

# The Self in Conversation

## On Narratives, Chronicles, and Scripts

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In this paper, self is conceived as a particular form of mental activity, or process, the dynamic and moving form of which is manifest in the stream of consciousness (James, 1890) and in certain kinds of conversation. A developmental pathway is constructed for self seen in this way.

The development schema depends on the postulate of two fundamentally different forms of human language and conversation. One of the conversations, which has a nonlinear form, becomes a linguistic marker of "self." The emergence of "self" is seen to depend on a form of memory, the autobiographical, which emerges at about four years of age. This memory system also allows the formation of narrative and of the storying that is the basis of culture.

Disruptions of self are conceived according to Jacksonian theory and the notion of trauma. They result in forms of consciousness that are underpinned by memory systems, which, relative to the "autobiographical," are more primitive. The disruptions are manifest in clinical conversations of a less complex, more automatic kind than the narrative of self. They are referred to, in this article, as chronicles and scripts. Successful therapy involves their transformation into a more spontaneous and complex narrative form.

**W**ILLIAM JAMES WROTE OF THE NOTION OF "SELF": "EVER SINCE Hume's time, it has justly been regarded as the most puzzling puzzle with which psychology has to deal" (James, 1890, I, p. 330). The puzzle has not been solved. Perhaps it cannot be solved, at least in its totality. Yet, some kind of solution must be found if an

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adequate theory of therapeutic practice, based on psychological development, is to be built. The solution put forward in this article might be called pragmatic, using that word in the manner of James, one of the founders of the philosophy of pragmatism. "All that the pragmatic method implies," he stated, "is that truths should have practical consequences" (James, 1909, pp. 51-52), that is, they should be useful.

The main thesis of this article is woven about the concept of self put forward by James. It is deceptively simple. He saw self as an awareness of the "stream of consciousness." "Thoughts connected as we feel them to be connected are *what we mean* by personal selves"<sup>1</sup> (James, 1892, pp. 153-154). Thoughts, in this statement, should be understood as a shorthand term referring to that drift of images, feelings, memories, ideas, imaginings, and so forth that are sensed during moments of contemplation or reverie. What is essential to this experience is a nonlinear "shape" resembling that of play (Meares, 1990, 1993; Meares & Lichtenberg, 1995). Self conceived in this way is not a thing or structure but a process. The progressive and sequencing nature of this process resembles the form of narrative. However, it is important that, in this article, the stream of consciousness is understood not as a narrative but as a special form of conversation.

Self conceived in terms of conversation is useful in allowing us to chart an observable development of self from the first moments of life. It is useful, also, in allowing us to study self as shifting state in the therapeutic conversation, words being its marker.

### Proto-Conversation: Dyadic Intersubjectivity

Until quite recently, no developmental pathway could be envisaged for the Jamesian conception of self (i.e., an awareness of the stream of consciousness). However, Flavell, Green, and Flavell's (1993) report makes it possible to construct a preliminary schema. They showed that the child does not discover the experience of the stream of consciousness until surprisingly late—at 4, 5, or 6 years of age. The movement toward this milestone can be seen as beginning in the first moments of life. It is manifest in conversational play.

The young mother characteristically sets up a game with her newborn baby. The game is conversational. She talks to her infant, pretending that her baby can understand and converse with her. She often takes both parts in this dialogue, answering for the baby. Many of her utterances are repetitions (Kaye, 1982). The mother is behaving naturally. The thought does not occur to her that what she is doing is what she should be doing. She is beginning to set up a form of conversational play out of which will form the "selfhood" of her child.

With the increasing responsiveness of her baby, there develops some reciprocity between mother and baby. This progresses remarkably so that, by the age of two months, the engagement between the mother and her baby begins to have the appearance of mature conversation. Trevarthen (1974) called this a "proto-conversation." The voices, facial expressions, and body movements of the mother-baby dyad are finely coordinated—an interrelatedness Trevarthen (1983) termed primary intersubjectivity.

How can these behaviors be seen as forerunner to the Jamesian self? James saw self as double, a duplex unity made up of a pole of awareness, and another of the objects of awareness. He called these poles, for the sake of brevity, the "I" and the "me," the knower and the known.

