

the very act of coming into being, of being conceived, is the enjoining of two particles from opposites. Thus although some of us may experience life as a lone journey, and for all of us this will be so at times, it is from a place where two became one that we are journeying. The great question, then, and one decidedly relevant to the AHP conference theme, is: is the place we are journeying to a place where we will experience (whether consciously or not in our current understanding of consciousness) another enjoining, or a disintegration?

The workshop comprised a series of visualisations, a bit of bio-energetics and some small group and pairs work — the whole residing on a bed of dialogue to allow for discussion and digestion of our own particular experiences. The visualisations were prefaced by a deep relaxation and were aimed at facilitating the experience of aloneness, in both its negative and

its positive concepts. The bio-energetics, which were tactile, had been poached from a wonderful time I had in a workshop with Guy Gladstone several years ago, but reshaped a little to suit my purpose, which was to facilitate the experience of community (leading, ideally, to a sense of oneness in the group) and of being observed as 'other'.

As we develop awareness through life we all have the experience of *clinging*, clinging to the latest sureness, the latest certainty. To allow ourselves to let go, to be part of life's process (which includes death, naturally) is a mighty challenge. It is my belief that we can help each other in meeting this challenge, that we can bring perceptions, unique to our 'enjoinment', to us, that may help others at places where they may have got stuck, places where they cannot let go. It was in this spirit that I offered my workshop.

Drama beyond Self

David Brazier

As a Buddhist psychotherapist I am interested both in the parallels between Buddhist and Western psychology and also in the riddles that exist about what exactly the Buddha did mean. Unlike most Western psychologies, Buddhism suggests that our 'self' is a handicap rather than an asset. Much Buddhist training aims to help us overcome our attachment to self, to a sense of fixed identity or to anything that we think of as essentially 'me'. People in India during the Buddha's day were very interested in the idea of reincarnation. 'If there is no self, what gets

reborn?' they would ask. The Buddha's answer was, it is *karma* that continues. The difficult question that remains is to unravel precisely what the Buddha meant by 'karma'.

The Buddha often told stories which revolved around a description of previous lives — either his own or other people's. Reading these stories it is difficult to escape the impression that they were not always intended to be taken literally. The stories were told to throw light on a current situation by describing a parallel event set in the past. The Buddha would say something

like, 'Once upon a time there was a king and his minister ...' and the story would unfold. The story would have a moral. At the end of the story the Buddha would say, 'And the people in this story are not unknown to us,' and he would identify the characters with people present whose situations were parallel. The Buddha was a good narrator with a sense of drama.

Now 'karma' and 'drama' are closely related words, both of which basically mean 'action'. The Buddha could see the drama of a situation. When he talks about overcoming self, he has in mind freeing us from the melodramas that we get caught up in and liberating us from becoming typecast. The aim is to do with clarifying and freeing ourselves from our karma. After death no person is reborn, but only the karma continues. If we read 'karma' as 'drama' we can throw an interesting light

on Buddhist teaching, one which is particularly useful to me personally as a psychodramatist. What we bequeath to the world is not an immortal soul, but rather the dramas to which we have contributed during our lives.

To try to look at our drama not just as our personal property or individual fate, but as something that was running before we took a part in it and which may continue to run after we have departed, could be an interesting way of getting a new perspective on our lives. It also opens the possibility that the dramas we identify with may not be so intrinsically 'me' as we thought. Getting a sense of drama as karma can free us up. Getting a sense of the impact our dramas may have on others may simultaneously give us a sense of the importance of directing our energy toward constructive ends.

Three Rebirths

John Rowan

According to the theory of Ken Wilber we are all on a path of psychospiritual development. Along this path there are certain stations where we have to change our notion of our selves. For example, the body ego of our early lives has to give way to a highly imaginative self which is very creative and has little sense of what is impossible. This is experienced as a wrench and a loss, as well as progress. Then we have to move on from there to a 'membership' self, which identifies itself with the family, the group, the tribe. This too is felt as a loss as well as a gain. With

adolescence, we move on once more into a more personal sense of having an ego, which again means leaving one state of consciousness in order to go on to another one.

So far we are on common ground. But Wilber says that this process can continue, if we will let it, and that we can move on from the mental ego to yet another version of the self, which humanistic psychology calls the 'real' self or the 'true' self. This very often feels like a crisis, only resolved by a period of therapy. We may have peak experiences at this stage which suggest we