may have much in common with the cathartic phenomena found by Grof (1975) in his work with psychedelic drugs and later with his technique of hyperventilation. It may be that these techniques act as "loosening" exercises at the somatic level and facilitate the expression of sub-verbal material. Furthermore, it appears that the above loosening techniques have much in common with the "uncovering" techniques of Gestalt therapy (DelMonte 1990, 1995a) insofar as they both facilitate access to material at lower levels of awareness. Meditation practice, like regression techniques, can thus lead to the uncovering of unconscious material. However, all forced uncovering techniques, unlike self-paced ones as in psychoanalysis and meditation, carry the risk that clients subjected to them may have some difficulty in dealing with prematurely exposed material unless given adequate support. This is where the Buddhist approach is relevant.

Constructivism, Buddhism and Duality

As McWilliams (1984) postulates, both Buddhist Psychology and Kellian Personal Construct Theory acknowledge that normal human understanding of our universe involves the use of dualistic conceptual dimensions to make sense of an ultimately unitary universe. For Kelly (1955) all constructs are bi-polar. Kelly in his theorising developed his own bi-polar constructs to elaborate his Personal Construct Theory, such as "loose" versus "tight", and "constricted" versus "dilated", etc.

There is also a long tradition in psychoanalysis of postulating concepts in bi-polar terms. If one can postulate a concept then we can also imagine its opposite. For example, Freud's "pleasure principle" is contrasted with his "reality principle", as is Thanatos, the death instinct, with Eros. This is also true for Freud's "primary process" and his "secondary process" (Freud 1900, 1912, 1930). Bion (1970) similarly distinguished "alpha" functioning from "beta". Jung also contrasted "anima" with "animus","introverted" with "extraverted", and "persona" with "shadow" (Jung 1958). Matte Blanco (1988) with his "bi-logic" theory noted that the deep unconscious is characterised by "symmetry" (no contrasts), whereas logical consciousness is "asymmetrical", that is, is characterised by discriminatory construing such as "male versus female", "mother" versus "wife" and "old versus young". The unitary unconscious is, by means of dualistic construing, increasingly discriminated and complexified as one becomes more and more conscious .

Melanie Klein saw psychological "splitting" as starting in early infancy and persisting throughout most of life, usually to separate the desirable from the undesirable, for example the "good breast" from the "bad breast" (Klein 1946). The "bad" is often disavowed and projected psychologically into demonised others. Buddhist approaches would emphasise the need to see through this illusion of duality via practices such as concentrative and mindfulness meditation.

Buddhists, and many Eastern writers such as De Mello (1990), would see suffering as stemming from our desire to force the unitary (inter-penetrating) world to conform to our dualistic and egocentric cravings, beliefs and values. A fundamental concern about dualistic construing is that it creates conceptual divisions and boundaries in a universe that Buddhists postulate to be inherently holistic, unitary and in constant flux. Thinking tends towards dualism. Concepts tend to fragment reality by discriminating extra layers of asymmetry (differences). Different languages fragment reality in their own unique ways, rendering exact translations between them well-nigh impossible. McWilliams (1984, p.2) wrote, "to the extent that we attend to conventional, dichotomous, ideas about the universe, we are taken away from direct, immediate experience of the universe". McWilliams contends that the Buddhist viewpoint is that it is possible to transcend the illusion of our self-invented dualistic world, and, in seeing the transparency of our construct system, experience a greater sense of unity (with our universe). Such an experience comes from an awareness of how we personally construct our subjective view of this greater reality. This awareness involves a journey which may be unfolded through the practice of mindfulness meditation and the like. An aim of this practice is to put one in touch with compassion and "inter-being", that is, with the inter-penetration and inter-dependence of all forms of life (Thich Nhat Hanh 1975, 1991, 2003). Another aim of meditation is transcendence (DelMonte 2003, 2004).

Transcendence, Ascendance and Descendance

Kelly (1955) was adamant on the notion of bi-polarity of constructs. For Kelly one always abstracts on the basis of both similarity and contrast. Dichotomy is seen as an essential feature and, ultimately, a limitation of thinking itself. Whilst Kelly says that one can transcend one's current biography and not become a victim of circumstance, one can only do this through developing alternative bi-polar constructs. One never escapes from one's construct system, but always assimilates the world through it or through its elaborations. Thus, when one transcends a particular bi-polarity, one tends to climb to a higher and more abstract level, but to a level which, nonetheless, is structured in bi-polar terms.