Although we are born with a rudimentary I, the me is a potentiality. The proto-conversation is a step along the way toward its coming into being. During this engagement, the mother can be conceived as playing out an embryonic me in relation to the baby as I. In her smiling at her baby child, in her quasi-imitative behaviors, she shows the baby who is me (see also Winnicott, 1971). Such emotional reknowing (or recognizing) is an essential aspect of the development of self. The matching between the expressions of the mother and the baby involves the sense of "fit" that, I have suggested (Meares, 1977, pp. 52-56; Meares, 1993, pp. 59-73), generates a feeling of pleasure or well-being, which is at the core of the personal.

At the end of the first year of life, the baby is beginning to take over some of the representing function. The infant performs its own imitations, trying out its version of the behavior of others in playing the "pretend game" (Uzgiris, 1991).

### Symbolic Play: Triadic Intersubjectivity

The Jamesian me is multiple and is found in two main domains. The first involves a sense of inner life; the second concerns who one is in

<sup>1</sup> This sentence does not appear in the 1890 text.

relation to others. In maturity, these two domains, although differentiated, are seamlessly united so that to speak of them in different terms is something of an abstraction. Nevertheless, in this account, it is necessary to distinguish them. The me that is recognized by the world can be called identity: the me of the inner life is self. The former is relatively enduring; the latter is fluctuant and subject to change. This is illustrated in ordinary language (e.g., "I was not myself after she left me").

The emergence of the differentiation between self and identity begins, in an observable sense, at about 18 months. At this stage, there also is a progression to a new form of representing by means of words.

At about 18 months, the child begins to recognize the image of himself or herself as seen by others (Amsterdam, 1972; Lewis & Brooks-Gunn, 1979). He or she knows who is seen in a mirror. At about the same age, the child begins to engage in a form of play that can be plausibly understood as a necessary precursor to self as the stream of consciousness. Piaget called it symbolic play.

Symbolic play, which is apparently a solitary activity, arises out of an earlier dyadic intersubjectivity made up of parent and child.

"A third element needs to be found for self to evolve. This element is the world-to-be-manipulated" (Meares, 1993, p. 33)—that is, pieces of bodies, clothes, bottles, toys. The first manifestation of this third term involves play with these physical objects in the context of a relationship with another who is experienced as part of the infant's personal system. I am calling this preintimate relatedness.

Developmental studies show a trajectory of attentional focus on the part of the child in which increasing interest is shown in things in the physical environment while in relation to the caregiver (e.g., Penman, Meares, and Milgrom-Friedman, 1981).

This trajectory of attentional focus culminates, during the second year of life, in periods of play during which the child is totally absorbed in play with physical objects. His or her absorption in the play is like the state of an adult who is lost in thought. The child may appear oblivious of the caretaker. However, what is essential to this activity going on is the opposite of the appearance. It involves a curious kind of conversation.

As the child plays, he or she is chattering. Piaget (1926) described this scene: "What he says does not seem to him to be addressed to himself but is enveloped with the feeling of a presence, so that to speak of himself or to speak to his mother appear to him to be one and the same thing" (p. 243). Piaget called this a "life of union." The sense of

the presence of the caregiver is necessary to the play going on. In Kohutian terms, the parent is a selfobject (Kohut 1971, 1977) but a selfobject who behaves differently than with a two-month-old. The child is conversing with a quasi-illusory person who is a condensation of both himself and his mother.

This activity is triadic. The scene of symbolic play arises in a metaphorical space between the person who plays and a quasi-illusory other.

## Two Forms of Human Language

Representation of the infant's me is at first the role of the caregiver. Slowly, however, the baby begins to take on this function for himself or herself. With the emergence of symbolic play, the representation of the personal moves beyond the limitations of the body to include language and material objects. What is important about this activity is that it displays a transformation of words and things that are taken from others and from the external environment into the words and scenes of the personal. We are able to observe, in the external world, the coming into being of a cardinal feature of the stream of consciousness—that is, the feeling that this experience is mine. James (1890) noted: "It seems as if the elementary psychic fact were not *thought* or *this thought* or *that thought*, but *my thought*, every thought being owned" (I, p. 226). Baldwin (1906), who Piaget frequently cites and who was the first to study the emergence of self in play, described this transformational process.

During symbolic play, the child takes the things of the world that are not his or her own and makes them into what he or she wishes them to be. "Play is a way of making an object, for present and personal purposes, *what it might be*" (Baldwin, 1906, p. 124). This object now becomes a "semblant object." "The selection of the object for play is a 'personal' selection" (p. 112). In turning the object into what it wants it to be—the leaf into a boat, the stick into a man, the stone into a monster—the child makes a "reconstruction of the real world." What is essential to the selection and to the play is freedom. The selection is not imposed, and the play has about it what Baldwin called the "don't-have-to-feeling" (p. 113).

