St. Stephen's College

QUIET MAGIC: Using Metaphor Journeys to Explore Transition in an Arts-based Group Setting
by

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Abstract

This arts-informed study investigates how a group of eight participants, who self-identified as being in a transition process, experience an arts-based, six session group workshop entitled *Quiet Magic,* led by the author and organized around metaphor themes. A rite of passage and a hero's journey provide the thematic context for the workshop sessions. The author examines three aspects of participants' experience: 1) participating in a group-based experience, 2) undertaking various art-making activities that formed the body of the workshop sessions, and 3) making art and being involved in other workshop experiences related to a mythic and metaphoric journey. The author analyzes research data using a method of constant comparison inquiry and identified four overarching themes. These themes were metaphoric thinking, emergent form, personal process, and metaphoric journey. The author views these themes as qualities of the creative flow that were activated when participants undertook the liminal phase of their journey during the six sessions of the workshop. The research data shows arts-based metaphor journey themes may be helpful to workshop participants in facilitating their intra-psychic exploration. These journey themes can lead participants to gain new insights and perspectives as they move through a period of transition. To be effective, however, the use of metaphor journey themes in a workshop setting need to match the individual requirements of participants' personal learning process. Overall, this research suggests metaphoric themes and metaphoric thinking, when used in conjunction with art-making experiences, can foster a creative flow of expression and provide a supportive bridge for exploring personal development and transition.

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Introduction

For as long as I can remember, I have been interested in the creative process. I have created visual art; written stories, poems, songs, and movie scripts; made educational videos; designed courses and workshops; and developed training products. I am most alive when I am in the creative flow of inner exploration and authentic expression, either on my own or with others.

In Western society, many people have a tendency to inhibit and disconnect from their unique and individual expression of this creative flow in favour of conforming to cultural and societal norms that currently tend to emphasize a rational orientation to life. In separating from this innate natural flow of our creative juices, I believe we also, in some way, disconnect from the life force and its ability to enliven our physical and intra-psychic health and wholeness. In my view, cutting off from our creative birthright can inhibit personal development and lead to mental, emotional, and physical disease. Dance therapist Roth's (1989) life's work was dedicated to empowering people through the creative process and helping them restore health, wholeness, and vitality to their lives. As an art therapist, I also hold the intention of empowering people through the creative process. One of my practicum clients referred to his art therapy experience as "quiet magic." I found his phrase so revealing and evocative as a metaphor for the power of art therapy to reconnect people to their creative flow, that I used it both for the title of my research workshop and this thesis.

Research Purpose

The research question I used to focus this study is: "How do people, who self -

identify as being in a transition process, experience an arts-based group workshop that is organized around metaphoric themes?" Through a six-session workshop, the study was designed to explore participants' experiences of an arts-based metaphor journey within a group setting. Before the start of the workshop, each participant was asked to identify and describe a current point of transition in his or her life. My research aimed to explore with each individual the experience of participating in the workshop in relation to their identified transition starting point. The metaphors explicitly included in the workshop drew upon the ideas of journey as (a) a rite of passage, (b) a hero's journey, and (c) an archetypal journey. This thesis discusses how each participant described their personal development in relation to participating in the workshop. These workshop experiences were explored within the context of (a) participating in a small group workshop; (b) participating in concentrated periods of individual and group art-making; and (c) participating within the context of an explicit metaphoric journey theme.

Research Focus

I had previously conducted a number of group-based art workshops that encouraged participants to explore and express something of their inner lives. Three core ideas had been crystallizing in my mind for some time about the value of these workshops and I wanted to explore these ideas in more detail, as I believed they would be central to the way I would work as an art therapist. These ideas were further developed by my background reading and study courses while at St Stephen's College, in conjunction with my personal interest and involvement in the creative process. My own art-making journey, the facilitation of public creative art classes, and my experience of undertaking 350 hours of client work during my art therapy practicum led to the desire to

explore these ideas in greater depth through this thesis.

Central to this thesis is an exploration of the psychological nature of liminality and its place in art-based expression. Liminal, from the Latin word *limens* meaning threshold, is the central transitional phase of a rite of passage (Turner, 1967). The three core ideas underpinning my planning and facilitation of the six Quiet Magic workshop sessions were that: (a) accessing one's creative flow and bringing it into authentic expression can promote and enliven an individual's personal development; (b) while participating in an arts-based metaphoric journey individuals can enter a *liminal space* that naturally supports personal insight and growth; and (c) the art forms that emerge for participants during immersion in this liminal space are able to capture and elucidate elements of their inner world and provide insight and encouragement for personal development.

I took these three ideas into the design and implementation of the *Quiet Magic* workshop that formed the basis of my research project. Here I further expand on these ideas as they explicitly informed both the workshop design and implementation and my research inquiry.

a) Accessing creative flow.

The idea of encouraging and supporting creative flow appears central to the practice of art therapy. McNiff (1995) asserted that "the presence of the creative process transforms life" and that "if we imagine healing as an energy of creative transformation then the purpose of art therapy is the cultivation of the salubrious force" (p. 180). Kapitan (2003) described this salubrious force as "a river that constantly flows with vitality, whose energies are needed for a creative life lived in motion" (p. 28). Kapitan

added that our role and function as art therapists is to tap into this creative vitality.

E. Levine (2003) wrote of the importance of tending the fire of creativity and of helping

our clients to "reconnect with their lost or diminished creative source" (p. 12). Time and

again in my practicum experience, I witnessed how promoting and supporting the

creative flow in clients' art-making experiences helped to release blocks and stagnation in

the inner world of the psyche, dislodge outworn beliefs, and encourage the development

of new insights and perspectives. In my thesis research workshop I wanted to create

opportunities that stimulated and supported creative flow in my participants. My

assumption was that, in doing so, their art-making experiences would connect them more

fully to the source of their own creative flow and thus "reflect their inner being in ways

that other forms of healing cannot" (Malchiodi, 2002, p. 19).

      b) A metaphoric art-based journey.

      Our lives can be viewed as a journey through time and space; however this is not

a simple linear journey from past through present to future. It also involves an intra-

psychic process of development. Personal development on the outside is often the result

of change on the inside. Hillman (1997) described this psychological maturing process as

one of "growing down" before growing up (p. 243). Campbell (2008) demonstrated how

this growing down process can be found in many of the world's myths. He refers to the

common features of this internal-external journey as a mono-myth. Campbell depicts this

as the hero's journey into the underworld, a journey that generally begins with a call to

wake up and leave behind one's familiar and comfortable life. In much of his writing,

Campbell (1988, 1990, 1997) shows how the metaphors and symbols present in mythic

journey tales can be interpreted in terms of a psycho-spiritual journey of discovery of the

deeper inner levels of the psyche.

Many of these mythic journeys can also be viewed as *rites of passage* (Van Gennep, 1961). Turner (1967) describes a rite of passage as a crossing over from the old and familiar to the undiscovered territory of the new. This crossing over contains three distinct phases: pre-liminal, liminal, and post-liminal, with the liminal phase being the phase that is particularly supportive of growth and transformation. Judith (2013) explicitly referred to mythic journeys as a crossing of the liminal zone between an old way of being and a new way that calls to our hearts. Judith suggested that our current world scenario can be viewed as a collective heroic journey that is moving us towards a global awakening of a heart-based paradigm for living.

In my research workshop, I introduced participants to these ideas of a mythic and metaphoric journey. My assumption was that the liminal phase of the journey might help shape and deepen art-based inner exploration and expression, in turn supporting personal development and helping each individual navigate their transitions.

c) The emergent art form.

S. Levine (2009) referred to art-making as a way of shaping our response to experience. He described how, through the activity of art-making, we can find "forms that make sense of life through imaginative transformation" (p. 18). McNiff (1992) wrote of how art-making can produce images that are a "spontaneous emergence from another realm" (p. 76). Both Levine and McNiff wrote of drawing inspiration from the deeper levels of the psyche where the natural language of art is formed from image, myth, and metaphor. Allen (2005), another art therapist, suggested "guiding images are waiting for us if we choose to receive them" (p. 86). Campbell (1997) eloquently captured this idea:

"when you are in the act of creating there is an implicit form that is going to ask to be brought forth, and you have to know how to recognize it" (p. 151). Each of these authors expressed ideas about the authentic emergent form that can arise during immersion in art-making. By emergent forms, I mean those incipient structures, symbols, and images that come unplanned, and seemingly from the deeper levels of our psyche. Such forms, because of their spontaneous, uncontrived nature and energy, can bring fresh and surprising insight, renewal, and nourishment to an individual's growth process. Through the research workshop experience I sought to provide opportunities for such spontaneous emergence of images in participants' artwork. My assumption was that such images could make participants' internal worlds more visible to them as authentic expressions from their own inner depths.

Personal Development and Transition

I believe one value of this particular study lies in its contribution towards research into effective ways of supporting people's personal development through art-based experiences. I see personal development as being central to our maturing process. Personal development, also known as self-development and personal growth, is generally characterized as "the pattern of movement or change that begins at conception and continues throughout the lifespan" (Santrock, 1999, p. 16). It can involve changes in mental, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual development. For the purposes of this research, I allowed participants to self-identify the significant aspects of their own developmental process that arose from their workshop experience rather than impose a definition of personal development. These aspects broadly revealed themselves as: increased self-awareness, changes in thinking, re-examined beliefs, emergence of new

attitudes and altered perspectives and points of view. The criterion that helped elicit the developmental aspects arising from the workshop experience, both for myself as researcher and for participants, was participants' self -identified transition process established prior to the start of the workshop.

People's lives can be viewed as an ongoing process of change and transition, including when such transition is an adaptation to changes in their immediate environment. Developmental theories also subscribe to the notion of significant transitional stages and events within the human life cycle such as birth, adolescence, marriage, and death (Sugarman, 2004). Although I left unspecified the type of transition participants might be experiencing when I invited them to take part in the workshop, I was aware that it might include significant life cycle changes. Significant transitional points in the human life cycle include such experiences as adolescent growth, leaving home, changing country and culture, preparing for work, changing career, finding a life partner, marriage, having children, separation and divorce, sickness and loss of mobility, surviving abuse and trauma, the death of a significant other, a mid-life crisis, menopause, retirement, old age, or adjusting to a time of spiritual awakening (Santrock, 1999). Clearly, the naming of what brings people to points of transition and growth is as varied as the individuals who experience them.

Personal development can also be viewed as a transformative journey, what Jung described as *individuation*, a profound process of change that takes place in the depths of the psyche (Jung & Storr, 1983). Sheehy (1995) wrote that as a general rule "it is discontent in the inner realm that signals the necessity to change," and that a developmental stage is not signaled so much by "marker events" as by "an underlying

impulse toward change that signals us from the mind or spirit" (p. 12). This idea of being signaled or called by an inner impulse tallies with Campbell's (2008) notion of receiving a call as the instigator of the heroic journey.

I wondered whether the inner realm of the psyche contains encoded structures or evolutionary blueprints that are activated at critical, transitional points during an individual's life journey. Such wonderings led me to consider including art experiences in the workshop that might activate archetypal energies as deeper, more universal levels of the psyche (Jung, 1983). With this is mind, I drew inspiration from the writings of Moore and Gillette (1991) and Hillman (1997). Moore and Gillette suggested there is a developmental structure to the deeper archetypal levels of the psyche, which they call the mature archetypes. I wondered whether having an increased awareness of these deeper structures and inner resources might offer support in a period of transition. This idea echoed the notion of digging deep when we are in trouble and in need of help beyond what we have previously known. Campbell's (2008) descriptions of threshold-crossing as a significant part of the hero's journey also seemed applicable here. I was also aware of the notion of daemons (Hillman, 1997; McNiff, 1992) as guides and helpers on the inner journey.

In my research project, I anticipated that participants might come having identified only a superficial need for change. As a researcher, I hoped that the metaphoric journey theme for the art-making experience might invoke deeper levels of awareness that would have a positive effect on participants' ability to engage and move through transition. My own bias towards intra-psychic deepening processes was an influence in how I set up this research project.

Art Therapy and Personal Development

Artwork created in therapeutic settings is sometimes viewed as contributing to journeys of change, personal development, and transformation. McNeilly (2006) for example, suggested "art therapy can provide a pictorial bridge between the past and the present" (p. 124) as well as open doors to the future. Liebmann (1986) proposed art therapy can facilitate seeing "the patterns of the past, and maybe even the shape of things to come" (p. 64). I chose to employ this journey idea in discovering whether, over a six-week period of art-making, participants noticed changes that might help them navigate more successfully through the transition points they had identified at the start of the workshop. I did not know what these changes might be. As a researcher, I hoped they might be seen within the context of personal development.

At the heart of art therapy is the presumed effectiveness of the creative process in supporting individuals to deal with difficult situations and to develop personal resources to support change and growth in their lives. In some cases it can be helpful to view this creative process as a form of rite of passage in which the artist/client leaves behind her familiar *pre-liminal* world; enters the *liminal* space of the studio environment and wrestles both internally and externally with the process of creating something new, meaningful, and satisfying (Turner, 1967; Van Gennep, 1961). Eventually, following a period of immersion and reflection (B. Moon, 2012), the artist may return with a new creation— perhaps a meaningful wisdom gift for her *post-liminal* re-entry to her outer world. The liminal phase is

In a similar vein, psychotherapy in general can be viewed as having a three-stage structure. The client first enters the therapeutic space and into relationship with the

therapist, bringing her past and present familiar world. In the middle transitional phase of the client's therapeutic journey, the client is encouraged to enter a creative process of change that involves exploring, confronting, and integrating inner difficulty and turmoil. In the final phase, the client emerges having hopefully healed in some way and perhaps discovered greater inner resources that will be beneficial in returning to his or her outer circumstantial world (Beels, 2007; Levis, 2014). Of course life is rarely this linear or straightforward. Growth and change, as with therapy, is more often a cyclical process that moves in fits and starts and loops back upon itself. Personal development and transformation rarely comes down to a single significant event. However, given this cautionary note, I chose to consciously apply the three stage rite of passage model to the design and implementation of the Quiet Magic workshop that was to provide the source data for my inquiry.

Art-making in a Group Setting

I assumed that the context of art-making within a group setting would also have a significant impact on participants' experiences. I chose to explicitly build in opportunities for group interaction, group art-making, and reflection. I wanted to know how the group, and specifically group interaction, would affect participants' experience of the workshop. B. Moon (2008) remarked that when people come together to make art, the multiple relationships of participants to therapist, materials, tools, images, art works, and other participants, in combination with experiences that engage body, mind, emotions, and senses "are where the curative aspects of art therapy are enacted" (p. 117). McNiff (1995) added that there is real magic in "the eternal healing functions of art and the participation mystique of community creation" (p. 181), and "the diversity of creations and

possibilities tends to be the most remarkable outcome of creating with others" (2003, p. 9). For Riley (2001) groups are a minor miracle and when art-making becomes part of the equation "the group has voice, behaviour, and eyes!" (2001, p. xviii). I hoped that the group dynamic would also play a role in the quiet magic available for participants on their inner journeys.

The notion of *communitas* as a key component of a rite of passage was another aspect of group dynamic that might develop during the workshop (Turner, 1967). Turner described communitas as a spontaneous phenomena, where an "intimate bond of relationship" (p. 133) and an experience of shared humanity can arise during the liminal phase of a rite of passage. I wondered whether such a heart-based experience of connectedness might result from participants coming together to experience creative flow.

A Metaphoric Theme

"Quiet Magic" is also part of the world of metaphor and myth. I consciously built into the workshop the thematic structure of a rite of passage, some key aspects from the hero's journey as described by Campbell (2008), and an element of archetypal journey (Moore & Gillette, 1991; Judith, 2013). I wanted to introduce these metaphoric themes as entry points into exploring the deeper levels of the psyche, where greater personal resources might be uncovered. The two frameworks of a hero's journey and rite of passage, with an archetypal journey element, provided the thematic context for the participants' art-based workshop experience. As a researcher I was keen to observe how these thematic components might influence the art-making experience for participants.

To direct or not to direct as a therapist and facilitator is a common question in the

art therapy studio. During my practicum, I frequently wrestled with the question of how, when, and whether to provide direction for clients in their art-making experience. Art-making as an activity is sometimes described as healing in and of itself (McNiff, 2004; Allen, 1995). This begs the question whether there is any need for further direction. Why not simply set up an inviting studio space and provide a rich and enticing range of art materials and mediums to stimulate creativity? In addition, I could provide an open and welcoming facilitative presence in the studio space and step back to see if something happened. In responding to the question of providing direction, McNeilly (2006) suggested direction is naturally present in art therapy processes and the idea of a directive or non-directive art therapist is an outmoded perspective. In my own research, I wanted to explore whether I could achieve an effective balance between giving and not giving direction to participants. I hoped to provide a space that encouraged freedom of expression while also providing structured art-based experience supportive of participants' personal growth and development.

Defining a Research Method.

Arriving at a suitable research method for my study proved a difficult process that included a number of trials. Eventually, framing my investigation as an arts-based qualitative study facilitated my ability to both capture the significant components and themes arising from participants' workshop experience, as well as reflect upon possible meanings and significance arising from that experience. Eisner (2003) proposed that qualitative research is a mix of art and science and that there are multiple ways of constructing knowledge. On the other hand, Finley (2003) firmly placed these alternate ways of knowing, that were being used in the wake of postmodernist influenced art-based

research studies, in the arena of cutting edge, qualitative research. Sinner, Leggo, Irwine, Gouzouasis and Grauer (2006) demonstrated how art-based research involves an active search for meaning in which artistic expression is at the heart of the inquiry. This was the core of this study.

The Quiet Magic workshop was structured as a series of six weekly, 3-hour sessions with a group of eight participants. Each participant chosen for the study had expressed an interest in an arts-based approach to exploring personal development.

I set out to gather data of participants' individual and shared experiences from the *Quiet Magic* workshop as captured in their artwork, in group discussions, and in post-workshop reflective interviews that explored meaning and insight arising from three examples of their workshop artwork. I was fortunate to have two research assistants to both video and digitally photograph portions of the weekly sessions. These provided a visual record of the art-making experiences and captured dialogue during group discussions. The post-workshop interviews conducted with each participant were also videotaped and transcribed.

In this introduction, I have presented my motivation for conducting this study, stated the research question, clarified my underlying assumptions, introduced some of the literature, defined some of the terminology, and briefly outlined the methodology I used to guide my inquiry. In the following chapter, I review the literature in detail of authors that have influenced my thinking over the course of writing this thesis.