It may be that some meditation and yoga practices are directly or indirectly attempting to elaborate the non-verbal construing of the person so that it undermines the dualistic verbally-labelled constructions. From this point of view one could initially be talking about "descendance" from the psyche to the soma, rather than transcendence. One, therefore, can distinguish between descendance, ascendance and transcendence. Descendance implies moving "down" from cognitive to pre-verbal construing—be it sensory or somatic. In psychodynamic terms this may be characterised by adaptive regression as opposed to mal-adaptive (e.g. psychotic) regression. With descendance there may also be a gradual decrease in the level of consciousness into the pre-conscious—right down to the somatic unconscious level.

Ascendance, on the other hand, describes a movement "up" to a higher and more abstract bi-polar construct, that is, to super-ordinate construing within one's personal construct system. An example would be learning to appreciate the beauty of sculpture or painting, rather than confining that appreciation to the human body. Freudian "sublimation" of basic instincts and drives comes to mind here. Such super-ordinate construing may, if taken far enough, be seen as the supra-conscious (Assagioli 1965), and at such a level it may also become difficult to verbalise one's experiences, or, in other words, to symbolise. An example here could be sexual or romantic love mutating into ineffable (non-dualistic) spiritual love.

Transcendence, as found in "no-thought", is the feeling of unity or bliss when the meditator has the experience that he or she has transcended the bi-polarity of all cognitive construing—but nonetheless is still construing at a very basic somatic level in terms of balance, posture, respiration, osmo-regulation, blood pressure and other vital aspects of one's metabolism. Transcendence is, therefore, where the person recovers his or her non-verbal sense of "oneness" by not confusing the duality of our personal bi-polar construing with the essential unity of greater reality. Both ascendance and descendance, in so far that they side-step the bi-polar thinking mind, may involve varying degrees of quiescence, the former by superseding the dualistic mind, and the later by reverting to somatic "just being". However, the road to somatic "just being" can be full of pitfalls.

Somatoform Disorders

There can be problems in the development of symbolisation and awareness. We can thus turn to the field of psychosomatic and hysterical disorders where complaints are largely manifested in the somatic format. Patients with psychosomatic symptoms tend to be very concrete in their presentation of complaints due to a difficulty with verbal symbolisation. Such patients often show varying degrees of alexithymia in that they have difficulty identifying and naming their own feelings and those of others (Vanheule et al. 2011). The word "a-lexi-thymia" comes from ancient Greek and means "without words (for) feelings". Unsurprisingly, this condition invariably leads to inter-personal problems (Vanheule et al. 2010) as not being able to notice, locate, name and communicate feelings in oneself and others handicaps the social self. It also leads to a range of psychological disorders including depression and eating disorders (Fonagy et al. 2011).

In discussing disorders involving psychosomatic symptoms, Kelly (1955) illustrates how the "mind-body" construct can be applied pre-emptively by such patients. This is where people often show a strong "mind-body" split. The difficulty lies in both concrete and dualistic thinking. The person is unable to construe herself as a whole because the body is construed in a "mechanical" manner and the area of mind is construed largely in a separate "intellectualized" way (Kelly 1955, p.921). A solution, according to Kelly, for overcoming such mind/body dualism is to be found in (adaptive) regression in psychotherapy to early forms of pre-verbal thinking—"Only at that primitive level may we find that the mind and the body were not pre-emptively separated" (p.921). There are several pathways to achieving such adaptive regression—such as in Gestalt therapy, psychoanalysis, meditation and hypnosis (DelMonte 2011b). For example, in Zen meditation, the use of Koans is an assault on the mind/body dualism found with intellectual defences. Paradoxically, although an objective of meditation is to move beyond, that is to transcend the habitual state of verbalised consciousness, elements of this dualistic state remain incorporated, intact and available for practical, social and aesthetic usage. However, the meditator now becomes aware of these cognitive dualisms as a mindful observer and is less inclined to unwittingly over-identify with them. With mindfulness meditation (Vipassana) one strives to achieve non-dissociative (non-split) consciousness by neither clutching onto nor rejecting the fullness of immediate experience, for example by not having one's attention drift away from one's embodied self while engaging in tasks.

As already mentioned, pre-verbal constructs originated mostly in infancy in order to make sense of those elements of life encountered by the infant in its growth and development. When people get into difficulty using their adult constructions, their last line of defence is often mal-adaptive regression to the pre-verbal constructions of infancy, with

its attendant infantile dependency. Hence we often find psychosomatic symptomatology accompanying strong unfulfilled dependency needs. Hysterical symptomatology, likewise associated with dependency needs, often symbolises strong unconscious conflicts, which one defensively avoids because of inherent feelings of fear, shame or guilt. According to Leader and Corfield (2008) many somatoform symptoms are also associated with strong, largely unconscious, identifications with other people's suffering.