In that the object is chosen and re-created according to the child's imagination, it has a quality of innerness. Yet, it is also the thing itself. "The play object becomes not the inner or fancy object as such, nor

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yet the outer present object as such, *but both at once*, what we are calling the semblant object, itself the terminus of a sort of interest which later on develops into what is called 'syntelic' or 'contemplative'" (Baldwin, 1906, p. 116).

Baldwin's use of the word contemplative suggests that the scene of symbolic play is the precursor of adult states of reflection or contemplation, conditions under which the stream of consciousness becomes prominent. He implies, consistent with a main thesis of our article, that symbolic play shows us the self in embryonic form. The same or similar laws govern each state.

In the play mode, then, the alien objects of the world are transformed into those things that are sensed as mine. They have about them, as James (1890) remarked, "a sort of warmth and intimacy" (I, p. 223). The language that accompanies symbolic play seems likely to be an essential element of this transformational process.

This language, which Vygotsky described, can be called nonlinear. It operates according to rules different from those governing another language the child uses while engaged with the world of objects, the social environment in general. In this engagement, the child's language can be conceived as linear. It is relatively logical and has a goal.

For much of the time, the child is in linear mode. His or her language is directed toward stimuli provided by the environment. It is a manifestation of "directed thought" (Piaget, 1926, p. 43). Some of the stimuli arise from the child's body (e.g., sensations of hunger or pain). The child's language has a purpose that is obvious and related to the stimulus. Characteristically, it involves questions. The child asks for information, comfort, nurture. Why? What? How? When? These questions are prominent in the child's expressions.

When engaged in symbolic play, the child, rather than being outer directed, is in a state that is embryonically inner. The child's experience, as remarked previously, is equivalent to that of an adult who is lost in thought.

The chattering that accompanies the child's symbolic play is a language that is qualitatively different from that used for communication and for ordinary coping with the environment. "Inner speech is not the interior aspect of external speech—it is a function in itself" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 149). It is condensed, makes jumps, and moves capriciously according to association and analogies. It is often lacking the grammar of ordinary communicative language. At times, it is so condensed as to be incomprehensible, suggesting that its purpose

is not communicative. My thesis is that this curious, nonlinear form of language has the purpose of representing and so fostering the emergence of a personal reality.

The possibility that the language of symbolic play has a peculiarly personal purpose is supported when we examine what the child is chattering about. We find that he or she is characteristically telling a little story. It often reflects aspects of the child's intimate life in an imaginative way. It is an embryonic narrative of self. The child's use of words, like his or her selection and manipulation of toys and other things, is personal. A language that is not a language for others but a language for oneself is used.

Before the age of about four, the child oscillates, often very rapidly, between two states. In the first, which depends on preintimate relatedness, attention is inwardly directed, and the language is nonlinear; in the second, which involves other relatedness, attention is toward the outer world, and the language is linear. The child, then, has two languages and two kinds of conversation (Meares, 1990, 1993).

At about five, the nonlinear form of language accompanying symbolic play begins to disappear. Vygotsky believed that it is internalized. At about this age, the concept of an inner world that is one's own and distinct from the outer world is achieved. This is evident in the child's gaining an understanding of secrecy (Meares and Orlay, 1988).<sup>2</sup> It is also evident in the child's discovery of the experience of the stream of consciousness. With this developmental step the child achieves the sense of self as defined by James. The scene of symbolic play, which is the locus of the embryonic self, has become internalized. The sense of the quasi-illusory other is represented not as a monad but as a form of relatedness (Mitchell, 1988). The nonlinear form of language is now the language of inner life and can be seen as the language of self. The behavior of intimacy, which depends on the revelation and sharing of what is most inward, (Meares, 1976) now emerges and involves the use of this language.

This developmental progression from outer to inner follows the famous principle put forward by Janet and Baldwin (van der Veer and Valsiner, 1994, p. 354). These men proposed that the functions that

<sup>2</sup> Another means of determining the age at which the conceptualization of an inner world is achieved includes the study of false belief (Perner, 1987; Gopnik and Astington, 1988). Wellman (1990) and Hobson (1993) have also investigated the child's "theory of mind."

the adult experiences as part of the inner world and that are unique to humans were originally manifest in the outer world as actions conducted in the context of a particular relationship with others.