Literature Review

Exploring the context surrounding my research question involves discussing the art therapy and psychotherapy theorists who have influenced the development of this study. Following this is a discussion of the literature that addresses various aspects of the metaphoric journey including the use of thematic approaches, the experience of group journeys, the intra-psychic nature of the journey, and the emerging form.

A Theoretical Framework for Art Therapy Practice

Underpinning this thesis and my facilitation of the Quiet Magic workshop is my own transitional journey towards becoming an art therapist. As a developing art therapist, I have sought to establish an authentic and well-considered theoretical framework to understand personal growth, transition, and change processes in my clients' lives. Schaverien (2000) explained how "in a profession such as art therapy, developments evolve from practice; it is out of this that theory gradually emerges" (p. 57). At this stage in my journey, I seek to hold theory lightly, while at the same time drawing upon a number of influences that resonate strongly with me.

When it comes to the process of art-making, I have long admired Bruce Moon's existential approach to working with, and alongside clients. He emphasizes the centrality of art-making for both the client and the art therapist and views art therapy as "going on a shared journey . . . to discover the meaning of clients' lives as they emerge in artistic processes and products" (2012, p. 71). Moon wrote in depth about the significance of metaphor in clients' artwork and suggested ways to listen and respond to metaphoric communications that describe clients' transitional journeys (2007). He described, for example, in working with adolescents, how the metaphoric expressions and existential

themes of the unfairness of life, pain, discomfort, struggle, loneliness, and responsibility show up repeatedly in clients' images (2012).

An influence I have often found helpful in enabling clients to reflect upon the significance of their artworks is the phenomenological approach described by Mala Betensky (1995). Her approach provides a constructive method of looking at artwork that begins with paying attention to the visual language components of an image such as line, colour, shape, and composition, and then moves on to uncovering meaning and significance. I used Betensky's "what do you see?" approach with workshop participants when we came to reflect upon their artwork during the post-workshop interviews. I also employed Carpendale's (2009) three level approach to processing artwork, which includes attending to the concrete, metaphoric, and self-reflective levels of description. This three-tiered approach allows for "a progression from what is actually seen in the art, to an unfolding of symbolism and metaphor that can then assist an individual to reflect on a deeper level of personal meaning" (Lummis, 2004, p. 34). This approach became an important ingredient in workshop participants' ability to deepen their level of insight into their developmental processes.

Both Moon (2009) and McNiff (2004) emphasized the importance of the art studio space and the need for it to convey safety, enthusiasm, and predictability. These ideas were central to my thinking about the kind of ambience and interaction I wanted to establish for the Quiet Magic workshop. Moon and McNiff also share the view that there is real value in establishing collaborative relationships in the studio and in making art alongside clients as they work. Although I share this view, as a researcher I chose not to make art alongside workshop participants, as I was intent on observing the dynamics of

the group as whole. However, I did pay close attention to whether the ambience of the studio environment and the promotion of a safe and trusting group dynamic could nurture and support a flow of creativity that would be contagious both amongst and between participants during their art-making experiences.

S. Levine's (1997, 2009) philosophic writings about the creative process were also an important influence to my thinking and affected my design and facilitation of the workshop. His ideas about knowing something by shaping it and giving it form; his exploration of liminality as central to the creative space and process; and his discussion of how the spirit of *communitas* (Turner, 1967) can arise in a group setting when individuals bear witness to each other's creative endeavors, were especially influential.

I hoped workshop participants would tap into deeper inner levels and resources through their artwork. Three writers were particularly influential in my thinking about how access to these deeper levels can become apparent in the artwork. Allen (1995, 2005) is an art therapist who explored personal growth and transformation through connecting with archetypal energies. She considered that when we commit to art-making as a way of knowing, we come to a point where "certain images appear 'numinous' or spirit-filled" (1995, p. 87). Allen suggested these emergent forms are our primary or archetypal images that take us into the deeper levels of the psyche. Schaverien (1999), an analytic art therapist working from a Jungian perspective, also discussed the archetypal qualities that can appear in clients' artwork. She suggested that these archetypal energies can "influence the choice of a certain image at a certain time" and imbue pictures with "their numinosity" (p. 21). Schaverien also made helpful distinctions between embodied images and descriptive or diagrammatic pictures. She defined embodiment as the "life in

the picture" (p. 102). In an embodied image, the feelings that went into the creation of the artwork become an integral part of the image (p. 92). These ideas proved helpful when it came time to discuss the meaning and significance of images with participants during post-workshop interviews.

McNiff (1992, 1995, 2003, 2004) is an enduring influence in my approach to art-based expression in a group setting. McNiff wrote cogently about the diversity of creations and possibilities that can open up when people make art together and of "the remarkable outcome of creating with others" (2003, p. 9). He gave equal emphasis to the value of both the process and the product of client artwork and offered a range of creative methods for relating to artistic creations as entities in their own right, through dialogue, drama, prose, and poetry (1992, 2004). A number of workshop participants linked their art images with poetry writing, dramatic enactment, and ritual. McNiff (2004) also wrote eloquently and enthusiastically about the infectious nature of creative flow, creative energy, and the transformative power of art as therapy. These ideas were central to my own thinking about what might emerge in participants' workshop experiences.

An Art-informed Approach to Inquiry

McNiff, Moon, and Allen are all good examples of the artist as therapist stance towards art therapy, which gives primacy to the therapeutic value of the art-making process. Each of these theorists attests to the power of both process and product to facilitate personal development. One of the criticisms leveled at the artist as therapist stance, however, is the lack of rigorous analysis applied to demonstrating the effectiveness of art as therapy. Although there is a growing body of empirical research on the content of imagery and the study of images, there is little on the processes of art-

making, on the dynamics of the relationship between art therapist and art maker, and "most importantly why, when and how art-making is healing" (Kapitan, 2010, p.43). Eaton, Doherty, Rebekah and Widrick (2007) also criticized the lack of methodological specificity regarding outcome variables in much of art therapy research. They argued this limits the usefulness of many studies and researchers' ability to generalize. I disagree. Given there is "no clear window into the inner life of an individual" and "no single method can grasp all of the subtle variations in ongoing human experience" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 19), it seems important that arts-based research with its ability to bring a legitimate postmodern perspective be welcomed at the research methods table.

Theories employed by art therapists are often eclectic in nature, and art therapy remains an ill-defined field of study. Given this lack of definition, Kapitan (2010) recommended that artist as therapist researchers be explicit about their uniquely aesthetic worldview as this affects "how they interact with therapeutic concepts, what they are predisposed to value or pay attention to in therapy, and how they interpret information from the clinical environment" (p. 30).

My viewpoint is that of an artist as therapist. How I gain knowledge of the world and of my clients is through art-informed inquiry. I am interested in what emerges from first-hand experience and my interpretive framework is guided by reflection upon the subjectively contextualized experiences of myself and my clients (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The motivation for conducting this study lies firmly in the arena of arts-informed inquiry. The study seeks to establish valid relationships between the variables of art-making, metaphoric and mythic journey themes, and how these relate to depth psychology and the processes of personal development and transition. I view my research

question as bound together with my own assumptive hypothesis about what might be helpful to a small, select group of people moving through a period of transition and interested in participating in art-based experiences.

This study does not explicitly address art as therapy, and yet a therapeutic element in participants' workshop experience was clearly intended. That experience encompassed personal, psychological, developmental, and social factors. This made it important for me to make my assumptions explicit, as they characterize my personal perspective on what enables the efficacy of art-making as a medium for personal development. I outlined these assumptions in the introduction and will continue to clarify them at pertinent points in the study as they relate to creative flow, emergent form, and metaphoric journeying.

Influences from the Fields of Psychotherapy and Spirituality

Within the much broader field of psychotherapy, a number of theorists have been particularly influential to my worldview. Most of these theorists come under the umbrella of depth psychology (Hillman, 1975, 1979, 1997; Jung, 1968, 1983, 1989; Miller, 2004; Moore & Gillette, 1991). Jung was instrumental in developing knowledge of the archetypal dimension of the collective unconscious, the shadow side of the personal unconscious, the links between mythic stories and psychic images and symbols, and a view of personal development as an inward journey towards individuation, integration, and wholeness. This multi-dimensional, multi-leveled approach to the inner world also informed the perspective and understanding of my own inner developmental process. A major component of my personal therapy experience as part of my art therapy training took place in the capable hands of a Jungian therapist. The time spent with her led to a richly rewarding journey within my own psyche. Therapy involved identifying mythic

stories and characters pertinent to my own journey, and it enabled me to continue an integrative process of bringing insight and clarity to my outer world. Jung's writings equally informed the design and implementation of the Quiet Magic workshop as well as my discussion of the results arising from this study.

Many depth psychology theorists hold image, and image as metaphor, as central to the inner language of the psyche (Jung, 1983; Hillman, 1975, 1979). Jung held that "psyche is image" (1983, p. 50) and Hillman (1979) agreed that our psychic substance consists of metaphoric images. When engaging this notion of the language of the psyche as image and metaphoric expression, whether conscious, subconscious, or unconscious, art becomes a powerful medium for accessing inner imagery and fostering intra-psychic awareness and personal development.

Alongside Jung, Hillman (1975, 1979, 1997, 1998) has a long history of exploring archetypes, mythology, intra-psychic exploration, and personal growth. Hillman's views on journeying into the inner underworld are insightful and helpful. He had little patience for what he called surface level psychotherapy, and he championed the necessity of inner journeying when it comes to realizing legitimate personal growth and development. Hillman was something of an iconoclast who provocatively challenged the prevalent pathology-based view of psychotherapy (1998).

In writing the discussion section of this study, I came upon the seminal work of Miller (2004). He wrote in depth about Jung's concept of the *transcendent function* as the factor that creates integration of the inner world of the psyche with an individual's outer conscious life. Miller's observed that "the transcendent function operates in the space between psychologically disparate states" (p. 104): between the conscious and the

unconscious. His description of the transcendent function as "the psychological manifestation of and catalyst for liminality" (p. 106) suggested the transcendent function as a bridging concept between the familiar conscious world of the pre-liminal and the liminal subconscious realm. Miller described the transcendent function as "opening a dialogue between the conscious and the unconscious" (p. 5), and I wondered whether art-making had a similar function in serving to facilitate entry into the liminal, unknown phase of creativity.

Moore and Gillette's (1991) writing is focused on archetypes as developmental structures present in the deeper levels of the psyche and, in particular, how these structures relate to the male psyche. Moore and Gillette argued that the primary archetypal structures present in the deeper levels of the unconscious give rise to the most fundamental dynamic of life development: "the attempt to move from a lower form of experience and consciousness to a higher (or deeper) level of consciousness" (p. 5). They viewed this developmental shift as a transformative journey made from the immature to the mature archetypal inner forms and energies, from boyhood to mature adulthood. They suggested these unseen archetypal structures are like blueprints, hard wiring for inner development.

Fox (2009) suggested archetypes are stories and images that both men and women can relate to "as aspects of both the masculine and the feminine inside themselves" (p. xxi), rather than something men should specifically aspire to manifest their masculinity. My literature review did not include an in depth study of Jung's archetypal psychology. At this point in time, my intuitive sensing of archetypal energies resonates with Moore and Gillette's developmental framework of archetypes as internal blueprints. I agree with

Fox's (2009) view on the dangers of viewing archetypes as gender specific, and although

Ovenstone (1999) discussed female equivalents for Moore and Gillette's four primary

male archetypes, she also falls into the trap of viewing archetypes as gender specific.

  As a student of psychotherapy and spirituality, it is important to consider a

theological dimension to both my worldview and discussion of my research results. My

theological perspective for this study has been influenced predominantly by writers

coming from a Christian tradition. This is not due to personal adherence to its belief

systems but rather its familiarity as my inherited faith tradition. The contemplative

writings of Rohr (1999, 2010), especially his emphasis on liminal space as conducive to

inner development, helped me uncover links between personal and spiritual development.

Although not a Jungian, Schermer's (2003) discussion of the links between psyche and

Spirit and his ideas of development as "a spiritual journey in which forward movement

depends upon reconciling worldly experience with the needs of the spirit" (p. 141) were

also helpful. The call, by monastic theologian Teasdale (1999), for an inter-spiritual

approach to transformation that embraces the wisdom of the mystics also became relevant

to my thinking.

  My ability to think theologically is informed by Killen and De Beer (1994),

Kinast (1999), Jones (1989), and Stone and Duke (2013). Personally, I prefer the term

spiritual to theological, as I believe it provides a broader perspective by which to view

personal development. Fabricius (2007) neatly referred to theology without spirituality as

empty, and spirituality without theology as blind. For the purposes of this study, I

endeavored to establish connections between the inner world of the psyche, that shapes

our developmental self, and Spirit - as that which both transcends and embraces personal

development.

      McAlpin (2009), Killen and DeBeer (1994), and Stone and Duke (2013) all described the process of theological reflection in ways that parallel the inner journey of depth psychology. The lives of the mystics also indicate the importance of journeying into a liminal space of deep reflection and contemplation as an ideal place for nurturing spiritual growth and connection with the divine (Griffin, 2004; Rohr, 1999, 2010; Teasdale, 1999). Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (2003, Dover Thrift Edition) is a classic tale akin to a rite of passage and a hero's journey. Christian, the main character in this allegorical tale, receives a call to leave behind his pre-liminal world in the City of Destruction and travels on a quest to find the Celestial City. He passes through the Strait Gate into the liminal stage of his journey and faces tests, trials, ordeals, and seemingly insurmountable difficulty before being joyously welcomed into the Celestial City. What sustains Christian on his journey is the unquenchable fire wrought in his heart by grace (p. 36).

      Clearly there are significant relationships to uncover between Spirit and psyche that will provide a spiritual dimension to this study. Central to Bunyan's (2003, Dover Thrift Edition) pilgrim's tale is a metaphoric transitional journey in which the hero faces many trials and ordeals in his quest for spiritual development. The metaphor journey is a central aspect of this study.

A Metaphoric Journey

      A core component of this study was the role and influence of metaphor in the meaning-making processes for participants. The power of metaphor lies in its ability to evoke meaning through imagery. It was a necessary component in relating to the idea of

personal development as a mythic or rite of passage journey. It was also instrumental to both the making of art as well as the harvesting of its meaning and significance during the reflective periods, both during the workshop and in the post-workshop interviews.

Metaphor as meaning making is a way of showing the connectedness between phenomena. My own view is that the instinctive and intuitive use of metaphor is central to therapeutic art-making. I also believe the understanding and appreciation of metaphor is key to the practice of art therapy. Metaphor is part of the visual language of expressive art-making. It shows what the inner world is like. B. Moon goes so far as to suggest "all artworks are metaphoric depictions of the people who create them" (2007, p. 3). This global statement implies that every piece of art is in some way analogous to, or like something else. Some realist painters would argue they were accurately depicting what they see in front of them.

A number of writers view metaphor as foundational to our conceptual system. Punter (2007) posited metaphors are a requirement to connect with others and suggested they "make us look at the world afresh" (p. 9). Lakoff and Johnson (2003) argued that metaphors are pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but also in thought and action—as such, metaphor is central to our process of meaning making and is "the key to giving an adequate account of understanding" (p. ix). Kopp (1995) described metaphors as "mirrors reflecting our inner images of self, life and others" (p. xiii). Metaphor appears to influence every aspect of people's lives, is inherent in thinking processes, and invaluable in connecting people to their intra-psychic life.

I employed a rites of passage theme as a structural component of the Quiet Magic six session workshop due to its metaphorical significance to the experience of personal

development. The notion of a rite of passage (Turner, 1967; Van Gennep, 1961) is a metaphor for viewing significant moments of personal development as a transitional journey, a passage through time in which individuals face threshold opportunities for potential growth and transformational change. This metaphor is common across cultures and is embedded in our myths and stories (Campbell, 2008) and in our customs and rituals (Nunley & McCarty, 1999; Ryman, 2010; Turner, 1967; Van Gennep, 1961). As well as being an ancient process denoting change and transition, a rite of passage is also a concept central to postmodern social science and research (Bruner, 1987). In addition, such transitional stories lie at the heart of narrative therapies (Morgan, 2000).

Van Gennep (1961) introduced the idea of rites of passage to the world of anthropology. He discussed how the developmental transitions of birth, adolescence, marriage, parenting, and death are marked by rituals in all societies, and, though they may vary in detail, their essence is universal. He delineated three phases to a rite of passage that included a separation phase of pre-liminal rites, a transformational phase of liminal rites, and an aggregation or re-entry phase of post-liminal rites. Turner (1967) expanded on Van Gennep's three phase process. Turner was fascinated by the key transitional phase of liminality, which he described as "betwixt and between" (p. 107). He described the liminal stage as an ambiguous, limbo state in which individuals are no longer members of the group or society. They have left and have not yet crossed the necessary threshold to rejoin society with a newly acquired status. This liminal phase lies at the heart of a process of transition as "attention is on the transition itself, the process of being born, of learning, of growing, of entering adulthood, of becoming married, of recovering from an illness, or, finally, of dying" (Beels, 2007, p. 427). The liminal phase, as elucidated by Turner, Beels,

and S. Levine (1997), was important to my thinking about how to facilitate workshop participants' entry into a space of creativity, one that might support their growth through transition.

In the world of mythology, Campbell (2008) employed a similar three stage structure in describing the hero's journey. This iterative mythic journey cycles through three stages that Campbell depicted as departure, initiation, and return. Each of these three stages embraces a series of characteristic events or signposts. Thus, the departure, or pre-liminal phase, centers around responding to a call to a new adventure and a leave-taking from the familiar. The initiation, or liminal phase, signals entering the underworld and facing trials, ordeals, and developmental challenges. In the post-liminal phase the challenges involve returning to familiar society after a long absence and dealing with the difficulties of conveying the wisdom gifts realized during the journey. It became apparent to me this metaphoric narrative of the mythic journey provided a rich vein of potent imagery to draw upon in relating to the transitional process. I could see that, from the perspective of my study, the tales and imagery of the mythic journey might provide abundant opportunity to initiate inner artwork with workshop participants.

Campbell's schema for the hero's journey has been criticized as being androcentric and not representative of female development (Downing, 2007). Downing suggested the female journey from maiden and daughter to mature woman is significantly different, less individualistic, and more relational than the male journey. On the other hand, Frankel (2010) has been able to chart a heroic journey for women using the same basic structure as outlined by Campbell. Downing's legitimate criticism of the dearth of examples of female transitional journeys was, in retrospect, an aspect of the literature I wish I had given more

consideration to in the design of the Quiet Magic workshop experience. This is an issue I address in the conclusion chapter.