The psychoanalyst Hogan (1995) presents an interesting comparison between hysterical somatoform conversions, which he sees as post-oedipally symbolic, and the more primitive pre-oedipal psychosomatic disorders which, he claims, operate at a lower (often pre-verbal) level of symbolism, with less conscious control. For Hogan, psychosomatic disease of the gut can either represent psychosexual developmental arrest at the oral-anal (or "gut") phase, or an emotional regression back to that phase, following a perceived threat to one's security. In this respect Hogan sees the alexithymia of many psychosomatic patients as a defence against the shame felt about negative fantasies and feelings by blocking their conscious verbalisation. Instead these negative impulses are directed inwards to produce "masochistic gratification in the pain of psychosomatic symptoms" (p.103). This masochism, coupled with alexithymia and/or other defensive postures, makes psychosomatic disorders difficult to treat. So it is to treatment issues that we now return.

Abreaction, Insight and Integration

It has been argued by McGee et al. (1984) that emotional experiences which are too threatening to one's core psychological functioning can be defensively suspended as "un-experienced experiences", in other words, without being emotionally processed or integrated at a conscious level. This phenomenon has also more recently been referred to as defensive "experiential avoidance", and was shown to be correlated with a range of symptoms of psychopathology such as panic, anxiety, depression and PTSD (Keogh et al. 2008). In a sense, such experiences remain akin to the "unfinished business", the "unfulfilled needs", or the "incomplete Gestalten" referred to by Gestalt therapists. These incomplete Gestalten are usually at low levels of cognitive awareness and tend to be psychologically projected or "acted out" behaviourally, for example hysterically, in order to be communicated—often with considerable feeling but with little rational reflection. In this sense the symptoms of hysteria are seen to be functional and symbolic (Szasz 1972).

The weakening of one's cognitive defences during psychotherapy (and during concentrative meditation) facilitates the abreactive emergence of such incomplete Gestalten, as well as of repressed and dissociated material. In other words, the experience which was held in a sort of "suspended animation" can be relived emotionally—initially as "somatic memory", then with hindsight reprocessed and integrated into one's personal construct system at a more insightful level of awareness.

Such integration or assimilation of past experiences into one's construct system can be envisaged as requiring cognitive accommodation in the Piagetian sense (Piaget 1967). This accommodation usually leads to a tighter (cognitive) understanding of the largely sub-verbal experiences had during cathartic abreaction and should enable the client to put some verbal structure onto these pre-verbal feelings. By learning to put verbal form on feeling, the client is in a better position to discuss his or her experiences with others—including the therapist. This facilitates her adaptation into social structures (Lacan's Social Order). She can also "save" energy heretofore required to repress the memory of those psychodynamically threatening events with their associated emotions that were relived during abreaction.

This liberation from a need to repress the past is coupled with increased insight, and is associated with an enhanced observer status in every day life, as one learns to carry-over enhanced insight and awareness into one's daily activities. This process, as already mentioned, is assisted by the practice of meditation—a non-dual aspiration.

Non-dual States

The "no thought" of deep meditation is similar to the Buddhist doctrine of "emptiness" (Mendoza 2010). This is a special emptiness or fallow state full of potential in the Taoist sense—ready to give birth to something new. This fertile void can be envisaged as the non-dualistic essence out of which all form and performance emerges—including our dualistic thinking. In a parallel way, our universe emerged from "nothing" with the "Big Bang" 13.7 billion years ago (Matthews 1995; DelMonte 2011a, b). Behind all form there is an ultimate unknowable reality called "O" by Bion (1970). Bion also described this as the "absolute truth", the"infinite", the"godhead" and "the thing-in-itself" (Bion 1970, ch.3, p.26). It is also characterised by formlessness and timelessness. According to Bion, knowledge emerges out of this absolute truth through transformation of "O" by the "alpha process", that is by secondary process thinking in the Freudian sense. But, whereas "O" can transform into knowledge, the reverse does not apply, as Bion does not accept that knowledge can transform into "O".

The Buddhist viewpoint is that it is possible to transcend the delusion of our self-invented dualistic world, and, in seeing the transparency of our construct system, experience a greater sense of unity with our universe (with "O"?) . Such a transformative experience comes from an awareness of how we subjectively and collectively construct our views of this greater reality. This awareness may be unfolded through mindfulness meditation practice. As already mentioned, an aim of this practice is to put us in touch with the inter-penetration and the inter-dependence of all forms of life ("inter-being"), and also with compassion (Thich Nhat Hanh 1975, 1991, 2003). However, things may not always unfold so smoothly.