At this new stage of development, the two languages become coordinated. Ordinary conversation now involves their intermingling. Embedded in the linear language of adaptation is another language, which is nonlinear and related to the world of self. The third term is no longer visible, but it is now manifest in language. The playspace is now very much a metaphoric field arising, as it were, between people. Self is not only inner but is found or at least manifest in this metaphoric space.<sup>3</sup>

In adult life, the two main forms of human language are found in pure form only in unusual circumstances. The linear language of adaptation is shown, undiluted, in legal and political documents. The nonlinear form is found, relatively pristine, in certain kinds of poetry. The habitual use of the language of adaptation can be understood as a manifestation of alienation, whereas the sense of self is manifest in a language having something of the form of Vygotsky's "inner speech."

### Memory and Narrative

What is the basis of this developmental progression from symbolic play to the experience of a stream of consciousness? An important part of the answer to this question involves memory (Meares, 1995).

The stream of consciousness depends on memory. The flow of images, feelings, ideas, and imaginings of which it consists is linked by associations. Among these memories are scenes of events or of actual episodes in our lives. This memory for episodes or stories in which we have been participants, like the stream of consciousness, develops very late. Nelson (1992) has shown that this kind of memory does not develop until the age of about four or five. If it can be accepted that the emergence of this particular kind of memory allows the stream of consciousness to arise, we must infer that it is crucial to the sense of personal existence that we are calling self. This kind of memory is called autobiographical.

The idea that memory may be modular, consisting of a number of components, not all of which are working at the same time, is relatively new (Gazzaniga, 1989). Of the various modules that make up the memory system, autobiographical memory seems to develop last and is peculiar to the human condition. Other primates function at the level of, perhaps, a two-and-a-half-year-old child. Using this developmental level as a guide, we would assume that, as autobiographical memory emerges at about age four in human life, it is not developed in other primates. It is presumably advantageous to us. What could this advantage be? In order to answer this question, we need to consider autobiographical memory in more detail.

Hudson and Nelson (1986) have subdivided autobiographical memory. There are two main categories. The first is generic. One remembers an aggregate of a number of repeated events (e.g., going to school on a bus that follows a particular route). Such generic memories are obviously adaptive, helpful in everyday coping with the environment. But what possible evolutionary value could there be in a second category of autobiographical memory, which is of single occasions, which provide no general rules for responding to the environment, unless of course these occasions are life threatening or involve survival in other ways? What can be the value, for example, of remembering a picnic on a riverbank when one was eight or what one was doing when President Kennedy was killed? These memories, unlike generic memories, at first sight seem to offer no biological advantage to the human primate. When we think of how these memories are used, however, we begin to sense their significance. These memories are the basis of stories that link up groups of people. When one family member asks, "Do you remember that picnic . . .?" and another replies with a linking memory, a moment of a form of bonding has occurred. Stories help to hold together not only families but also large and diverse groups of people. These stories are frequently of a religious or mythological kind. We might say, then, that the story is the basis of culture. When one considers a culture that is relatively "pure," undisturbed by industrialization—a culture like that of the Australian aboriginal—the significance of stories in weaving the fabric of culture becomes more clearly evident.

### The Chronicle

The triadic kind of intersubjectivity manifest in conversational narrative is not what we encounter in the clinical situation, at least at

<sup>3</sup>Hobson (1985) remarks, "I can only find myself in and between me and my fellows in a human conversation" (p. 135). Hobson is the founder of the conversational model of psychotherapy.

first. Rather, it is a state toward which treatment is directed, toward what Ogden (1986, 1989, 1994) calls the "analytic third."

The common clinical situation is an intersubjectivity of another kind, which is neither primary nor mature but which involves other relatedness rather than interpersonal connectedness or intimate relatedness.<sup>4</sup> The relationship is dyadic rather than triadic. There is no third term. The language is linear. There is a disturbance of the narrative function, so that we are presented with a script<sup>5</sup> or chronicle (White, 1981) rather than a narrative.

Differences between narratives, chronicles, and scripts can be conceived in terms of memory. These differences involve complexity, voluntary control, the experience of time, and the notion of progressive sequencing.