In employing the hero's journey and rites of passage journey metaphors, I am not suggesting personal development is a simple matter of moving smoothly through a succession of well-defined stages. Life is never so simple, linear, or logical. It is all too easy for people to become mired in the intransigence of ingrained patterns, habits, and unexamined beliefs. Often people tend to prefer comfort and convenience over trials, ordeals, hardship, and real challenges that might disturb deep-rooted behaviours. The unknown and unfamiliar is also unpredictable and often anxiety provoking. However, given this cautionary caveat, I believe the journey metaphors previously described do provide a useful structure for thinking about periods of life transition. If nothing else, they provide a map by which to locate and reorient our life journeys.

Other writers who explore the idea of a mythic journey as one of personal development and therapeutic value include Andersen (2013), Judith (2013) and Rousseau, Lacroix, Baglishya and Heusch (2003). Judith proposed that everyone is at different stages of the heroic journey, with some experiencing dissolution; some in the underworld, battling ordeals, and discovering new archetypal energies; and some returning to familiar territory with new vision. This mythic journey is "a reclaiming of wholeness that denies little and embraces all" (Judith, 2013, p. 40). This heroic endeavor is clearly a transformational journey that perhaps only a few start and less complete as a developmental process.

Many art therapists also use a journey metaphor when describing the therapeutic process of change (B. Moon, 2008, 2009, 2012; McNiff, 1992, 2003, 2004; Malchiodi, 1998, 2002; Rubin, 2010). Moon (2009), for example, suggested "the work of an

existential art therapist can be thought of as going on a shared journey with a client" (p. 14). In travelling with and bearing witness to an individual's art-making journey, the art therapist can encourage a client to become the hero or heroine rather than the victim of his or her life narrative. Sibbett (2004) would agree, arguing that art therapy can be a form of re-authoring in which client and therapist can engage in the co-construction of a new narrative.

Fenton (2008), working in the arena of palliative care, suggested that this new narrative can be about individuals going home and discovering "the essential aspects of their creative selves and finding sanctuary on their arduous journeys toward wholeness" (p. 137). She observed how cancer clients find a way "to take back their voices and visions" (p. 137) and through the processes and products of therapeutic art cancer patients re-established their self-identity and self-confidence through undertaking creative, art-based journeys (Luzzato and Gabriel, 2000).

Anderson (2013) documented how art therapist Sally Hunter used the hero's journey metaphor in working with clients with eating disorders, helping them explore their sense of self and body image. The effectiveness of using myth and metaphor in the socialization of immigrant and refugee children to Canada has also been documented (Rousseau et al, 2003). Some of the key signposts on this metaphoric journey are finding a safe haven, obtaining a clearer view, clearing the way emotionally, and enhancing and enlivening the sense of self (Collie, Bottorff & Long, 2006). Is perhaps this idea of journeying as a way of thinking about change and transition actually a universal metaphor, one that spans developmental growth throughout history and across cultures?

A Thematic Approach to Personal Development and Transition

A theme is a central idea woven through and connecting a series of events or experiences. Themes are implicit in narratives and journeys. Liebmann (1986) recommended "sharing a theme that can help weld a group together" and depicted such a theme as one that can be "interpreted on many levels and be used flexibly to meet different needs" (p. 12). Lummis (2004) emphasized the value of using a thematic process in art therapy, in the arena of addictions, to address client issues such as self-concept, anger, depression, grief and loss, and transition. B. Moon (2009) viewed thematic approaches in art therapy as effective ways of engaging clients in a creative struggle with the ultimate concerns of human existence. He wrote that at "the heart of existential art therapy is the process of artistic expression that encourages creation of a personal system of meaning making" (p. 65). A thematic structure can help facilitate a meaning making process for clients.

McNeilly's (1983) criticism of the thematic approach to art therapy was that structured themes can promote dependency amongst clients, with the therapist being seen as "the provider or good mother who gives all the goodies" (p. 212). Waller (1993) charted the history of an ongoing debate around the pros and cons of thematic approaches. She concluded that it is possible to work effectively with both introduced themes and themes arising naturally from the artwork in verbal interactions with clients and client groups. In my view, McNeilly's criticism is a helpful, cautionary note when using a thematic approach. In establishing a thematic approach for the Quiet Magic workshop, as the facilitator, I was guiding the direction of the art-making experience. This was clearly an influence on participants' workshop experience. Each week I

introduced one or more signposts on the journey and thus guided the unfolding experience for participants. While directing how the art-making experience unfolded week by week, I stepped back and allowed group members to both establish their own level of involvement in the group dynamic and interpret art experiences in whatever way they chose. I also allowed for considerable freedom in both the choice of art materials and the direction of group discussion topics.

A Group Journey

The Quiet Magic workshop was both an individual and a group journey. McNiff (2003) suggested the group mind is more intelligent, creative, and resourceful than any single individual. He sees the diversity of creations and possibilities that can arise in a group setting as "the most remarkable outcome of creating with others" (p. 9). When art is added to a group environment then "another mysterious amulet is a part of the process" (Riley, 2001, p. xviii). Groups can be a primary therapeutic choice for helping people move through change and have "immense power to move people in creative and more life-giving directions" (Corey & Corey, 1997, p. 5). Yalom and Leszcz (2005) established 11 therapeutic factors as evident in, and unique to, group settings. I witnessed a number of these factors being active ingredients in the Quiet Magic workshop.

An important component of an art-based group experience is the role of witnessing each other's processes and products. McNiff (1995) described how in addition to experiencing the shared flow of creative energy of working together, participants also witness and receive each other's expressions through the communicative power of images. Yalom and Leszcz (2005) suggested group members can become compatriots sharing in losses, gains, and growth experiences. Through witnessing, it becomes

possible to enter a sacred space of commonality and openness during both the creative

liminal phase and the post-liminal return phase of a rite of passage (S. Levine, 1997;

Turner, 1967). Beels (2007) observed that "the audience with whom a story or ritual is

performed is as important as the content" (p. 432). Workshop participants shared in ritual

experiences such as drumming circles and dancing as well as presentations of artwork.

My sense is that through witnessing experiences, groups can illuminate the value of both

shared experience and the unique qualities of individual experience and expression.

The witnessing by a therapist of an individual's transition process can also

provide a supportive therapeutic container for personal development. Allen (1995, 2005)

emphasized the power and importance of witnessing to her own developmental process as

an art therapist. She described witnessing consciousness as "that attribute of the Divine

that does not judge but simply holds, hears, and cherishes" (2005, p. 9). Allen highlighted

the notion of witnessing as giving rise to sacred space and this ties in with Turner's

(1967) concept of communitas. The spirit of communitas can spontaneously arise when

people equally engaged in a creative change process join empathically together in the

commonality of shared experience. S. Levine (1997) described how groups can come

together in communitas and "meet not as a series of individual 'I's but as an essential

'We,' a community characterized by the feeling of 'humankindness'" (p. 49). The

implication is that groups have the capacity to enable participants to experience deeper

levels of connectedness through witnessing rituals. B. Moon (2009) saw such ritual

coming together as "the central truths of the community translated into symbolic actions"

(p. 20), and he encouraged art therapists to "engage in rituals of healing alongside

clients" (p. 21). Such moments of ritual can provide opportunities for deep experiences of

connection.

An Intra-psychic Journey

Myths can be viewed as metaphorical depictions of "the journey inward" (Campbell, 1988 p. 37). Campbell saw mythic narratives as depicting "the maturation of the individual, from dependency through adulthood, through maturity and then to the exit" (p. 32). Mythology can be conceptualized as "a psychology of antiquity" and psychology as a "mythology of modernity" (Hillman, 1979, p. 23). Both writers agreed that the basic themes of mythology reveal an inner world of the psyche, one that supports and sustains an outer world of form and substance. This idea is a foundational premise of depth psychology.

In her introduction to depth psychology, Bright (2010) described symbolic, archetypal, and mythological forms as residing in the wild landscape of the unconscious and that growth and integration is a process of translating the world within us into outer reality.

Each of these authors—Campbell, Hillman, and Bright—view the world of myth from within a 20th Century perspective. Jung (1970) had already described the deeper reaches of the unconscious as consisting of "mythological motifs or primordial images" (p. 152). Psychoanalyst Stephen Aizenstat added a further depth dimension to the psyche, a kind of ground level he described as being all "interrelated and connected in a living matrix" (Kearney, 2009, p. 143). I wondered whether the mythic journey was not only an effective way to view personal development but also whether it had the capacity to connect people to the unifying principle of the living matrix deep within the collective unconscious. Could this be the unifying dimension from which

the spirit of communitas arises as a phenomenal reality?

A Journey Through Liminal Space

I have already written of the liminal stage as the core of the creative transitional journey, "a realm of pure possibility whence novel configurations of ideas and relations may arise" (Turner, 1967, p. 97). Using a similar model, but from a business perspective, Bridges (2009) referred to this phase as both a space and a time which he calls the *neutral zone*, "a nowhere between two somewheres" (p. 40), "a time that is ripe with creative opportunity" (p. 43).

In the field of child psychology, Winnicott's (1971) concepts of *transitional object* and *transitional space* as the phenomena that facilitate a child's earliest development towards independence, seemed relevant to this discussion on liminality. Transitional space links the child's subjective inner world experience to the outer world of form and otherness in a way similar to the ability of art-making to link inner and outer experience. Commenting on Winnicott's ideas, Praglin (2006) described how such transitional space "initiates the most authentic and creative aspects of our personal and communal existence, including artistic, scientific, and religious expression" (p. 1). E. Levine (2003) specifically utilized the idea of transitional space in describing the creative journey. She called it a "fire-place" (p. 68) and portrayed art therapy as a practice of "tending the fire" to keep the creative spark alive in the person. She viewed the transitional space of expressive arts as one where "creativity finds its home" (p. 68). In a similar vein, writing about performance theory, Schechner (2003) viewed the creative process as having three stages that include preparation, performance, and cool down. The mid-stage of performance is where the performer separates him or herself from everyday reality and moves into an in-between

space of creative play. This mid-way space, or betwixt and between phase, is viewed as a time of potential change and transformation by disciplines as diverse as anthropology, business, psychology, performance, and art therapy.

Psychologically, the liminal phase is not necessarily a comfortable one to enter and reside within. As Turner (1967) indicated, it is characterized by unfamiliarity, separation from the past, and a sense of being unmoored from what was previously known. Due to the level of uncertainty and possible insecurity that can arise in the liminal, it becomes inadvisable to enter or take others into this phase lightly. Caution and due consideration towards creating a safe and conducive space needed to be part of my workshop planning. This was necessary to provide both a holding space for liminal experience and a way of transitioning back to the familiar at the end of workshop sessions.

In the process of performing, careful framing is required to facilitate movement in and out of the actual performance space (Schechner, 2003). E. Levine (Knill, Levine & Levine, 2005) wrote of *framed chaos* as a safe setting in which to nurture change. E. Levine wrote that "framed chaos takes place in an as-if reality, an imaginal space" (p. 180). A feeling of chaos can be present when the creative flow ignites, but when a safe container for creative work is provided then this is not unbounded chaos where there is danger and threat. Levine noted that framed chaos supports the potential for change.

The Emerging Form

Entering a liminal phase in an art-based experience can ignite the creative flow in which new forms can emerge. McNiff (2003) expressed this creative flow as "waves, rhythms, stormy outbursts and tranquil moods" (p. 56) and viewed the artist as the agent of its expression. He described "all the rivers of spontaneous expression" as flowing from the

same source (p. 64). Kapitan (2003) described how "the dragon of creative power" is released and that encountering this dragon gives access to a "natural entanglement in the unfathomable, shape-shifting world in which we live and create"
(p. 54). These descriptive images of the energy and movement of creativity suggest that the creative flow can at times be wild and chaotic, and at others, tranquil and fluid. The main point I wish to emphasize is that what emerges from this creative flow is the possibility of newly emerging, authentic, and spontaneous forms of expression, what Campbell (1997) described as "an implicit form" (p. 151) seeking expression from deep within.

The hypothesis I explore in this research study is that these newly emerging—and often surprising—images, forms, symbols, and motifs that arise in the artwork of individuals committed to an intensive and extended art-making experience can provide new meaning, insight, and perspectives that support transitions and contribute to personal development. In the following chapter, I describe the research method I used to explore my research question and the hypothesis in which it was embedded.

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter describes my choice of research methodology and the literature I consulted in making this choice. I account for the methods I used to collect and analyze data related to my study topic and research question, and for the tools and resources I chose to gather the data. I review the ethical considerations that needed to be addressed in conducting the study and I describe the processes of data gathering and analysis used to ensure the trustworthiness of my findings.

An Arts-based Research Approach

The primary therapeutic method art therapists use in their work consists of activating the process of creation with clients and following this with a reflective process that reveals something of the meaning and substance of the creative results. This therapeutic method also informs the approach used by many art therapists to engage researchable questions (Kapitan, 2010; McNiff, 1998, 2011). I used this art therapy process as the basis of my approach to conducting this study and gathering data about my research question. This arts-based clinical method is generally recognized as pivotal to arts-based research (ABR). "ABR practices have emerged out of the natural affinity between research practice and artistic practice" (Leavy, 2009, p. ix) and are recognized as a valid method for generating new knowledge. Chilton (2013) suggested that the purpose of ABR is not so much to generate new knowledge as to "uncover and enliven significant questions and conversations, to shift hearts and minds and enable new possibilities and opportunities" (p. 460) for further study. The idea of contributing to an ongoing conversation and investigation of how "changes in people may be due to the activation of

the creative energy" (McNiff, 1998, p. 197) appealed to me as a match to my research question.

My review of the literature suggested there is no definitive way to conduct arts-based research (Barone & Eisner, 2011; Butler-Kisber, 2010; Rolling, 2013; Kapitan, 2010; Leavy, 2009; McNiff, 1998, 2011). In arts-based research, the arts can be both the object of investigation and the method of investigating (Deaver, 2002, p. 24). Whereas McNiff (2011) saw ABR as requiring the primary researcher to be actively involved in art-making, Leavy (2009) viewed it more abstractly as a set of methodological tools for embracing data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation. Straddling these two perspectives, Rolling (2010) made a useful distinction between arts-based and arts-informed research. He described arts-based research as emphasizing immersion, disciplined practice, and high creative commitment to arts practice on the part of the researcher, while arts-informed research can employ art either in source or presentation and be focused on the art-making activities of research participants. This distinction helped me view my own study more precisely as an arts-informed inquiry, as it uses arts-based experience as a primary data source in addressing the research question. Although I continue to use the umbrella terms of arts-based research or arts-based inquiry when discussing methodology, I refer to my study research method as arts-informed research.

ABR, as a clearly defined methodology, is a work in progress. The common ground shared by authors I consulted was in the primacy of art-making as both method of inquiry, (Kapitan, 2010) and the principal way of generating new understanding. As a working artist, I sense the ecological validity of this premise, having actively and consistently used art-making as a form of inquiry to further my own personal

development for many years. I continued making art alongside this study writing process. The majority of my personal artwork emerges from an ongoing cycle of inner exploration, outer expression, and quiet reflection. As an artist, art as inquiry has entailed wrestling with elements of design in parallel with promptings from the unseen world of the psyche. In design inquiry, I attempt to solve problems of composition, colour, balance, harmony, form, shape, and contour. In inner inquiry, I search for the emerging forms that exemplify authentic expression.

McNiff (1998) based this form of inquiry on principles of artistic knowing that arise from "the unique character of the art experience" (p. 17). Leavy (2009) viewed aesthetic knowing as central to ABR and praised its ability to foster reflexivity and empathy in both researcher and audience. Both writers engage this knowing as particularly characteristic of artistic inquiry. Barone and Eisner (2011) suggested that ABR is a specific form of qualitative research, one in which the researcher describes, interprets, and appraises the features of some process through narrative like or artistically investigative means. Rolling (2013) argued that ABR is neither wholly quantitative nor qualitative but a mixture of the two that "carves out, overlaps and burrows beneath both domains" (p. 8).

As both artist and art therapist conducting a research study for the first time, I appreciate Rolling's unconfined perspective and his suggestion that ABR is "an autonomous paradigm that generates its own language, meaning, and possibilities" (p. 69). It hints at the notion that instinct, intuition, and educated guesswork can be part of the research equation. Indeed, he indicates as much when discussing abduction as a legitimate form of reasoning in ABR.

Kapitan (2010) conceptualized research as a hunt and recommended that

researchers using an arts-based approach follow either a quantitative or qualitative trail in addressing their research question and gathering and analyzing their research data. My research question addresses how people, who self-identify as in a transition process, experience an art-based group workshop organized around metaphoric themes. Would they find the workshop helpful and relevant to their personal development and transitional process? What issues and concerns would arise for participants in such a setting? Would the workshop format, and the ideas presented, allow participants to focus on and find creative solutions for their concerns or would the metaphoric journey themes confuse and distract them? Would the art-making experiences be viewed as simply a relaxing break from the daily grind or serve a more purposeful, supportive, and insightful function for participants' personal journeys? What thematic elements might arise when it came time to analyze their experiences as a whole and would these themes adequately capture their transitional journey?

I knew the data I needed to gather would be grounded in participants' subjectively descriptive accounts of their workshop experience and would include their personal reflections on their own artwork creations. Following McNiff's advice to keep the research "focused on experiments with media" (1998, p. 26) and hoping to discover meaningful themes in the data, it seemed a natural choice to take an arts-based qualitative approach to my study. Qualitative inquiry "aims at making meaning of the world" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 1) and in this approach "meaning emerges through labeling, identifying and classifying emerging concepts; interrelating concepts and testing hypotheses; finding patterns; and generating theory" (Leavy, 2009, p. 18). These processes match my research question as I was seeking to learn more about how participants would make meaning of the

workshop experience.

Kapitan (2010) suggested framing the research question as: "What am I hunting for?" I knew I wanted the workshop sessions to be a meaningful experience for participants. I also knew I would be hunting for meaning in analyzing and discussing the research data. Butler-Kisber (2010) identified three types of qualitative inquiry: thematic, narrative and arts-informed (p. 9). My inquiry embraced elements of all three as it was grounded in arts-informed experience, shaped by the narrative of a metaphoric journey, and emerging themes were sought from the data.