Critique and Conclusions

Compared with psychoanalysts, most schools of meditation have little to say about finding, accepting and coming to terms with our inner "badness" or destructiveness (such as anger, hatred, lust, envy and the like). Zen Buddhists refer to "Makyo" as morbid, unwanted, unconscious material which interferes with meditation by arising spontaneously during its practice (Russell 1986). Meditation instructors usually do not seek to analyse emergent Makyo. In this respect the practice of traditional meditation differs from psychotherapy. With the latter, there is an attempt to integrate split off goodness (ego-ideals and idealised objects) as well as badness (our "shadows"), rather than just "side-stepping" our unwanted parts as in meditation (see Main 1982, 1984, 1989; DelMonte 1995b, 2004). Psychoanalysts see splitting as weakening the ego. The approach in meditation is to move beyond the dictate of the ego. A difficulty with this approach could be that individuals who have rather fragmented ego identities tend to be drawn to meditation, yet may experience considerable difficulty in transcending their unintegrated egos (DelMonte 1990). Paradoxically, we need reasonably good "ego-strength" to help us transcend those ego strivings that temporarily yield some pleasure but ultimately little happiness. Hence such transcendence depends for its

success on a healthy ego to be able to temporarily suspend its cognitive (i.e. dualistic) functioning (DelMonte 1987, 1990, 1995b, 2004).

A problem with those who exclusively advocate the "via negativa" is that they tend to deify the "no-self" or "nothingness" experience. Although such experience can have enormous spiritual value for some it can also be a defensive escape into "narcissistic emptiness" (Epstein 1990). In other words, there can be confusion between egolessness and self-abnegation. The latter has been described as pathological de-personalisation and de-realisation, which are forms of hysterical dissociation (Castillo 1990).

Concentrative meditation (Samatha) can be mis-used to deny the importance of the body and aspects of external reality, thereby increasing splits such as found in "mind/body" and "person/world" or subject/object dualisms. Worse still, there is the risk that the via negativa can turn into a painless form of premature self-destruction anticipating death; in other words, working more in the service of Thanatos than of Eros.

Thus concentrative meditation can also be used as a psychological defence (Epstein 1990)—especially in the short-term when it is used to engage in pre-mature relaxation or escapist dissociation (DelMonte 1990). There is always the possibility that some people will abuse the practice of Samatha as a means of escaping from interacting with painful aspects of social life. Others may turn to Samatha as a defence by using it to distance themselves from what they regard as unworthy parts of themselves—namely their aggression, sexuality, intellect, envy and so forth. But, as Epstein points out, these functions are still present (only denied). "Such people often find themselves irresistibly attracted to powerful others who come to contain essential ego functions that are otherwise disavowed" (Epstein 1990, p.78). Hence we find the cult leader phenomenon.

The path of mindfulness should not seek to diminish the embodied self, but rather to accomplish the liberation of self from blind allegiance to impulses and conditioning, as well as from the impoverishment resulting from our defences. Meditation should allow ego just to be ego—neither permanently subjected to repudiation per la via negativa nor indulged with narcissistic grandiosity. The insights gained through psychotherapy show us that Eros cannot stand alone without Thanatos (the Yin/Yang interplay), and that the via negativa, without the bridle of logic afforded by the via positiva, may be no more than an elaborate defence.

Finally, the conclusions of this paper may appear rather paradoxical. Having initially argued for the value of the "talking cure" in dealing with somatoform disorders by learning to put verbal form on elusive feelings, I then go on to deconstruct the notion that such verbalisation be seen as a clinical panacea. Here the value of (silent) concentrative and mindfulness meditation is also acknowledged. There are limits to the "talking cure". Learning to put verbal form on feelings can be developmentally liberating, but can also be defensive—as with intellectualisation, mis-attribution and rationalisation—which serve to contort and reframe the truth of our emotional underworlds and spiritual "overworlds". Hence simplistic notions that mind is superior to body, that "abstract" is better than "concrete" or that one "causes" the other, are just dualistic fallacies! Beyond both matter and mind, or beyond body and language, lies the non-dualistic ineffable domain beyond symbolisation—namely the stillness and silence of Bion's "O" and Matte Blanco's complete "symmetry".

The practice of mindfulness allows one to pay attention to feelings. Emotions are the connection between mind and body, as well as between bodies (the social domain), and even between the social and the transpersonal, and thus can play an integrative role. So we end this paper near to where we began, by allusion to that mysterious extra-linguistic realm variously described as "Primary Reality" (Kelly), the "Real" (Lacan), complete "Symmetry" (Matte Blanco) or "O"—the "Absolute Truth" (Bion)—so diffuse, and yet so desired, by us.

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