A chronicle is a primitive history. The Oxford English Dictionary defines chronicle as a "detailed and continuous register of events in order of time; a historical record, especially one in which the facts are narrated without philosophic treatment, or any attempt at literary style." The clinical chronicle is, characteristically, a catalogue of problems with the family, with work, and with bodily sensation. Nothing comes from an interior world. The individual's experience is outer oriented, the language is linear, and there is relative poverty of metaphorical usage.

An explanation of this state of affairs can be derived from the developmental schema built around two forms of conversation.

As the development of symbolic play depends on preintimate relatedness, the hypothesis arises that a child who has been relatively deprived of this environmental provision will also have a diminished access to the kind of mental activity that is fundamental to the establishment of self. He or she will be caught in the zone of adaptation. Experience will come, overwhelmingly, from the outer world and be recounted, in linear form, as a series of reactions, with little evidence of the third term, which I am calling self. Put another way, those who suffer disorders of self will be afflicted with a form of "stimulus entrapment" (Meares, 1997).

A complementary and in some ways more powerful explanation depends on the work of Jackson, a neglected pioneer in the study of

<sup>4</sup>The word intimate here refers to what is inward. As common usage is less precise and limited, the less expressive term interpersonal connectedness might be preferred.

<sup>5</sup>The word script has been used by many writers. Schank and Abelson's (1977) usage has been particularly influential.

mental illness and an influence on Freud. Jackson (1931-1932) also anticipated the notion of the two fundamental human conversations which he called "external speech" and "internal speech" (vol. 2, p. 207). He wrote: "We speak, not only to tell other people what we think, but to tell ourselves what we think" (Vol. II, p. 131).

A Jacksonian explanation depends on two assumptions. They are, first, that a failure of preintimate or intimate relatedness is, in a minor way, traumatic and, second, that psychological trauma can be conceived as analogous to a physical or toxic disruption of central nervous system function (Terr, 1994, pp. 29, 201).

Jackson maintained, as is well known, that those functions that have evolved most recently and that appear last in human development are more fragile than functions that evolved earlier. Traumatic, electrical, or toxic insults to the central nervous system cause these most recently evolved functions to be lost first. Jackson suggested that at least certain forms of mental illness could be understood in terms of this principle, which he called "dissolution," a reverse of the evolutionary trajectory. As it would seem that self, and the memory that forms its basis, is new in terms of primate evolutionary history, we would predict that this system will be lost first when environmental circumstances are traumatic. In particular, it would be predicted that an individual who has experienced repeated minor traumas will function by means of a memory system that is earlier or more primitive than the autobiographical.

This indeed seems to be the case. In our studies of borderline patients (Stevenson & Meares, 1992), Garbutt (1997) has coded all utterances recorded in randomly chosen audiotapes of 15 sessions with different borderline patients. The patients' utterances concerned, in the large majority of cases (57.5%), events of the previous few days. The remote past of childhood was rarely referred to (3.9%).

A memory for events of the last few days appears earlier in development than the autobiographical. It is manifest in the third year of life, whereas the autobiographical appears in the fifth. Episodic memory seems to be the dominant form of memory operating in borderline individuals.

Jackson's theory predicts other aspects of the form of conversation of those with disorders of self. He stated that evolution involved a progression toward more complex functions over which the individual has greater voluntary control. Under traumatic conditions, his theory states, the reverse trajectory is apparent. Accordingly, the chronicle should be less complex and should involve less voluntary control than

the narrative. The chronicle's more limited form of voluntary control is exhibited in sequencing. Whereas narrative has a progressive sequencing showing the quality of freedom—the "don't-have-to-feeling" that Baldwin associated with symbolic play—the free sequencing of chronicle is diminished. The sequence is imposed from without.

The less complex nature of chronicle is implied in the dictionary definition which highlights the fact that chronicle is without "philosophical treatment." It is unprocessed. The things that have happened are recounted as if they had not entered that form of nonlinear mental activity that is the basis of the stream of consciousness.

The chronicle, which reflects a state of disconnection from inner experience, is told in a relationship of disconnection. It emerges in an established therapeutic relationship when the atmosphere of interpersonal connectedness is broken up. The chronicling conveys a sense of deadness, as the creative aliveness of a nonlinear, playful self, which depends on this atmosphere, is lost. Both partners are bored but also afflicted with a vague unease. The chronicle, however, is the starting point of much psychotherapeutic work.