There was also a heuristic element to my research method. Barone and Eisner (2011) described the process of ABR as "a heuristic through which we deepen and make more complex our understanding of some aspect of the world" (p. 3). A heuristic process is one grounded in subjective experience and characterized by an experimental or trial and error approach to solving problems or testing hypotheses. The originating impulse behind my study was a personal conviction about the power of creative energy—what I have called creative flow—to positively influence people's personal growth and development. McNiff (1998) called for more research into "art medicine as an infusion of creative energy" (p. 196). This idea is congruent with Csikszentmihalyi's (2008) flow theory whereby we develop and exercise the abilities we need to meet the challenges we face.

My trial and error experiment involved designing a series of arts-based workshop experiences that would generate data to inform my beliefs about creative flow within the context of a metaphorical journey and in relation to a group of people navigating a period of transition in their lives. Due to the contextual framework of the workshop experience, I hoped to "present the possibility of new understandings" (Barone & Eisner, 2011, p. 179)

and to add to the conversation about the catalytic nature of creative flow.

The principal form of data would consist of the self-described subjective experiences of workshop participants. The workshop was to provide the experimental context for generating this data, and my subsequent analysis of the results and follow up discussion would be, at least in part, a subjectively interpretive process. In analyzing and interpreting the data the starting point was the self-described transition points that workshop participants were asked to provide as brief written statements prior to the start of the workshop.

A Research Method

The research method should seek to answer these questions: a) How do I go about obtaining what I need? b) What will I actually do to conduct the study? and c) What approaches and techniques will I use to analyze the data? (Kapitan, 2010, p. 6). The following sections provide an outline of my research method in addressing these questions.

Participant recruitment.

Having first obtained approval for my research proposal from the St Stephen's College Ethics Review Committee, I set out to recruit eight workshop participants. Both my own past experience and group theory taught me that eight to ten was a suitable number to create a lively group dynamic that would provide a variety of experiences, viewpoints, and examples of transitional processes (Yalom & Eleszcz, 2005).

I recruited participants using criterion sampling, the most common form of purposeful sampling strategies (Lawrence, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2013). Participant selection was based on the following criteria: a) adult men and women over the age of 21, b) an interest in expressive art work, c) previous experience in taking

part in groups with a focus on personal development, d) expressed interest in mythic and metaphoric journeys, and e) ability to identify themselves as currently moving through a period of transition in their lives.

I decided a random selection process would be too complex and time consuming to attempt for this study. A purposeful sampling strategy was appropriate as I needed to identify and select individuals to take part in the workshop who were at least somewhat knowledgeable about, or experienced in, expressive art-making (Lawrence et al, 2013, p. 2) that took inner experience as the basis for the artwork. I also required participants to commit to six weekly sessions, take part in post-workshop interviews, and be involved in the review and validation of research results. I interviewed 12 potential participants for the study, speaking in person to each to ascertain their interest, willingness, and ability to commit to the study requirements. Of the 12, four were unable to commit to the stated requirements and were not invited to participate. Of the eight remaining prospective participants:

a) three had previously attended one or more of my locally-based expressive art classes that were conducted prior to my art therapy training;

b) two were fellow art therapy students at St Stephen's;

c) two were acquaintances who heard about the research project from one of the expressive art class prospective participants and indicated a keen interest in taking part; and

d) one was a previous practicum client who had extensive experience in expressive art workshops and who had previously expressed an interest in taking part in one or more of my workshops.

I followed this initial selection of prospective participants with individual face-to-face meetings where I outlined the purpose and scope of the study and extended formal invitations (see Appendix B: *Participant Letter of Invitation* and Appendix C: *Thesis Study Consent Form*). During these meetings, I obtained participants' informed written consent, including their consent to have two research assistants record audio-video and digital photographic images, but not otherwise participate in the program (see Appendix D: *Research Assistant Confidentiality Agreement*).

Ethical issues.

Ethical issues were addressed before inviting prospective participants to take part in the study. A series of required documents were submitted to and approved by the St Stephen's Ethics Review Committee. These included:

a) Consent letter outlining thesis purpose, research method, verification and review of results, rights of participants, and process of obtaining informed consent and supervisor's name.

b) Overview of research project

c) Application for Ethics Review

d) Procedures for observing ethical guidelines

The Quiet Magic workshop experience.

To conduct the study I designed and facilitated the Quiet Magic workshop. As the workshop designer and facilitator, I wanted participants to have experiences of using art-making as a primary means to explore, express, and reflect upon aspects of their own developmental process while also addressing the transitional process they had self-described prior to the start of the workshop. I set the art-making within the context of a

metaphorical journey as a key aspect of my research question was the inclusion of a metaphoric journey. Kapitan (2010) notes that personal journeys and narratives are regularly documented in art-making experiences. My design and facilitation was an attempt to provide participants with arts-based experiences that I anticipated would both support their personal journeys and generate sufficient data with which to investigate my research question.

Semi-structured post-workshop interviews, conducted after the completion of the workshop series, provided me with the principle means for collecting data. The interview data was augmented by audio-video and photographic evidence recorded by my research assistants during the workshop sessions. As my technical equipment and resources were rudimentary, it was not feasible to record the whole event. Capturing a digital record of events involved selecting what to record and was dependent upon the choices made by my research assistants. My instruction to them was to digitally record a flavour of what took place in each session and to pay special attention to capturing arts-based activities and group discussions.

Each participant was asked to produce a pre-workshop written statement identifying the current transition point they wished to explore during the six sessions. These statements are not included in the appendices due to their personal nature. Participants included in these statements any concerns they had about workshop participation and descriptions of what they hoped to achieve from their research project involvement. They emailed these statements to me as Word documents before the first session. Participants and I referenced these statements both during the workshop and in post-workshop interviews. As previously mentioned, these statements provided a baseline

for assessing whether and how transitional progress and personal development took place as result of their workshop experiences.

My primary focus in facilitating the six workshop sessions was to provide a safe, welcoming, and suitably atmospheric space for group members to participate in an arts-based metaphoric journey. My intention in providing stimulus, activities, and resources was to support participants to find creative ways to further their personal development and address their transitional processes. *Appendix A* provides an outline of the content and process of workshop sessions. I designed slideshows to introduce visual images from mythic tales and to illustrate particular elements of rites of passage and the hero's journey. Group discussions allowed me to elaborate on these ideas and provided opportunities for participants to make personal connections to the ideas I was introducing. Participants then entered into structured and unstructured art-making experiences that related to one or more elements of the journey metaphors I had introduced. They had access to a wide variety of art materials and mediums for both individual and group-based art activities. These art experiences formed the backbone of each session. This general format, with some variation, provided the basic structure for the weekly sessions.

I attempted to minimize my influence on the workshop experience and did not make either my working hypothesis or assumptions for this study explicit to participants. I did influence the general flow of the workshop as I was providing information on the metaphoric themes and giving art-making directives and suggestions for each session. However, I attempted to keep my involvement in group discussions to a minimum and allowed participants to direct the flow and general topics of conversation. I instigated two

group art-making activities but otherwise permitted group members to find their own level of involvement and interaction with one another. Individual exploration and expression was encouraged and participants were free to interpret art activities in whatever way they chose.

Gathering data.

I set out to gather data on three layers of participants' experience of the workshop in order to explore experiences related to personal development and transitional change. These specific data areas included participants' experience of and reflection upon:

a) being part of a group that met together for six weekly sessions each lasting three hours.

b) various art-making activities that formed the body of the workshop sessions.

c) art-making and other related workshop experiences within the context of a mythic journey metaphor.

This data was sourced from transcripts of the audio-video recordings of post-workshop interviews (see the following section for more detail) and from highlights of weekly group discussions captured by research assistants. The group discussion transcripts were only partial as the research assistants were unable to capture all the group discussions due to technical limitations. The data regarding participants' art-making experiences was augmented by digital images of their artwork. Each participant chose three pieces of original artwork to bring to their post-workshop interview for reflection and discussion.

Post-workshop interviews.

The principal means used for gathering data of participants' subjective experience

of the workshop was a semi-structured interview that included art reflection, and in which I asked participants to describe their personal experience of the following three aspects of the workshop all within the frame of how it affected their developmental process:

    a) being part of a group and in relation to their starting points identified in the pre-workshop assignment;

    b) undertaking a variety of art-making experiences, both group and individual, in relation to their transitional starting points

    c) using the contextual framework of a metaphoric journey for the weekly sessions

These three areas were directly explored with each participant. Upon presenting an area to be explored, I allowed each participant to direct the conversation, as I wanted to elicit information through an organic, conversational process. My assumption was that this would be more revealing of each participant's unique personal experience of the workshop.

Kvale (2003) pointed to a preference for open-ended, unstructured interviews as opposed to "the tyranny of verbatim transcripts and formalized methods of analysis" (p. 288) as the former are more likely to give rise to sensitivity, intuitive, and empathic rapport during the interview. In using semi-structured interviews, I saw the possibility of allowing each participant to speak of things most pertinent to his or her particular experience. This format also allowed me to facilitate more in-depth discussion of the experiences highlighted as significant by each participant. Each hour long interview was audio-video recorded and later transcribed as a Word document. Digital photographs were taken of the three artworks each participant brought to his or her interview. The

transcripts as raw data are not included in the study, though many examples of verbatim comments do appear in the results, discussion, and conclusion chapters alongside other comments made during group discussions.

The interviews provided participants with both an opportunity to describe their workshop experiences and reflect upon three self-chosen pieces of artwork (*Appendix F*). This reflective opportunity, held subsequent to the workshop sessions, allowed a distancing time between art-making and reflective phases. My practicum experience taught me the value of creating a time break between these two distinct phases of working with images. The processes of immersion, absorption, and openness to new experience are "the hallmarks of the creative process" (Kapitan, 2010, p.167; B. Moon, 2009; McNiff, 2004). These are distinct from the reflective process which requires a stepping out and stepping back from the immersive process of art-making to view artistic images from various aesthetic perspectives and discover in them "new openings into their expression" (McNiff, 1998, p. 149).

Art images are the forms that "objectify the experience in art-based inquiry" (Kapitan, 2010, p. 170). Such art images, and the aesthetic experiences that produced them, can both exemplify and amplify participants' recollection of their workshop experiences (Leavy, 2009, McNiff, 1998). Specific time set aside for reflection and interpretation allowed participants the opportunity to explore and give words to the meaning contained in the art-making experiences. The post-workshop interviews were an effective context for facilitating this reflection process. I used the reflective method of viewing images at the three levels of the concrete, metaphoric and self-reflective described earlier in the literature review chapter (Betensky, 1995; Carpendale, 2009;

Lummis, 2004).

The research assistants' recordings provided a further level of data that was a rich visual record of the workshop event. McNiff (1998) urges arts-based researchers to use photographic media and videotape as "a primary medium for generating data" (p. 193), as they provide first hand visual evidence of what is happening in the moment of the experience. These recordings are powerful visual evidence of the range of participant experience. They reveal the flavour of group discussions, and create a catalogue of digital images that capture and preserve art-making processes and artworks produced over the course of the six sessions.

Between workshop sessions, I engaged my own arts-based journey that involved compiling digital images to form slideshow impressions of what took place. At the start of each workshop session I showed participants a slideshow of the previous session, providing them with a kind of immediate feedback that encouraged recollection and continuity. My hope was that creating this bridge between sessions would promote further immersion in the creative process and develop a feeling of the journey.

Data analysis.

Thorne (2009) described data analysis as "the most complex and mysterious of all of the phases of a qualitative project" (p.68) She lamented the lack of guidance available in the literature and added that it is often difficult to know what researchers actually did during the analysis phase or to understand how research findings evolved out of the data. My goal in the analysis phase was to reveal meaningful themes in the data that provide a relevant and coherent response to my research question. My question was: How do people who self-identify as being in a transition process experience an arts-based group

workshop organized around metaphoric themes?

Butler-Kisber (2010) described thematic inquiry as a way of becoming immersed in the research data and not simply "a certain method or series of analytic steps" (p. 8). She provided a detailed account, with a number of illustrative examples, of constant comparison inquiry as a core method for revealing themes. I used this method of analysis within the context of an arts-informed inquiry. I kept Rolling's (2013) depiction of the creative worldview in mind as I grappled with the data. The creative worldview sees theory and praxis as co-constructing one another in an ongoing cycle.

My research method was evaluative. It involved a process of constant comparison inquiry, which Butler-Kisber defined as "a thematic form of qualitative work that uses categorizing to produce conceptual understanding of experiences" (2010, p. 47), provided the basic structure for systematically analyzing the interview data. Categories are constructed into larger themes that provide an explanation of the context of the study. This method is a series of iterative practices that involve close reading of data transcripts to build familiarity with the materials, with a differentiation between a "coarse-grained phase" and a "fine-grained phase" (p. 30) of analysis. The coarse-grained phase involves "close readings and re-readings or listening and viewing" (ibid), dialoguing with oneself, and assigning and naming broad and temporary categories. The fine-grained phase requires a closer examination of the data to refine, reassemble, collapse, and rename categories, until the relationships between them are revealed.

Looking at this method from the creative worldview of an arts-based inquirer, the process appeared to me to be akin to one of creative writing, editing, and re-editing in order to realize a clear, succinct, and refined expression of ideas that form a coherent

narrative. For a visual artist, it is similar to beginning a painting with a range of instinctive and intuitive expressive gestures and then painstakingly inching towards rendering a work of sublime form and meaning.

In constant comparison inquiry, the reassembling of categories into larger general themes is based upon their relational qualities. It is insight into these relational qualities that produces the emerging themes. The goal is "to construct a plausible and persuasive explanation of what is transpiring from the emergent themes" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 31). Implicit in the process of refinement is the humble recognition that all explanations are partial. There are always multiple ways that experiences and phenomena might be explained. As an artist, I recognize the transience of certainty. I view all my pictures as works in progress whether sold and seemingly complete or unsold and still in my care. Whether a research study or a piece of artwork, each is but a time and context defined contribution to an ongoing investigation.

In seeking to render form and meaning from my study data, I sought to discern conceptual frames, patterns, and themes. I began by carefully transcribing the video material from the workshop and post-workshop interviews, checking and re-checking for accuracy as I proceeded, while building familiarity with my working materials. I became immersed in the data through reading and re-reading the transcripts. As I read, I also viewed digital images of artworks and of participants actively engaged in workshop activities.

In the coarse-grained phase of analysis (Butler-Kisber, 2010), I highlighted transcript statements and developed subject headings that encapsulated concepts discussed by participants, making notes relating to their possible meaning and implication

as I went. As a result of this process, I had a total of 40 subject headings. I then returned to the data and undertook a line-by-line analysis of the transcripts. If I had missed any additional subject matter, I would catch it this way. I categorized subject headings under one or more of the three principal areas under investigation: art-making activities, group involvement, and the metaphoric journey. Although these three categories contained the *what* of participants' experiences, they did not illuminate *how* these experiences related to their transitional processes. I needed to find categories that would further a meaningful response to my research question.

I re-categorized the subject headings into common and uncommon patterns of experience. The rule of inclusion for the first category was that five or more participants referred to this type of experience, and for the second, that between one and four participants referred to this type of experience. This served to uncover the levels of commonality in participants' workshop experiences and to collapse the subject categories down to a more refined 32 subject headings, of which 28 were common and 4 were uncommon (*Appendix E*). I was still hunting for categories that would reveal a more meaningful connection to my research question and each step I took was helping bring further clarification to the process. My next step was to re-read the original transition point statements made by participants prior to the first workshop session, in the hope of discovering more elements relevant to both subject headings and categories.

My sense as a researcher at this time was of being in the incubation phase of my constant comparison inquiry, a time of "structured intellectual chaos" (Leavy, 2009, p. 18). It felt like being in the liminal phase of a rite of passage journey. I was moving in a time-space of not yet knowing. I believe my willingness to stay in the discomfort of not

knowing helped provoke a eureka moment of recognition (Butler-Kisber, 2010). I began to see that it was possible to categorize each subject heading under one or more phase of a rite of passage journey. This led me to wonder if it was possible to overlay a more detailed series of categories that included the hero's journey themes of the call, entering the underworld, crossing thresholds, facing dragon forces, and returning home. Each of these journey themes had been addressed in the workshop sessions.

I was entering the fine-grain phase of inquiry (Butler-Kisber, 2010). I created a large wall map to establish this category framework and found it was possible to place each of the 32 subject heading under one or more of the pre-liminal, liminal, and post-liminal phases of a rite of passage (*Appendix E*). I could also overlay the hero's journey thematic elements on this map. The visual mapmaking was helpful in achieving a more holistic and conceptual understanding as a layered big picture of the data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Butler-Kisber, 2010).

As the mapmaking proceeded, I also created a parallel alternative method of categorizing subject headings that focused more directly on the relationships between subject headings and transition processes. This category framework consisted of three umbrella topics:

a) participants' self-described experiences of personal development that took place during the entire workshop period and that bore some relationship to their journey starting points;

b) the elements of the journey that particularly affected and influenced their developmental experience either positively or negatively;

c) participants insights and personal learnings revealed through artwork

reflection.

An additional category d) held statements about the personal difficulties participants experienced with aspects of their workshop experience. This alternative categorization system allowed me to appreciate the unfolding process for each participant and link their workshop experience with their self-identified transition point.

While viewing these two parallel approaches to categorization, one based on personal transition and the other on journey stages, the final themes of this study began to emerge. It became possible to see that the emerging themes were capturing the raw data and relating back to the research question. The emergent and absorbing nature of this process attested to a contextual trustworthiness of my findings. Rolling (2013) described three reasoning processes relevant to research analysis: deductive, inductive and abductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning, a top down approach, is most evident in quantitative research whereas the bottom up, inductive emergent reasoning is more evident in qualitative research. Abductive reasoning is seen as a significant factor in arts-based research (Allen, 1995; McNiff, 1998; Rolling, 2013). Where the inductive reasoning implicit in qualitative research infers plausible conclusions from particular instances, abductive reasoning draws from instinctive and intuitive realms of the unconscious and imagination in making educated guesses. As an artist and arts-based inquirer, I am familiar and comfortable with these inner ways of knowing that seem to bypass linear logic and yet require a sustained depth of contemplative pondering.