The chronicle should not be understood as resistance, and, as Balint (1987) implies in a discussion of a case of this kind, the memory failure should not be considered a consequence of repression. It is the manifestation of damage. The damage is likely to have been of the kind identified by Balint (1963) in an earlier article, "On Being Empty of Oneself." Balint felt that this state was the result of a mismatch between infantile experience and maternal perception. Mismatching triggers the child's experience toward the outer world, leaving the inner zone stunted, depleted, and, at times, painfully vacant (Meares, 1993).

### The Traumatic Script

Damage may be greater than disconnection—breaking up, through very high anxiety, a background sense of self, however stunted or frail. This kind of trauma, inflicted by a variety of means (e.g., shame, abuse, devaluation), leads to a feeling of annihilation. Jacksonian theory predicts that, relative to the chronicle, trauma will be recorded in a more primitive memory system and will manifest itself in a way that shows less sequencing, a more limited temporal dimension, less voluntary control, and less complexity. Rather than a chronicle, it is a script.

The script is triggered automatically by contextual circumstances that mirror, in a minor way, the original trauma. These circumstances include aspects of the therapist's behavior and inner states (Brandchaft, 1993). In this way, conversation that is driven by a script and that is characteristic of what we might call the trauma zone involves transference and experiences that are not repressed but that are, in a way, unconscious, as they involve memories that are not experienced as such but as realities of the present situation. The script lacks a sequencing quality. It is repetitive, governed by "invariant organizing principles" (Brandchaft and Stolorow, 1990, p. 108). It simply tells the individual that he or she is bad, worthless, stupid, weak, and so forth and in the presence of a critical, devaluing, intrusive, and so forth other.

A narrative involves time. Events are going on that relate to a past and to a future. In a script, however, time is relatively absent. The action takes place in the present. The individual seems unaware that he or she is in the grip of a memory. At our present state of knowledge, it is reasonable to suppose that this memory system is the "semantic," which becomes manifest in the first year of life, well before the "episodic" and "autobiographical."<sup>6</sup> It is beyond the access of the reflective process. It does not include memories of actual episodes but only memories of "facts" (e.g., personal attributes).

The traumatic system requires a discussion that is beyond the scope of this article. It is almost devoid of self as defined by James. It involves a form of experiencing others that depends on a pathological subject-object representation in which there is a near fusion with an alien object (Meares, 1993, pp. 87–100). The third term of mature intersubjectivity is lacking.

### Therapeutic Language

Three different forms of conversation have now been described. They are characterized by the terms narrative, chronicle, and script. They hypothetically depend on different forms of memory—the autobiographical, the episodic, and the semantic, respectively.

<sup>6</sup> Tulving (1972, 1983) was the originator of the distinction between "semantic" and "episodic" memories. "Autobiographical" memory is considered an aspect of episodic memory and is sometimes called "remote episodic."

Despite the fact that, in the clinical situation, we are confronted with many different forms of conversation, the tripartite classification I have given has a heuristic value. It gives us a way of thinking about the storying that is going on in the clinical situation.

In a broad generalization, we can say that the clinical encounter begins with conversations of the second and third type (i.e., the chronicle and the script). The therapeutic conversation starts in the language of alienation.

When the therapist is confronted with a chronicle, the therapeutic aim will be to transform this conversation into one that is more complex. Using Spence's (1984) terminology, the task involves the transformation of "historical truth" into "narrative truth." Most important, it fosters the emergence of "aliveness" out of "deadness" (Ogden, 1997a, b). In the case of the script, the task involves an integration of this sequestered, unconscious, and automatically triggered system into another system operating under different laws—namely, the stream of consciousness.

In both of these cases, the success (or otherwise) of the endeavor will depend on the form of language employed. Integration, we might suppose, involves a process of transformation similar to what can be observed in symbolic play and inferred for the stream of consciousness. This involves the use of a language that resonates with inner life. The therapist's aim is to connect. He or she must not get caught up in the language of the chronicle or the script. The therapist who repeatedly uses interventions of a linear kind is likely to be untherapeutic (Meares, 1973) or worse (Meares and Hobson, 1977).

A language of connectedness is the opposite of the logical and linear. Although it is apparently "ordinary," it has ideally the effect of poetic expression. Ogden (1997c, in press) uses Robert Frost as a model in his explorations of the therapeutic use of words. Such usage involves skill and is, in terms of some authoritative definitions, an art. Art, as Langer (1957) put it, "is the creation of expressive forms to present ideas of feeling or what is sometimes called the 'inner life' of subjective reality" (p. 112).

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