As I stared again at the wall map categories of pre-liminal, liminal, and post-liminal, I considered how these categories, that now contained the component experiences of participants arts-based rites of passage journey, contributed to a

transitional process of personal development. The first thematic element came into view when I went back to re-read participants' transitional point statements. I noticed that in seven out of eight cases, participants used metaphors to describe their transition points. As I looked again at the subject headings beneath their journey categories, I could see how and where metaphoric thinking was repeatedly implicit in many of them. I confirmed this by re-reading the transcripts and highlighted examples of metaphoric thinking embedded in participants' statements. It became clear that metaphoric thinking was central to the whole journey experience. As I pondered how metaphoric thinking enables personal development, I saw how, in my own experience as an art-based journeyer, it enables me to shift from a more familiar outward literal and fact based perspective to a more fluid, imaginative, and poetic apperception of events and circumstances. In my own experience metaphoric thinking supports creative flow and intra-psychic knowing. As the inner world of the psyche becomes activated and known, metaphoric thinking gives more form to the "as if" and "it's like" world within. I found this relationship evidenced in participant statements such as "this onion is like me holding something" (Participant Sam).

I have described the emergence of this first theme in detail as it demonstrates the process of thoughtful inquiry I went through in arriving at each of the four themes that subsequently formed the outcome of my constant comparison analytic method. These four themes are described, explored, and illustrated in the following chapter, and substantiated with workshop participants' verbatim remarks interspersed throughout the text.

Validation Processes

Issues of credibility and verification.

Traditional conceptions of validity and reliability "are inappropriate for evaluating artistic inquiry" (Leavy, 2009, p.15). The aim of artistic inquiry is generally to provide resonance and understanding, to evoke meaning rather than denote it, and to provide situated, time-based, contextual truths rather than generalizable cases. As Barone and Eisner (2011) state, "what we seek in ABR is not so much validity as credibility" (p. 6). Arts-informed inquiry does not aim to present finally correct descriptions, interpretations, or judgments, but rather offers accounts that are trustworthy. Rolling (2013) believed that such trustworthiness establishes local credibility, dependability, and confirmability (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Butler-Kisber (2010) described trustworthiness in terms of transparency, persuasiveness, and plausibility.

The focus of my research data in this subjectively oriented study was on personally reported experience rather than observed behavior. While this data collection process can be duplicated, it is important to be clear that these results are "dependent upon the particular interaction between the investigator and the reality being presented" (Rolling, 2013, p. 29). The contextual reality of data collection is apparent in the design and facilitation of the Quiet Magic workshop with a particular group of selected participants. Contextual conditions contextualize the knowledge itself. This does not limit its usefulness but rather requires "reflection upon what consequences this has for applying the actual knowledge in a new context" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 98).

A principal aim of constant comparison is to account for the experiences of participants in a way that fairly represents them. This is a necessary condition for

acquiring local credibility and dependability for my study findings. To help ensure my representation was fair I undertook a process of member checking (Creswell & Miller, 2000) in which each participant could compare my results to his or her workshop experience recollections. I invited each participant to read and comment on my findings as represented in the draft results chapter. I invited comments on the accuracy of my conclusions as they related to participants' recollections included in this chapter. These checks formed an integral part of the follow-up process after the workshop. I also invited participants to inform me of additional comments they felt should be included in the results chapter that might provide a fuller picture or more accurately represent their experiences. Each participant was invited to provide feedback, either via email or in a face-to face meeting. I subsequently received written comments from seven of the eight participants. These comments indicated participants were content with how they had been represented. Three participants provided further elaboration on one or more of their experiences, which informed further revisions of the results chapter.

In support of trustworthiness for my findings, I have attempted in this chapter to be transparent in providing a detailed account of how I gathered and analyzed the data. As a result, I have documented a thinking process that can inform future research. The constant comparison inquiry method I used led to emerging themes that I deemed significant, meaningful, and representative of both *what* participants experienced and *how* these experiences related to their transitional processes and personal growth. A fuller exposition of these linking relationships is developed in succeeding chapters.

An arts-informed qualitative interpretation of data is a reflexive exercise in which meaning is perhaps made more than found. Researcher, method, and data are

interdependent and interconnected (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). Given this positioning, I attempted to account for both my thinking processes and the ideas that influenced my research purpose and methods at various points throughout this study. "In qualitative inquiry no apologies are needed for . . . assumptions and biases, just a rigorous accounting for them" (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 19). As such, I have worked hard to both increase my awareness of my personal perspective throughout this research process and to articulate that perspective clearly in this document.

In this study, participants' accounts of the workshop, group involvement, art-making, and journey experiences provided the raw data. Self-selected artworks brought to the post-workshop interviews acted as informative field texts (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 29) and served to add a further layer of depth and insight into participants' experiences. Haslam (2011) described how "creating an image transforms what is an ephemeral fleeting reality, and performs a permanent 'capture,' a possession that in a very real psychological sense is a form of magic" (p. 14). As field texts, I believe these representative artworks capture an essential flavour of participants' journey experiences. I have not attempted to analyze or attribute meaning to these images beyond the interpretations provided by participants during post-workshop interviews. When participants reflected upon their art images in the post-workshop interviews, they gained deeper insight and meaning into their workshop experience and its impact on their transitional processes—insight that was, in most cases, not immediately apparent during the workshop sessions. These additional discoveries helped me recognize and extract the themes that emerged from data analysis.

In the following chapter, I present the results arising from my data analysis. I also

include a website link to a slideshow of creatively selected digital images taken during the workshop. These slideshow images stand as accurate, visual, subjective decisions in representing participants' workshop experiences that reveal creative flow in action within the liminal phase of a transitional journey. As such, the slideshow provides additional arts-informed evidence for readers to view as an evocative representation of both what took place and how participants responded to the workshop event.

Results

Four overarching themes emerged from applying constant comparison inquiry to the data collected. These themes, along with my thoughts and literature references, are described in this section, interspersed with direct quotes by participants from either the post-workshop interviews or group discussions. I have taken care to represent the views of each of the eight participants. The pseudonyms for participants, in order of appearance in the text, are: Jill, Sam, Ben, Jack, Alice, Pam, Cathy, and Dawn. The images discussed in this chapter appear in Appendix F. Each image is labeled with initials identifying the participant: Ji, S, B, Ja, A, P, C, and D and a number. The numbering system refers to the order in which participants discussed images brought to the post workshop interviews and does not necessarily refer to the order in which these images are discussed in the text. Thus for example "Ji. 1" refers to the first image Jill discussed in the sample of images she brought to her post-workshop interview.

Four Emerging Themes

Through immersion in the data and the use of a constant comparison method of analysis (Butler-Kisber, 2010), I identified four themes that address my research question: How do people who self-identify as being in a transition process experience an arts-based group workshop that is organized around metaphoric themes?

1. Metaphorical thinking as a phenomenon that can contribute to a shift in perspective

2. The emergent form as a key ingredient in supporting transition

3. A personal process characterized by the unique qualities of an individual's transitional journey, and

4. A metaphoric and mythic journey as a helpful framework to view personal development and transition.

Metaphoric Thinking

Metaphors are far more prevalent in our lives than we generally recognize. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) convincingly demonstrate how metaphors are embedded in our everyday lives, language, thoughts, and actions. With multiple examples, they show how "our conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (p. 3). For example, in speaking of the concept of argument, metaphorical images of war are often used such as "your claims are *indefensible*. He *attacked every weak point* in my argument. His criticisms were *right on target*. I *demolished* his argument. I've never *won* an argument with him" (p. 4).

People use metaphoric images to encapsulate meaning. They act as visual vessels to carry our expressions of meaning in symbolic form. Many artists do the same in painted images. "Everything of which we are conscious is an image, and that image is psyche" (Jung, 1983, p. 50). In a similar vein, Hillman wrote "in the beginning is the image" and "our psychic substance consists of images" (1979, p.23). Is image perhaps the first emerging form within the psyche? Given the ubiquitous nature of visual imagery, both inner and outer, it appears quite natural that in their surface lives people would regularly use image metaphors to make sense of experience.

The use of metaphoric language, thinking, and expression were central to the Quiet Magic workshop experience. In using the hero's journey and the rite of passage as the framework for exploring personal development and transition, I actively sought to increase participants' awareness of the use of metaphor. I did not make this idea explicit;

it was implicit in the workshop design. Although I made use of metaphor in the design of the workshop, I was only intuitively cognizant of how an increased awareness about metaphorical thinking might facilitate personal development.

As it happened, participants were already employing metaphors before the workshop journey was undertaken. Each participant was asked to provide a written statement describing a transition point in his or her life. Seven participants expressed these transitional points through metaphor. These metaphors included, "connecting the island I inhabit," "pulling out the old roots and planting new seeds," "finding a balance," "penetrate the barriers," "let the baggage go," "a new channel," "sing my own magic," and "take off my armour." The eighth member interpreted the writing task as a series of affirmations that described what she wanted to bring into her life in the future: "I am doing what I love to do—creating, singing, painting," and "I am cooking and entertaining people in my home." Although not formed as metaphors, these affirmations do conjure images of future possibility. These metaphoric expressions provided me with the initial clue that metaphoric thinking was thematic of participants' experience.

Hillman (1979) tells us that "our being is imaginal" (p.23) and B. Moon (2007) is certain that "all artworks are metaphoric depictions of the people who create them" (p. 3). Metaphoric artworks are "akin to parables" (p. 5) in that they tell stories of our lived and living experience. Moon links metaphor to the idea of life as a journey and states that through these metaphoric art images we can harvest truths for and about ourselves. Thus, metaphor presents people with a way of knowing themselves and their way of being in the world. If heightened awareness and clarity is brought to this internal way of knowing

through creating and then reflecting on artwork expressions, metaphoric thinking can increase people's self-knowledge (Moon, 2007; Allen, 1995).

Each workshop participant implicitly or explicitly employed metaphoric ways of thinking and knowing while creating their artwork images. In the reflective phase, participants made conscious links between these images and their lived experience and transitional process. Before an artwork is even begun, the choice of materials can have metaphorical significance. The participant Jill, in reflecting in the post work interview upon one of her images (Ji. 3[1]) stated that "even taking this black paper, where I'm at is this unknown, this black hole." As Jill reflected on the explosion of colour on the surface of the paper, she added, "I'm moving forward with darkness behind me and going into the light." Jill's artwork journey thus became a metaphor for her personal journey.

Sam remarked about one of his art images, "they are like things that have taken root in me, quite small but not very well developed," (S. 2) and "originally it felt like there was a holding and this onion is like me holding something, but now it's not a holding. This just needs time to develop before it can open like a bud." Sam's observation shows how his image could have an unfolding metaphoric significance to his personal journey long after the image was made. In art therapy, this is sometimes referred to as the life of the image (McNiff, 2004; Schaverien, 1999). This ongoing metaphoric life of the image is well illustrated by Jack when he observed, "painting this piece has really brought a lot of loose ends to a single point (see image Ja. 3). I really carry this as an image with me. It has meaning for me and it's almost independent now from the picture itself."

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[1] All workshop images referenced can be found in Appendix F pp 137 - 140

Important to Ben in his transitional journey was a desire to connect more with others. He spoke of his art-making as "letting myself be seen a little bit." He described how his images could reveal something of his inner life to others, echoing Levine's statement that we make art "not to be saved but to be seen" (2009, p. 11). Of image B. 3, Ben remarked, "it's like a bit of a shaman. With a shaman, an energy body is more likely. This is what the energy body is like. A lived in knowledge of energy bodies, not a book knowledge. Being that." Ben's remark suggests that expressive artwork has the power to reveal his unseen inner life in the form of a metaphoric image.

Occasionally, metaphoric thinking can work at a conscious level as artists create. Referring to image Ja.1 with its black and red crushed tissue paper balls, Jack clearly linked this to "letting go of my fear and anger" and described how the process of making his three-dimensional image had "certainly increased awareness in the sense of having more choice when involved in a situation where fear or anger are steering me." Such conscious metaphorical thinking does not necessarily interrupt the creative flow. Jack remarked in relation to creating image Ja. 3 where he body-mapped his archetypal image in workshop session five, "I could feel certain ideas coming through and influencing the choice of colours, but not in the sense that I had a certain outcome in mind, they were just with me these ideas and influencing my process."

Often the metaphoric nature of art images is not apparent during their creation. The metaphoric message is frequently subliminal, seeming to arise from some pre-conscious level of the psyche. On the surface, the artist might feel quite disconnected from the created image while a meaning-making connectedness is taking place at a deeper level. Alice's experience of the workshop series was she "had very little energy to

give to it for half of the time, and so I didn't get as deeply into it as I was hoping for or expected I might." This apparent frustration with an ongoing immersive process suggests that meaning making can be happening naturally, although subliminally, during an incubation period. This subliminal meaning making happened for me as a researcher as I undertook a constant comparison analysis of the workshop data and had little idea of what, if anything, might emerge as a result of my efforts.

This phenomenon of subliminal meaning making also influenced my decision to confine the bulk of participants' reflection time to the post workshop interviews. Alice remarked later in reference to image A. 1, "so you need to have this trust that it's not just pushing paint around the paper with no meaning or no purpose. There's nourishment in it. Because at the time I didn't like it and didn't know what was there. I didn't trust it. I didn't see this at the time, but I'm drawn to the rootedness of this tree trunk, to where it gets it's strength and it's roots." The use of, what I term, conscious metaphoric thinking is a key component of the process of art-based reflection and inquiry.

A prerequisite for inner knowing is the presence of self-awareness. This can involve bringing conscious awareness to the subterranean levels of the psyche, "the hidden or deeper parts of human experience" (Bright, 2010, p. 2). In her pre-workshop statement and during the post workshop interview, Pam spoke of how she wanted to move past her tendency to find "comfort in withdrawing and being alone." In discussing her art-making process, Pam said, "when I was doing art I didn't have self awareness. I enjoyed just not needing for it to look a certain way." This lack of conscious self-awareness or insight into what we are creating as we create can be a common experience in spontaneous art-making. Perhaps this is necessarily so if our artworks are to be

spontaneous, authentic, and made in an intuitive, meditatively absorbed, liminal phase? Though we may not be consciously creating metaphoric images, the act of art-making itself can stir a metaphorically meaningful process in the subterranean levels of the psyche. I wondered, as I reflected upon participants workshop experiences, whether, as the psyche is stirred by creative flow, it naturally and spontaneously releases some of its images? Pam remarked on how "there was a piece that just ended up being black but I had so enjoyed the process because it felt like a journey in which I was aware of what I was moving through . . . it wasn't just about a receiving but also about a giving. That's what was going on in me" (image P.4).

It appears, at least sometimes, that metaphorical thinking is not confined to the conscious surface level of thought, and that through a conscious reflective process, such subliminal metaphorical thinking can be brought to the surface of self-awareness.

Metaphors can package powerful associative meanings when people are willing to follow their lead. As Cathy explored the metaphors in her image C.3, which formed part of a group art piece on thresholds, she was able to recognize different facets of the masculine and feminine sides of her nature. She said "the snake is very feminine. A lot of the goddesses have snakes around them, or they bring wisdom or dreams. They're very magical creatures. Snakes are curvy, usually very feminine, but that was like a gigantic penis. The mixing of the male and female." Cathy later added that "this metaphor for 'yielding' and 'pressing forward' has been very transformative for me . . . helped me gain a deep capacity to say 'yes, this works for me' or 'no, this is not for me right now.' I am becoming more discerning." As her insight grew, so did her knowledge of inner resources for her transitional journey.

Metaphoric thinking and image-making is not confined to individual artworks. It is also apparent in group art activities. Here, the influence of others can affect the meaning revealed in a created image. Sam remarked on an event that took place for him during the group creation of a mythic landscape, "what was coming in was this feminine form flowing into what I had drawn … because what I had drawn was this big, colourful, vibrant thing, coarse colours, and it was like going into something finer to go through the threshold.". Sam was able to make links between what happened in the group art-making experience with his transitional starting point, where he sought to change his way of relating to sexuality.

Metaphors can become motifs that show up repeatedly through a series of artworks. Feeney describes motifs as evolving symbols "related to the individual's pursuit and discovery of a sense of purpose and meaning in their own life and in relating to the lives of others" (2001, p. xiv). Dawn remarked on how "this vine started growing out of the brick wall. This motif of the vine and leaf shapes on it came up over and over in my artwork" (Images D.1 & D.4) and "then this spiral shape came here. Is it infinity? I don't know but it also kept showing up in my pieces" (image D.2 & D.3). A key transitional theme Dawn identified concerned becoming more open to change in her life. She related this to her vine motif. "I think it's symbolic of the whole part of letting life evolve, letting things happen that are meant to happen."

The notion of motifs as universal symbols used to support personal development and discovery of new meaning (Feeney, 2001) brings me to the next thematic idea, that of the emergent form. The concept of emergent form is the idea that in the act of creating we

give life and externalized form to the metaphoric images that are present purely as potentialities within the different levels of our psyche.

Emergent Form

I conceptualize the psyche as the interface between what we are beyond form—the formless Spirit—and the reality we know as physical form. What can be said of the formless if it provides no image? Lao Tzu remarked, "the Tao that can be spoken is not the eternal Tao, the name that can be named is not the eternal name" (Lin, 2006, p. 3). If psychic images are subtle forms that are subsequent to the formless, then the art images emerging from the psyche are a bridge to the outer world.

Jill captured this idea of emerging forms when she said, "my way of painting is like pulling out, pulling out all the potential, pulling out life out of life." Campbell referred to the emergent form as "the implicit form that is going to ask to be brought forth" (1997, p. 151). He emphasized that this implicit form cannot be a rehash or copy of some previous image. It cannot be a retreading of old ground, but needs to be "a living moment actually in action or an inward experience" (Campbell, 1990, p. 184). A remark of Jill's about her image Ji.1 emphasizes the newness implicit in an authentic emergent form. "The colours are colours that I don't usually use, much brighter . . . the green thing is new life growing out of a something, maybe it's something new, a crossover into a threshold."

My assumption is that such emergent forms cannot be separated from the energy of creative flow or "the dragon of creative power" (Kapitan, 2003, p. 54). In the process of creating, the artist is "not a passive conduit, but a responsive partner who collaborates

with the formative energy" (McNiff, 2003, p. 57). These new forms emerge from the movement of the body and "from our rhythmic engagement with materials, places, one another, and the world" (2004, p. 231). McNiff referred to these emergent forms as "the primary source of change" (p. 231). I visualize the initiation of these emergent forms as an ignition of creative flow that crosses the gap between psyche and artist when the artist enters into a liminal phase of uncertainty and not knowing. Sam remarked of his image S. 2, "this was the first piece with a real flow to it and once I got into it and let go of trying to think what I needed to do, I was just free to get in and paint lines and there was this energy in the process of creating it."

Jack described how, in creating an image, he was "very absorbed making it—not in my usual mind—absorbed by the creative process." Throughout the workshop sessions, I used a selection of music to support creativity. Jack said of the music, "it helped to keep me in flow. I don't particularly remember it but it worked. It kept things flowing and in motion." Pam commented on how "the music took me, it supported wherever I was going with my art-making." Jack captured the delight he experienced in the spontaneous nature of the emerging form when he exclaimed, "just give me some paint and a brush and let's see where it goes!" Jill made a similar point when she said, "oh it's flowing and I just want to keep on going!"

Cathy, an experienced artist, already knew how to trust and employ the creative flow of emerging forms in support of her personal healing journey. "I know how to get there and I know why to get there. I've discovered a magical route. I can go places in my mind I never could go before. It's a gift," she said. She was also aware that a key ingredient is being true to the emerging forms. "When I'm creating art I need to be in my

most authentic self." Emerging forms can be full of surprises. Cathy observed of image C. 4, "I was creating a self-portrait and then all of a sudden this idea of dragon forces took hold. I came to see that the dragon force was within myself." Cathy's resulting image is a powerful example of how metaphoric thinking and the emergent form can come together to produce something magical.

Although Alice experienced discomfort and disconnection during the workshop, she still found a level of quiet magic present in the process of art-making. "I always like creating the art whether I like the end result or not. It's always a great experience to do it." McNiff (2003) explains how emerging forms are not exclusively concerned with expressing intra-psychic processes. They are also influenced by our interrelatedness with the external influences of others, materials, and environment. Speaking of image A. 2, Alice said, "I found a knife and I was liking the feeling of it." There can be a power and immediacy, exclusive to the moment of expression, when an intimate bond between creator and materials happens. Speaking of the knife painting process, she remarked, "I liked it better when it was wet. It was more powerful and the black was more present." Later, when reflecting upon what had primarily been a kinesthetic experience, Alice found she could blend her kinesthetic memory with the image's metaphorical significance. "Now I see something slain," and "it's reminiscent of bones, like something dead and rotted away and slain, seems like a contradiction, there's blood and there's bare bones." Is metaphorical significance implicit in the emerging form? The following comments by Alice suggest as much. "I took the knife to it and discovered that when I scraped over this with the knife I was so interested that it resisted the black, that the black didn't stick to the other colours. There was this resistance to the darkness that I found

exciting" (Image A. 3). Writing of the genuine excitement that can arise as people interact with emerging forms, Campbell (1995) comments, "the creative act is not hanging on, but yielding to a new creative movement. Awe is what moves us forward" (p. 262).

The emergent form as an artwork expression is essentially metaphorical in nature, a representation of something previously unseen and perhaps unknown. It re-presents the as-yet-unseen but not the un-seeable, the formless. In giving expression to the previously unseen within the psyche, and in relationship to outside influences, even the basic design elements from which such art images are formed can have metaphorical significance. Colours alone can represent something intuited, but previously unseen. Ben, for example, spoke of how "when I'm doing art I'm tuned into colour, and that wakes me up a bit." Due to the tactile and immediate quality of finger paint, Ben discovered its ability to support the emergence within him of both creative flow and the spontaneity of new forms. "Finger painting was great. A lot happened in that I tried it with different colours."

Part of Ben's transitional focus during the workshop was to look at his "readiness for a relationship." He explored this theme through the emerging forms of his finger paint art experiences. "If I could draw I'd be drawing figures of women but I can't draw so then I'm just doing colour but what I'm remembering is a friend's costume and what it meant to her and I'm swishing colour around and though it doesn't look like that, that's what I'm thinking about as I'm doing it, so that's what I'm actually painting" (Image B. 2). Ben used the design element of colour in conjunction with bodily movements to take a metaphorical journey into his inner world (Image B. 1). "My thinking at the time was the black and then from the black expression. And it's very dynamic expression. Some of

that is black from black, but a lot of it is very vibrant colours." How well this comment describes the idea of form emerging from the previously unseen, bringing with it new insight and perspective!

The emergent form can have an alive immediacy during its execution and a metaphoric life after its completion. As such, it is both a process and a product supportive of personal development. Jill illustrates this as she describes her painting process. "I started into blue with leaving behind and going into brightness. Now its like I'm moving forward and darkness is behind me and going into the light. I started with the blues, purples, and pinks and then went into the light." As she reflects on the forming of her image, Jill harvests metaphoric meaning held in the image. She remarked on the insight gained from this process. "I don't have to be in that darkness. I want to be in the light and to feel that growth. What I am doing is to detach myself from the old. Now I feel I have the space to breath."

What Campbell (1997) calls "the implicit form," Schaverien (1999) refers to as the "embodied image" and Kapitan (2003) equates with "vessels of transformation." During their artwork experiences, participants discovered that it was necessary to let go of old ideas and images for something new to emerge. As Sam reflected upon image S.1, he described how he

> "was still looking for (collage) pictures but there was nothing that I could find that represented real woman-ness. Nothing natural about it. So I had to draw it and I dug for this image and it came out from within, and I couldn't find that externally. I had to go inside and look for it."

Actively exploring a change in his relationship towards women Sam observed, "when I was drawing the female face I was really excited about it, choosing the colours and just being really loving. That's what's setting me free in it, the fact that I love it and I love what it represents."

A clear sign of the presence of, and therapeutic dynamics of, an authentic emergent form is the intimate relationship the artist has with his or her work. Dawn spoke of how "I love my dragon," adding, "I have for so long felt vulnerable and unprotected and I came to value this core stability in my dragon and now I recognize that it has served its purpose and can soften its flame" (D. 3). Dawn described a transitional process that took place between the processes of creating and reflecting. The emergent form becomes both a container and transitional object in which visual images "hold the internal world of the artist but in visible form" (Levine, 2003, p. 69).

Our embodied relationship with these emergent forms is not necessarily easy or comfortable. It can stir and reveal surprising, uncomfortable, and sometimes shocking elements. It "develops in unexpected ways and usually takes a form which could not have been predicted and so it may surprise even its maker" (Schaverien, 1999, p. 87).

Dawn said of image D. 2, "it so shocked and scared me when this image came out. It's a female image and maybe because I still had this red, the red marks came on and she looks like a totally helpless, abused person. You can't see her arms. You don't know if she has arms. She's laying on the ground and floating there. She's naked, she's oozing blood!" Disturbing images can arise from deeper levels of the personal unconscious and, as such, they can become precursors to further investigation and insight. Dawn remarked,

"perhaps this image should be another piece of art. It's not helpful to pretend it's not there."

Authentic emergent forms show themselves when people are able to relax, feel safe, and playfully enter into creative expression. "To really play . . . means to give up any sense of a fixed idea of what will happen or of knowing anything beforehand" (Levine, 2003, p. 69). These playfully arising forms can leave the artist with a sense of "How did I do that? Where did it come from?" (p.72). Pam took this playful approach to her art-making experiences. "It was like I was just wanting to do art for the first time, just playing and seeing where it goes, like a 3-year old." Of image P. 1 she said, "I remember as I was doing this I was really relating to this. I really loved it and I thought, oh this is what art is!" She added, "this was like giving form to something that's beautiful inside." With image P. 2, Pam remarked, "I've never done anything with masks and I was ambivalent about making it but it opened another world, finding more of what's inside through this mask making." She went on to harvest meaning from her image. "I liked the idea of having a face outside of me. It makes it easier to see on the inside. It affects my face when I look at it; my body responds to it. It takes me to more of an awareness of my being." In her transitional statement Pam had written of taking off her armour and "connecting the island that I inhabit so that it is no more an island." Her mask allowed her to explore her relationship with armour with regard to her self-image and her developing inner awareness.

Authentic emergent forms and their embodied metaphoric meanings have the potential to become magical conduits for personal development. Such development,

however, is by no means a certainty. Every emergent form is born within the context of each artist's unique personal process.

Personal Processes

The more I observed participants' art-making processes during the workshop experience, the more I bore witness to the unique qualities of each individual's journey. This was demonstrated in the way they took part in the workshop experience as a whole and in how they expressed themselves through their artwork. These unique qualities and differences in approach became even more evident when participants spoke of their transitional journeys and made links to their artwork experiences during the post-workshop interviews, confirming that "the differences among individuals within a given ethnic group can be as great as the differences between groups" (Corey, 2009, p. 291).

Cathy referred to the Quiet Magic workshop group of participants as "a band of travelers," adding that there was a "huge variety of personalities and ages, starting points and a tremendously diverse group." Jill called it "a very eclectic group," and Sam spoke of how "everyone brought a different perspective." All individuals come with a spark of uniqueness that seeks expression in the world, although not all individuals have clear and open channels for the creative flow to give expression to that individuality. Individuality comes wrapped in a multi-influenced, context bound past. The creative flow must find its way through each person's configuration of inner structures, filters, boundaries, patterns, and self-made restrictions. These influences shape an individual's particular ways of thinking, feeling, acting, learning, and expressing.

What guides people's personal process is not pathology of repressed and unresolved past, but rather an inner blueprint, a kernel of essence of who we really are

(Hillman, 1997). Hillman called this essence "the innate image" (p.4), and remarked that it holds and guides the fulfillment of each person's inner potential "in the co-presence of today, yesterday and tomorrow" (p. 7), revealing itself "mainly in hints, intuitions, whispers" (p. 10).

In the following section, I illustrate with transcript statements how each participant's journey was a unique personal process. Each participant is presented in turn.

Jack.

What guided Jack's personal process was his awareness of transitioning "into a stage in my life where I would have more choice and room and be a little bit more of a wiser person." He wanted to move beyond familiar patterns of "pleasing others and being driven by unconscious forces, and losing more and more energy." During the workshop, Jack found his "inner psychological development was more private and not so much part of the group." He felt the workshop allowed him to be self-directed, remarking "there was not one evening where I didn't know what to do or I didn't feel inspired." He was also open to the influence of others in his creative process and enjoyed "seeing others using different techniques like a spatula rather than a brush, or the colours that people are working with." He added, "it's always good to know what other artists do."

A difficulty Jack encountered during the workshop experience was in "relating to one of the mature archetypes of King, Magician, Warrior and Lover as defined by Moore and Gillette (1991) as none of them seemed to fully work for him." Moore and Gillette describe archetypes as our "deep cohesive structures" (1991, p. 3) and as "inner blueprints" (p. 9) of potential. This is akin to Hillman's concept of the innate image that guides our destiny (1979). Another way of viewing archetypes is as potentials that do not

become fully available until filled with lived experience (Corbett & Stein, 2005) or grown into.

Although Jack found that none of the mature archetypes were a good fit, he did connect to the foundational archetype of the "divine child" that is "innocent, simple and stepping out into the world with an unencumbered heart and openness" (Moore, 1991, p.14). This divine child archetype is sometimes associated with an opening of the heart. Jack remarked of his archetype image J. 3 that he "spent most of the time with the heart centre. It became obvious that would be the place from where to come in letting go of fear and anger and to help with freedom of choice." This archetype seemed pivotal to Jack's transitional journey, as he viewed the "heart as the centre point between polarities" and observed "that's where we are most human." He saw "heart as the centre where change takes place," or, as Hillman asserted, "the heart holds the image of your destiny and calls you to it" (1997, p. 46).

Jack was aware that his transitioning into a wiser and freer person "won't be limited to the six weeks of the course but be a process of a year or two." Yet, he found the workshop "highlighted it and set parameters." Jack viewed the Quiet Magic workshop experience as "reconnecting me with creativity and ease of moving and some of that has found its way into the way I'm working."

Cathy.

Cathy's workshop experience followed on from a prolonged period of arts-based self-healing. During the workshop she was also "painting at home sometimes 4-5 hours a day." The workshop experience "really allowed me that inner journey," and "I didn't feel I had to explain any of my artwork which was nice." Like Jack, Cathy was also self-

directed. "I was very self-centred in this thing. I liked that it was a group, but I was only responsible for myself." She remarked that during the workshop she "wasn't interested in painting. I felt averse to anything that was going to create any kind of a mess" and "wanted my artwork to be very simple." Cathy found the mythological aspects of the workshop influenced her home-based artwork and that her images "were coming out of this new way of thinking about myths and archetypes." The mythic journey "helped me look at my own outside artwork in a new light and allow things to subtly shift within myself." The mythic presented her with a new perspective. "All of a sudden, I could see things I'd never seen before falling into place."

Cathy worked with a transitional point around leaving a career that had shaped much of her identity. She described how "I needed to figure out how to let go of all this behind me." A key aspect of her process was connected to coming out of a prolonged period of traumatic stress. "My goal all along has been to make friends with the dissociative state," she remarked. Cathy's art-based journey had led her to view this dissociative state as "a sacred space, once I knew how to be in that space safely." Where this dissociative state had been one of disconnection and withdrawal, her perspective was changing to seeing it as a place of renewal.

Cathy's perspective was rich with the metaphors arising from her healing process. "So many of my images have masks and the mask is coming away," she commented. Her workshop images continued this process of renewal. At the point in the workshop where participants explored facing the dragon forces in their lives, Cathy remarked, "I am the dragon force within myself and that just really showed up for me, and not to be scared of the dragon forces." She acknowledged "that ultimately mastering my inner landscape or

dragon is the most fruitful endeavor" and that it was "all of the shifts I make in myself that allow me to influence my environment." Commenting on the workshop experience as a whole, she said "what has been most helpful for me has been the move towards authenticity." She added, "whimsical play fosters authenticity for me and that's why this group was useful to me because it was very playful."

In unfolding her spark of uniqueness, Cathy shifted her central archetypal influence from the warrior archetype that "is very strong in me" to where she felt able to "embody a completely different warrior archetype that is neither male nor female but one of discernment and knowing." She aligned this with a developing ability "to speak up and act in accordance with my authentic nature." In addition, Cathy was aware of new space in her for the "archetype of queen, of leader, ready to be filled."

Alice.

Alice's personal process involved "deepening my confidence in what I have to offer and penetrate the barriers to a more acute awareness of my deeper self and what I need to express." Alice was preoccupied with pressure in her outer life circumstances when she entered the workshop experience. "I found the whole thing challenging. It was bad timing for me." Preoccupied by her workload, Alice felt her art-making experience "was dead. I had the experience of doing it but nothing was coming back to me from it." Alice stayed the course. "I knew I wasn't going to quit." What resulted was that she generally felt disconnected from both the metaphorical meaning in her art and from others in the group. "I felt I wanted to isolate myself. I didn't want to put things on other people's spaces. I found it safest for me just to work in my own little corner, so it was really a kind of independent work for me." She spoke of, "what sticks out for me most

was the discomfort," most of which came from "a lot of self-judgment." Of her artwork, Alice spoke "of not liking what I've done, so I don't necessarily want to show it" and of being inhibited by "my life long fear of rejection." Alice's familiar patterns were energized at this time.

As we reflected together on her artwork during the post-workshop interview, Alice began recognizing some of the metaphorical meaning that was actually apparent in her artwork, despite not being in her awareness at the time of creating it. Alice remarked on how "the dragon slaying was so powerful for me. I wanted to slay this dragon and felt I had successfully slain it because it gave the power to stand in my ground and not fly off and get crazy about it." She saw how "I don't recognize it, or I criticize it or distrust it. I don't see it even." She observed, "I didn't see it till now. At the time I'm thinking I must have to do something a little deeper, that's not enough." Such self-judgment can serve to cloud awareness.

It is no small thing to trust the integrity of one's own process, especially when one's experience is difficult, painful, and uncomfortable. However, as the image is a kind of capture, in the later process of art image reflection, significant meaning can emerge and reveal itself. Alice observed how "even if I feel disconnected there is something I am connected to. I may not be aware of it, it's probably subliminal, but you are living it or expressing it even without knowing." A meaningful personal developmental process can continue in art-based inquiry even through difficulty and distress. "Getting past all the insecurity and hesitance and mistrust of what I have to offer. I'm gaining some trust in it but it's a slow process." Alice added, "now having processed these paintings, it gives me

more confidence and strength and a sense of solidity. The power is in the ability to trust in yourself."

Ben.

Ben viewed his workshop experience as an "opportunity to continue awakening." Before the workshop, Ben had begun some expressive artwork at home and had discovered it could support his personal journey towards "newness, expression, connectivity, and an openness to the subconscious." During the workshop, Ben focused on continuing to develop his art-making process. He was also curious as to how others made art and was keen to make new connections with people. "Ninety five percent of my focus was my own page in front of me, but you'd see who was doing what on the other tables and that immediately became part of the reference and I'd incorporate it into what I was doing too." Making art for Ben was not simply a solitary pursuit but also a way to connect with others. "I'm coming out and expressing more so I tell everyone I'm doing art now and show pictures of my art. It gives me a social platform." He added, "the art isn't just me, it isn't just an internal process, it's on display to my friends." Ben observed how his art could represent him, "letting myself be seen a little bit." Ben enjoyed talking about his art and found it helped him in "seeing a lot more" and that "talking about it adds a depth to it." He spoke of how his art connected him to "the women in my life, the women in the art group, femininity. If I'm not consciously doing that I'm doing that subconsciously or unconsciously."

Ben's workshop art-making process was bold, fluid, and experimental. Of his working process he said, "on another painting I took a transfer, on other times I cut a spiral out of paper and painted over the top. I was trying different things." Connecting

inner to outer life appeared central to Ben's personal developmental process. "There's always new connections and understandings. It's good that I have a chance to express it. On the inside you just connect with an energy, and it's not concrete, and it's different than the usual self." Through the workshop, he discovered a richness of colour in his inner landscape. "The colours are brighter. I like it in the abstract, abstract expression, I really love all the colour."

Jill.

Jill was another participant who "experienced change in the colours I used. I picked all these bright colours." These colours seemed to affirm the affirmations she made in her transition point statement. Like Cathy, Jill also made art at home during the time of the workshop experience. Jill described her personal process as intertwined with her creativity. "I get into it and I become a part of that world and I want to get in to it. It's like being in a warm bath. I don't want the water to get cold and I don't want to come out." She spoke of how "I'd go home after the classes and I just continued into something. I'd look at the last painting I'd done and it was awe! And that led to another painting and that led to something else." She laughed, "I need a 24-hour course!" Jill described her painting method as "like pulling out, pulling out all the potential, pulling out life out of life." Jill's pre-workshop affirmations also seemed to represent her desire to pull out life out of life.

One aspect of Jill's personal process that came to the fore during the workshop was around feeling "really awkward" in a group setting. She described how "this is true throughout my life. Sometimes I have an idea, or really witty thing, and I want to say it and hold back and somebody else says it or someone else does it." She sees this

behaviour pattern as being "a leader inside but outside a wallflower." She saw it as inhibiting her creative fluidity during group art-making experiences. "I'm always looking at what everybody else is doing because I don't want to do anything wrong." Jill commented on how this wondering whether she is doing something wrong was representative of her general life situation in which she observed how uncertainty held her back from moving forward in the life she envisioned in her affirmations. She used her art-making experiences to "detach myself from the old." She viewed her images as concerned with finding "the space to breathe and accept or not accept for myself." Jill added, "I like life. I want to live with a capital L." Jill actively used her artwork to further her personal development.

Sam.

At the start of the workshop experience Sam felt, "quite nervous to be going into a group with what I wanted to bring." Sam used the workshop experience to explore his relationship with sexuality, "particularly as a filter through which I view women." He discovered that the supportive nature of the group helped him feel more at ease. "I did feel I was being held by people in the group." Through his involvement in workshop sessions Sam found, "I was coming to this heart understanding of how this whole sexual patterning thing works." His art-making journey allowed him to see that "the more I relate to heart understanding and the truth that I see, the less I'm pulled into those things." Sam "intentionally chose to work with people I hadn't spoken to before" during group art-making experiences. He observed how he found a number of these experiences "relate back to my new relationship" with women.

Sam was also "quite nervous about my art because I hadn't done any in ages," but discovered that "once I got into it and let go of trying to think what I needed to do, I was just free to get in and paint lines and there was this energy in the process of creating it." Sam was being activated by the contagious nature of the creative flow that can happen in groups (McNiff, 2003). He was inspired by noticing how "everyone was getting into it and enjoying the process." Sam wondered whether he might find himself "just sitting there like in an exam," and was heartened to see "everyone was so enthusiastic in it." Although motivated and enlivened by the group energy, he was still able to find his own "art process was individual, and I was in my own kind of bubble."

Being a musician, Sam found the music "was one of my favourite things about the whole process." It provided a "soundtrack" to his art-making experience. He remarked, "you are just in the stream of it and the music helped bring that forth." At times Sam was aware of "having an unwillingness to step through a threshold" and noticed where "there was this weird moment and something said to move past it." Perhaps the creative flow was helping carry Sam over his personal transitional thresholds?

Dawn.

Dawn felt "compelled to be there. I did not want to miss a single night." This was despite having to deal with a number of circumstantial difficulties and concerns that arose for her during the period of the workshop sessions. Dawn observed that "the calmness of it and the respect of the environment, just the physical layout made me feel I was walking into something lovely." The group atmosphere helped her "really be present." Dawn also found the drumming circles that began each session "helped us be listening and attentive to each other." They assisted the group with "delving in, going deeper and being intuitive

with our artwork." Of the group art-making, Dawn noticed how she "kept my own stuff pretty small" and connected this to childhood experiences of feeling and believing, "I am small" and "insignificant" and "others are more important." She observed how "some of that stand alone quality comes across in the movement of the art I do." Dawn described her transitional process as "more an individual journey inside the group." This was an experience common to a number of participants; the self-absorbed nature of art-making as an activity can contribute to this phenomenon. Dawn did appreciate the pairing up that happened in the final session. In this session, each participant created a presentation piece of his or her art-based journey. Participants paired up to support one another's construction of this piece. Dawn liked that "someone else was genuinely interested in my process." Later the whole group witnessed one another's presentation.

Before the workshop, Dawn had written a number of possibilities for exploring transition in her life. She said, "I didn't pick one when I started. I just wanted my intuitive process and artwork to show to me what was most important to be working on." It did not take her long to decide, "my own personal well-beingness is the target." Dawn observed a key aspect of this goal "was about being open to what comes." She found her artwork becoming "symbolic of the whole part of letting life evolve, letting things happen that are meant to happen." This was a new perspective for Dawn. She viewed herself as normally being, "very goal directed and clear about what needs to happen next and what needs to fit in." Despite Dawn's tendency to "retreat back into the dark place" of sadness and grief, of feeling vulnerable and unprotected, through her art-making she found, "a lovely core of movement happening in there. Things are moving." She could see images of "warmth" and "spiritual growth" appearing in the emerging forms that supported her

personal unfolding, and she recognized that "the biggest impact in moving through the whole process is having a new way to view the journey of change." From an archetypal perspective, Dawn viewed her images as revealing "my own spiritual transition towards the old crone or the wise woman," and she knew "I'm valuing my own wisdom."

Pam.

Pam began the workshop wanting "to step into life and living by opening to vulnerability" and connecting more easily with others. She used the metaphor of taking "off my armor." At first, she found "it was a bit daunting" and appreciated how the drumming circles "opened a door to other ways of communicating." She described her usual pattern of "waiting to be excluded" and "to not be liked" and enjoyed the opportunities to connect through group art activities. She appreciated that "not everything has to be done alone" and the art-making provided "a way of communicating through art, like coming into the world but quietly, into relationship but quietly." Pam noticed how the group art-making highlighted how "I start as individual and alone and then there's a threshold to coming out into relationship." She remarked how transition is an ongoing, iterative process. "The whole thing of relating is such a continuous journey. As much as I'd like there to be an end point where all is well, it doesn't go that way."

Pam particularly enjoyed mask making and the ritual activity where archetypal masks were worn. She observed how masks "seem to depict something deeper, beneath the surface." Pam remarked on how the art allows a glimpse into the unseen worlds within others and that the art "is showing something else about them, other worlds that we all have. I can get fixated on this form. It opens something more."

Pam viewed her art-making experiences as a way of "finding me." Her workshop art was about "finding the being, the gold, everything that's beneath the surface." This revealed to her that "when I let my self see what I am, know what I am, relate to what I am, the pressure of needing others to see me softens and then there's more space and something changes in terms of how I relate to others."

Each participant's personal process demonstrated how deeply personal and individualistic journeys of transition can be. Yet, at the same time, a dance of being with others is interwoven through each participant's personal process because of the group setting. This individual and group process took place within the context of a metaphoric journey.

Metaphoric Journey

The heart of the Quiet Magic workshop experience was a metaphoric and mythic journey. Sometimes it is possible to follow the paths laid by others, but for much of the time individuals follow a pathless path, not quite knowing where it might lead. In rites of passage, these periods of not knowing are the liminal phase and, in the hero's journey, are the entry to the underworld. A personal process implies a journey that takes place over time; the mythic journey adds the dimension of depth to this linear surface journey. Much of the hero's journey is an extended metaphor for this deeper inward journey that individuals undertake as a part of their personal development. It brings awareness to, and connection with, the underlying forces that guide the surface journey.

As participants dug deep for metaphoric images in their artwork and gave expression to emerging forms, the metaphoric journey provided signposts for entering the deeper levels of the psyche. One of the basic functions of myth is to act as a travel map

for inner journeying, a map that helps individuals find their way towards a more fulfilling life (Campbell, 2004). Mythic images and symbols are not objective facts as they "come out of the collective unconscious" (Campbell, 1990, p. 45) and mythic stories "are metaphors . . . they take the facts of life and relate them to the psyche" (p. 43). The metaphors of the call, the underworld, facing dragon forces, crossing thresholds, and returning with gifts are each signposts in the mythic landscape of personal development and transformation.

Jack remarked that the "rite of passage worked for me because I had this idea of transitioning into my 50s. I saw it as a very individual personal rite of passage, as there's not one in our culture except for having a big birthday party." Jack was aware that his art-making experiences were "happening on many levels, some of them more visible on the surface and others on more unseen levels." He found it difficult, however, to "relate much to a particular stage of the hero's journey" but recognized that "the dynamic Campbell describes is certainly true and worth knowing." He enjoyed the art-making so much, "I didn't give myself a hard time if I couldn't relate much to a particular stage of the hero's journey."

Cathy experienced the workshop as an "inner journey" and found herself travelling "into the underworld, into the nether world." She made links between this journey and her home-based artwork where she was also "playing with all these mythological figures." Regarding the hero's journey, Cathy observed, "there's always this one place where there is a bit of a reprieve, and for me that is the dissociative spot." She added, "it can be a place of renewal."

She particularly connected to meeting her dragon forces and kept "coming back to this idea of inner dragon and the compulsion to master things outside of myself." She recognized that "ultimately mastering my inner landscape or dragon is the most fruitful endeavor" and realized it was important "not to be scared of the dragon forces." Through this deepening of her developmental process, Cathy saw that "a lasting effect has to come from a deeper place inside myself." She valued time spent exploring the mature archetypes and remarked on "a new awareness of archetypes in myself" and "when we presented our archetypes, I had to be at my most authentic self. You can't evoke those things and invite people in when you are being fake." She found the threshold metaphor equally meaningful. "Daily I'm crossing that threshold which is the re-connection part. As long as I keep coming along that neural pathway, that psychic energy pathway it will become a well worn path."

Cathy returned with inner wisdom. "You have to be careful to take things back from the extraordinary to the ordinary, otherwise you leave things in the extraordinary and it never effects change. For me this is trusting that the subtle shifts that happen in the extraordinary will come back with you." Cathy's experience confirms, "it is by going down into the abyss that we recover the treasures of life" (Campbell, 1991, p.10). The hero returns with treasures won!

Alice "really enjoyed the mythical aspect and the archetypes." She spoke of taking "a leap into the unknown, to find the courage to move forward in something I've longed for." In harvesting meaning derived from reflecting on her artworks, Alice observed how "on the road we pass by things and get into difficulty, complication, and struggles to find your way and that there's a way out and a way beyond getting through it

all and past it." This was similar to Cathy's remark "on the road I have gotten into difficulties and complications. I have struggled to find my way; however, I know that the struggles I have experienced are part of the journey. They make the journey worthwhile."

Alice spoke of "being in darkness, trying to pull the darkness away, slash the darkness." Such a "perilous journey into the darkness" (Campbell, 2008, p. 84) lies at the core of the underworld journey. Alice could also see the mythic journey as "juicy, wonderful, fertile ground." She particularly connected to a visceral "experience of slaying a dragon" and wrote poems of her encounter with dragons. In this extract from her poem, she reaches an internal threshold point:

"Gradually the in and out of my growing presence loosens the bars of my cage,

The fear-fortress dissolving, melting into a pool of compassion.

Slowly I remember. I let down my shield of defense and protection.

I remember the most essential thing: I remember who I am."

Pam thought the metaphoric journey "gave more dimension to the art-making so that it wasn't just here I am doing a painting. There was more that came with it, gave it a context, gave more meaning to the art." She "liked going on the journey, it gave more dimension to being human. It gave more substance to the unseen. It made things less abstract." Pam appreciated how the mythic journey "takes me out of the personal and makes it more universal." She especially enjoyed connecting to her archetype image, "my avatar. A mix of the divine child and the lover." Creating the image was "like giving form to something that's beautiful inside."

A cornerstone of the inner journey involves meeting and coming to terms with what Jung referred to as the shadow aspects of one's nature, "one's own dark side"

(Casement, 2003, p. 29). Shadow aspects "are activated at a time of rite of passage in an individual's life" (Casement, 2003, p. 31). Pam "liked the context of a rite of passage" and "enjoyed going through the underworld, that was my black piece." She described it as "going through the movement of these different darknesses, but moving through them and not being stuck, not getting lost, not just sitting in the underworld and waiting for something to change."

Ben saw in the blackness of one of his paintings, "something coming out of the dark, this figure with wings coming out of the dark, the bottom was mostly black. My thinking at the time was the black, and then from the black expression." Of the emerging figure he observed, "once it's released from the unconscious it takes on its own life." Was Ben's "dark figure with wings" perhaps a metaphor for aspects of his shadow coming to light?

The metaphoric journey involves moving through deeper levels. Ben spoke of how his archetype shamanic image came from "the deeper deep" and how "you just connect with an energy, and it's not concrete, and it's different than the usual self." He described how "the interior is mostly like that. It's largely unexplored and unknown and we keep limiting ourselves to our immediate surroundings and keeping ourselves comfortable in a small space but if you can be opening to everything, to the deep then the unknown is the vast majority of that."

Dawn came to the Quiet Magic workshop with "no sense of the mythical journey. I had no storybooks. I really had no sense of this mythical hero's journey." During the workshop experience, she found the metaphorical journey gave her "a new way to view the journey of change. The rite of passage framework allows me to live in the liminal not

knowing and not harbour confusion and anger." She observed how "the threshold being seen as an actual object, a doorway, a bridge, helped me realize that it's an actual crossroads, and that once you are through it's the new reality. It's not the old reality." At first, Dawn imagined the underworld journey as "being something dark and spooky inside." As she undertook her own deeper inner journey, she discovered through the forms emerging in her artwork that "the core was dark, but actually in the core there's something interesting going on. There's a little bit of light at the centre part of the spiral, and it looks quite like ocean waves." On this voyage of discovery, she noticed how "the felt sense in this darkness and depth is of sadness. I have some sense of taking care of that, and wanting to protect that, and maybe seeing some good in that, that this is not all bad." In meeting with dragon forces, she found "this fire breathing dragon came. As the fire came out it turned into more of an image of celebration, streamers, and fireworks, so the fire breathing dragon might be something fearful, but something good is coming out of it." This allowed her to comment, "my inner dragon has been befriended but not tamed."

Jill enjoyed "the myths and the images" and "was familiar with some of them." She found they were "mind opening, inspiration for ideas or feelings." In her underworld journey, she realized "I don't have to be in that darkness, that I've been in that darkness so long and now I feel I've crossed this threshold into the light." Through the emerging forms of her artwork, she discovered "life is coming from out of the underworld, swirls of life coming out of being in the underworld. You can be in the underworld but there is still life in there." Of the metaphoric journey as a whole, Jill saw "the inner child is the most crucial part of development in the process of the journey, the foundation of it. It's

like building a house; you have to have the foundation. That inner, golden child has to be taken care of, nourished, and nurtured. If you don't nurture the inner child then the rest of the process is hard."

From the beginning, Sam was drawn to the mythic journey. "It is a powerful way of looking at your life." Sam most enjoyed the workshops sessions "with a bit more juice like the archetype one. I really enjoyed hearing about it, and the underworld, subconscious one, and to see things in the mythology that I've never really thought about before." He enjoyed how the slideshows "tied it with other people's views. The dragon slideshow really grabbed me, and the archetypes, to see images in relation to the journey." The music also helped Sam feel "like I was on a hero's journey. It was like Lord of the Rings, Celtic, movement through landscapes. It had this epic quality to it."

On occasion during the workshop experience, Sam found himself coming to "this uncomfortable threshold" and discovered "it was like going into something finer to go through the threshold." He also related to the idea of an unfolding journey through the archetypes. "Since we finished the class, I've been looking more at the archetypes. First, I wanted to be the warrior. Then, I was drawn more towards the lover. Now something has changed, and I'm looking more to the King archetype, to have the potential to embody that." He saw the King's potential to integrate "the warrior and the lover and the magician all into one."

A number of participants commented on finding their own mythology. Ben remarked on how his personal mythology "has more meaning to it than classical mythology." Jack spoke of "missing some more contemporary archetypes" and how "it might have been easier … to relate to a more modern archetype, like the scientist for

example." These comments reminded me of Jung's search for his own myth and of how

he "consciously engaged an inner mythic reality" (Owen, 2011, p. 260) and took it upon

himself "to get to know 'my' myth . . . as the task of tasks" (p. 264). Cathy, on the other

hand, felt that, "I own my own personal mythology now. Not only do I create it in

conjunction with existing myths and archetypes, but I also believe it. I am living my

story."

Through a comprehensive use of individual participant statements, I hope to have

demonstrated in this chapter how the thematic elements are present in participants'

workshop experiences, and that these themes provide a coherent picture of their

transitional journey over the span of the workshop sessions. In the following chapter, I

place these themes in the context of the literature and discuss my own thinking and

process in response to the participants' themes.

The Study Slideshow

In the previous chapter, I mentioned that between workshop sessions, I created

slideshows of digital images captured by the research assistants and showed these in

subsequent sessions as feedback for participants so they might recollect highlights from

what had gone before. While producing these slideshows, I wondered how they might be

integrated into the study. Creating them felt equivalent to writing a self-reflective journal

(Ortlipp, 2008; Leavy, 2009). Many of the evocative digital images appeared to capture

an essence of what took place during the workshop experience as they momentarily froze

creative flow in action. Two years previously in my own artwork, I had made a series of

paintings that sought to capture similar subject matter. Viewing the digital images after

each workshop session, organizing them into a narrative flow, adding complementary

soundtracks, and showing slideshows from the previous week at the start of each session, kept me immersed in the data arising from the workshop experience. It provided an opportunity to reflect upon the possible meanings and implications of what I was seeing take place. This creative/reflective process of compiling slideshows gave me greater perspective than was possible while I was busily facilitating the workshop sessions.

I was keen to include some of this digital photographic data in the thesis and created a synthesis of images in a final slideshow. In my view, this slideshow of selected images[2] provides further insight into the nature of the quiet magic of creative flow. Images "can embody a phenomenon in a way that language can rarely achieve" (Goble, 2013, p. 6) and provide "a new means of presenting our work" (p.1). I obtained participants' permission to provide access to this slideshow for readers through a password-protected link available below. I let these fresh and rich images speak for themselves to the reader, as a record of how participants experienced the Quiet Magic workshop.

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[2]   Vimeo slideshow can be viewed at: https://vimeo.com/112959232
Required password is: thesisslideshow

Discussion

My research question explored the workshop experiences of people who self-identified as being in a transition process. In discussing the results arising from my constant comparison inquiry analysis of the research data, I enter into the broader question of the connection between a metaphoric art-based journey and personal development. This discussion explores the inner dynamics underlying periods of transition and how these dynamics can be supported by making art within the context of a metaphorical journey.

Transition is a principal characteristic of personal development (Santrock, 1999; Sugarman, 2004). Transition entails a process of moving from, moving through, and moving to. When an individual is in a transitional process, then some state, aspect, circumstance, or way of being of that individual is changing. A transitional process may take a short time or a long time to accomplish; some transitions may never be accomplished within a person's lifespan. The central phase of a period of transition is one of moving through. This moving through is not necessarily straightforward or easily accomplished. It can involve facing numerous difficulties and challenges. My study is, in part, an exploration of this central transitional phase.

The Cauldron

In the results chapter, I uncovered four themes relating to participants experiences of an arts-based group workshop organized around metaphoric themes. The themes were of metaphoric thinking, emergent form, personal process and metaphoric and mythic journey. I found it difficult to separate these themes from each other; each is distinct, and

yet they are interconnected elements, each influencing the other and together forming a whole.

After arriving at the themes, I looked for a metaphor—a symbolic form based in myth—which could dynamically represent these interweaving themes. Subsequent to the research analysis phase, I discovered an Irish myth about Dagda's cauldron called *The Undry*. The Dagda, a father figure God, was known for his magic cauldron that had arisen from beneath the sea. The Undry was said to be bottomless and from its bounty no man would leave unsatisfied. The Undry provided for all according to their worthiness and was reputed to have the power to restore life to the dead (Rhys, 1886; Knight, 2001). Eventually this cauldron of plenty was transmuted in Irish mythology to become the *Mysterious Chalice* and later the *Faery Cup of Truth* (Reidling, 2005). Campbell links the *Holy Grail* to the cauldron as "the inexhaustible source, the centre, the bubbling spring from which all life proceeds" (1988, p. 217). The symbolism implicit in the cauldron is that of "the womb of the Great Goddess of the Land" (Reidling, 2005, p. 208). In pre-Hellenic Greek mythology, this Goddess turns out to be none other than the Earth-Mother Gaia, the originating Goddess from whom springs all the roots of ancient mythology. She is described as "the ancient Earth Mother who brought forth the world and the human race from the gaping Void, Chaos" (Spretnak, 1992. p. 45).

In this mythic line of descent, I perceived a chain of symbolism pointing back to the womb of creative flow as the wellspring from which all forms originate. This idea is echoed in the view of art therapy practice as providing "the birthing vessel, the bowl, the alchemical crucible" of transformation and growth (Kapitan, 2003, pg. 20). Here, the inner world of the psyche is analogous to Gaia's womb of creation from which all forms

subsequently appear in the physical world. The implication is that what we see as form in the physical is born from within the fluid medium of the essentially feminine psyche. In this mythic metaphor, the Goddess Gaia who "unceasingly . . . manifested gifts on her surface" (Spretnak, 1992, p. 48) eternally re–presents this ever present, yet unseen, reality of the psyche that is, at source, the inexhaustible cauldron, chalice, cup, or womb of potential from which all change takes place within human experience.

I have brought this mythic metaphor to the fore as I see each of the four themes as magical ingredients that give life and form to the creative flow and support the developmental process. As described in the introduction, I assumed this flow to be the source from which health, wellness, and natural development springs. In the results chapter, I presented each of these magical ingredients in turn and provided illustrative examples from participants' statements of how they related to their transitional journeys.

I have described the Undry cauldron as a metaphor for the overflowing womb of the original Earth goddess, Gaia. This metaphor now provides a launching point to explore new questions. What type of container promotes personal development and an environment conducive to the emergence of new insights, resources, and abilities? How does an arts-based metaphoric journey provide this conducive environment for moving through a period of transition?

The Space Between

A container metaphor implies internal space. My interest here is not related to physical space; much has been written already about the importance of creating a warm, empathic therapeutic relationship, and providing a stimulating, inviting environment to nurture developmental art-making experiences. (McNiff, 2004; Rubin, 2010; C. Moon,

2002; B. Moon 2009, 2012). Rather, my interest lies in exploring the nature of psychological space that promotes and nurtures personal development. Is the Undry, as the cauldron of creative flow, such a space? What is the nature of this space, and how does it relate to an arts-based metaphoric journey?

Quoting an unknown source, Covey (1998) wrote that "between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom" (p. 27). Covey proceeded to fill this space with what he considered were four ingredients necessary to bridge stimulus and response with informed choice: "four gifts—self-awareness, conscience, creative imagination and independent will" (p. 32). Perhaps Covey is right, but for me it seeems more interesting to leave this space as an unknown potential. I do not wish to replace uncertainty with certainty so quickly. I am wary of missing the deeper, magical potential present in the moment of not knowing. I do not wish to leave the darkness and disorientation of not knowing in favour of the comforting light of others' conclusions. In my view, such infilling of the "space in-between" effectively cuts off connection to the creative flow present in the unknown moment. To engage with the magical ingredients in the Undry, it is necessary to be available to the potentialities present in the unfilled space.

This unfilled creative space of Gaia's womb may, in some unseen way, give rise to the real possibility of personal development and growth. To be in an unfilled space is to embrace uncertainty and new possibility. What then is the nature of this psychological space? As far as the inner world of human life is concerned, it is the domain of the psyche in all its wondrous and deeper levels. These deeper levels—beneath the round of daily thoughts and feelings—await discovery, acknowledgement, and indwelling. Entry

to these deeper levels within opens the "way for a psychological hermeneutic, a viewpoint of soul towards all things" (Hillman, 1979, p. 26). In the mythic journey, this is the descent into the underworld, a metaphor for the unobserved regions of the psyche (Campbell, 2008). Here is the inner landscape of liminality. What makes this landscape liminal is its uncertain, unknown qualities, those unseen levels of the psyche that lack the definition of outer reality.

I suggest that the extended space between stimulus and response as discussed by Covey (1998) is akin to the liminal phase of "betwixt and between" (Turner, 1967) that is central both to a rite of passage and a hero's journey. Other commentators have referred to this space by different names: the neutral zone (Bridges, 2001); the intermediate space and the play space (Winnicott, (1971); the transitional space (E. Levine, 2003); the zone (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008); and the space between (Scoble, 2011). Sykley (2012) likens it to the twilight zone after the description of liminality as "the moment of twilight" and "the crack between the worlds" (Castenada, 2008, p. 89).

Into this intermediate twilight zone of transition, Jung (1983) placed the transcendent function as the bridge and "harmonizing factor" (p. 225–226) between the conscious and unconscious. He described the transcendent function as "a third thing . . . a movement out of the suspension between the opposites" (Miller, 2004, p. 3). The transcendent function was central to Jung's thinking, and this concept remains pivotal to the process of individuation and the soul's journey towards wholeness. "The transcendent function is crucial to the central mission of depth psychology, which is to access, explore, and integrate the unconscious, and thereby apprehend the deeper meanings of soul"

(Miller, 2004, p. 3). Miller suggested that Jung was not clear about the nature of this transcendent function:

> Is it the expression of *relationship* between the conscious and unconscious when in dynamic opposition? Is it the *process* that ensues out of such opposition? Is it the *method* one uses to conduct the process? Is it the *final result*, the third thing that emerges? Or is it some combination of all of these? (2004, p. 55)

Whether it is a matter of relationship, process, method, or result within the dynamic between conscious and unconscious levels of the psyche, the transcendent function falls into "an archetypal pattern that implicates liminality and intiation" (Miller, 2004, p. 104). It flows from the natural tendency of the psyche to seek connection and dialogue and follow its innate desire "to move deeper into itself, to experience itself psychologically" (p. 99). The pre-condition for this natural tendency to take place consciously is entry into a liminal betwixt and between phase.

The Undry, as a bubbling flux of potentiality, could be a container of the betwixt and between, and art-making, as an agent, may provide entry to the Undry and give access to its magical ingredients. In my view, this is the conducive environment that offers the potential for developmental growth.

Depth Psychology and the Mythic Journey

"The *ego* self, the self we are aware of and can observe, is just the tip of an iceberg in a vast sea of unconsciousness" (Bright, 2012, p. 2). Entering the deeper levels of the psyche that lie beneath the surface of an individual's outward-focused self and personality necessitates a temporary leaving behind of the world of facts and definitions

and traversing an inner terrain that is more fluid, indistinct, and nebulous. It is here that metaphoric thinking, imagery, myth, and symbol are alive as signposts to the inner journey. This inner terrain is like a vast sea out of which dreams form as "an inscape of personified images" (Hillman, 1975, p. 33). It is here that mythic symbols and stories have ongoing life, which is why myth and depth psychology are so closely aligned.

In the workshop, Ben recognized an interconnected link between myth, metaphor, psyche, and personal development when he observed, "metaphor seems almost the only way to express new meaning and new inner dynamics." Metaphor provides an imaginal language through which to convey inner discoveries. Inner discoveries can lead to insights that may become the precursors of outer developmental change.

As an individual establishes connection with the psyche's deeper levels through image, metaphor, and myth, the psyche's inner language can surface and be expressed through artistic activity. I suggested previously that these connective links between inner and outer forms are born in liminal space. Entry to the liminal, as a mythic journey, is represented by a descent into the underworld of unknown, unexplored, subterranean territory. In depth psychology, the underworld journey denotes entrance into the personal unconscious, where the journeyer may first meet his or her shadow.

The shadow is Jung's metaphoric term for those aspects of an individual's psyche that appear to be in opposition to one's conscious view of oneself. Jung referred to the shadow as "that dark half of the psyche which we invariably get rid of by means of projection" (1983, p. 279). Hillman (1979) remarked, "to arrive at the basic structure of things we must go into their darkness" (p.26). Christian contemplative Rohr (1999) agreed that, "as soon as we take away outside stimuli all our inner turmoil erupts . . . the

wild beasts show themselves first" (p. 66). The trials and ordeals that arise in the encounter with shadow energies require the individual to embrace and integrate these seemingly opposing facets of herself: the dark and the light, the welcome and unwelcome.

A prominent thread of participants' experiences from the workshop related to images that embraced both darkness and light. These images appeared through the emerging forms of the artwork and, for some, in dreams that occurred during the workshop period. For example, Jill spoke of "this unknown, this black hole" and of "moving forward and darkness behind me and going into the light." Pam mentioned having "very strong dreams during that time, walking through an alley and meeting a dark stranger." Alice spoke of her painting process as "being in darkness, trying to pull the darkness away, slash the darkness." Dawn spoke of how going in allowed her "to live in the liminal not knowing and not harbour confusion and anger." Ben saw a "dark figure with wings" in his otherwise abstract painting.

For participants, entry into this twilight space between conscious and personal unconscious could enable connective links with the unseen and deeper levels of the psyche. In the metaphoric journey, art provided the vehicle that facilitated entrance into the liminal space within, while in the mythic journey, art supported remaining in that space as a way to establish these connective links with deeper levels. Art-making can have a catalytic function for individuals seeking to enter this psychological space where change becomes possible.

Entering liminal space involved "being open to what comes" (Dawn) and being "absorbed by the creative process" (Jack). What appeared to take place in this entry to the

liminal was that individuals received an invitation to learn more about themselves. This happened through immersion in an expanded viewpoint that embraced more of the internal world of the psyche. Having more internal space in which to move and function provided the psychological room for change. Making a journey "into the vast inner space that we call the psyche" (Stein, 1998) makes room for new seeing and knowing to emerge as a necessary precondition for change to take place. The liminal space can be a psychological space of renewal. It is a creative space. This, I believe, is the nature of the extended space between stimulus and response where creative change can happen. This is where the magical ingredients of the Undry can go to work.

Relaxing into the Deep

The added advantage of expressive art-making is that it's fun, playful, and absorbing qualities can help facilitate a willingness to enter the uncertainty of liminal space for a time. Typically participants spoke of "just playing and seeing where it goes like a 3-year old" (Pam), and "Oh its flowing and I just want to keep on going" (Jill). In this playful creative space, it becomes possible for the individual to explore, shape, and express her responses to what is being newly known. By letting go of the need to fix and control emerging images, participants were able to see into the deeper levels. They allowed what wanted to arise to simply do so. Pam expresses this idea of being newly responsive:

> I'm creating a new relationship with form. Doing finger painting or using
> utensils is very tactile, so I'm touching on formlessness using form. All of
> what we did felt embodied. A colour or a certain movement can take you
> down. It was something my body loved to do, like a child. The enjoyment

of using my hands and not really caring what comes out, and yet there is

meaning that I wasn't aware of at the time.

"There is in the psyche a process that seeks its own goal, independent of external

factors" (Jung, 1983, p. 255). This idea is profound. It suggests that given the right

circumstances, the psyche, like the body, will heal itself. The right circumstances and a

conducive environment can facilitate entry into a liminal phase. In art therapy, the client

is encouraged and supported to enter the liminal through art-based methods and mediums

and is provided with opportunities to express and reflect upon what is discovered there.

Given this set-up, it appears the psyche is able to activate the "process that seeks its own

goal," that which Jung called the transcendent function. The underlying assumption and

dynamic in play is that the natural direction of the psyche—its goal—is to move towards

harmony, wholeness, and union between all its levels. What prevents this naturally

occurring process from operating throughout our lives? I would suggest it is holding tight

to the ways, means, and perspective of our outward-focused selves. The deeper levels of

the psyche require us to release and relax into them and let them do their healing work.

The Spirit of Inquiry

In my experience, the work of personal development requires activation of both

the spirit of creativity and the spirit of inquiry. As an arts-based researcher, the more I

inquire into who I am, the more these two inner daemons are activated. A daemon is "the

movement or force of creation" (McNiff, 1992, p. 89), appearing as an inner archetype

within the psyche. McNiff described a daemon as one "who guides my actions and helps

me stay in contact with the deepest images of my soul's desire" (p. 80). In activating

these daemons of creativity and inquiry, exploration and expression, it is possible, in my

view, to fully engage the process that seeks its own goal, the natural healing force of the psyche.

The psyche engages in a self-healing process through the language of its imaginal forms of metaphoric and mythic figures and symbols. It naturally communicates through such phenomena. The daemon, for example, is not a factually tangible thing. It has no outer form. Its existence is as a metaphoric intermediary, an energetic messenger between two worlds. It is thus a third thing that arises within the creative liminal space to open conscious communication with the deeper levels. Such communication opens a doorway to inner growth and transformation (Jung & Storr, 1983). The therapist's central tool is communication within the context of a therapeutic alliance. The therapist knows that if communication between therapist and client is opened and entered into, then change and healing become a real possibility (McLeod, 2011). Communication with one's deeper levels serves the same purpose.

The Magical Ingredient of Metaphor

Miller (2004) described metaphor as "an image that is separate from the subject of the metaphor and the thing to which it is compared" (p. 125), indicating that metaphor functions as a third thing. As a third thing, metaphors and metaphoric thinking provide a bridge, a connecting link between two worlds. Metaphoric thinking comes alive in the in-between world of relationships.

Moon (2007) asserted that "all artworks are metaphoric" (p. 3). In the Quiet Magic workshop, the art-making experiences facilitated the emergence of metaphoric images. These images, shaped by the context of an inner mythic and metaphoric journey and the outer influences of others, became the connecting links, the "living partner in

dialogue" (McNiff, 2004, p. 101) between the participants' conscious and unconscious selves. Paintings, pots, and masks became "the third thing that emerges" (Miller, 2004, p. 55), and they "constituted the relationship, the intermediate space or field between the two, that is neither one thing nor the other, and is the "metaphorical third" (p. 126). These emergent third things may become agents of personal development.

Reflecting upon art images and harvesting them for symbolic meaning extended the life of these images as developmental agents for workshop participants. Alice remarked, "having processed these paintings it gives me more confidence and strength and a sense of solidity." Dawn noticed, "the art just did it. There was no word or thought that went into it, until I reflected on it afterwards." Pam revealed how her mask "takes me to more of an awareness of my being." Dawn spoke of coming "to value this core stability in my dragon." Jack said of his archetype picture, "I really carry this as an image with me. It has meaning for me, and it's almost independent now from the picture itself."

The art image is analogous to Jung's notion of "a living, third thing" (Miller, 2004, p. 3). This living third thing includes the two processes of creating metaphoric images and reflecting upon them. This living third thing can give rise to new awareness and insights and the possibility of integration and personal growth. It can also "implicate matters of transcendence in a spiritual or divine sense" (Miller, 2004, p. 115) and move us "into a liminal space where we come into contact with the larger consciousness of which we are a part" (p. 116). Sometimes, an art image can direct the artist to a deeper connection to Spirit. It is to the larger spiritual context that I turn next in this discussion.

A Psycho-Spiritual Perspective

I have reflected on liminal space as a psychological space. I have argued that it may be a space that communicates through the language of image, myth, and metaphor. I have suggested that engaging in an arts-based metaphoric journey may enable the expansion of intra-psychic space for the individual to inhabit, and this fluid, room-making process could create the conditions necessary for inner personal development to occur and for the psyche to self-heal. This inner space-making can bring about developmental changes, such as a shift in perspective. A shift in perspective is fundamental to personal development and can open an individual to the possibility of loosening the kind of rigid and reactive behaviour patterns that normally fill the space between stimulus and response.

Workshop participants spoke of shifting perspective on a number of occasions. Cathy experienced "new awareness of archetypes in myself." Sam reflected on "new heart understanding of how this whole sexual patterning thing works." Jill spoke of new "space to breath and accept or not accept for myself." Ben declared he was now "coming out and expressing more." Jack found "more awareness than before that these are mostly unconscious forces that do drive me." He noticed, "I can be more aware of them and step back and take a deep breath and be aware of more choice in letting them go." Alice drew upon her insight that "the power is the ability to trust in yourself," and Pam discovered "there's more space and something changes in terms of how I relate to others." Dawn referred specifically to the liminal space, exploring how "as I live in this space there is a lovely core of movement happening in there. Things are moving." Personal development

is often an incremental process but, if it is to be sustained, it generally requires a shift in perspective.

What happens when a spiritual perspective is brought to bear on the developmental process? The subject of spirituality was not explicitly addressed during the Quiet Magic workshop. At the same time, participants were making their own connections with this dimension. Dawn was the most overt in describing herself as "aware of being on a personal spiritual journey" as she worked. She saw her fire-breathing dragon as providing warmth that was indicative of "spiritual growth" and that she was making "a spiritual transition towards the old crone or the wise woman." Pam spoke of how the mythic dimension took her "out of the personal and made it more universal" and of how, in painting her archetype image, she recognized that "everything is connected." A number of participants made reference to the heart and the "heart centre" (Jack) appearing in their artwork.

In my own life, Christianity was the "embedded theology" (Stone & Duke, 2013) of my childhood. I will use a Judeo-Christian framework to discuss the spiritual dimension of personal development. Christian theological reflection often involves "discerning God's presence in a particular situation" (VanKatwyk, 2008, p. 3). It requires staying open to the possibility of knowing and being known by what some call the "Holy Other" (Dickey, 2006, p. 1). Knowledge of the Holy Other, as Jesus instructed, requires that the individual look within. I have already suggested that looking within requires looking within the psyche, and it is here where one may discern whether there is a connecting link between Spirit and psyche. To theologically reflect in this way requires that I set aside assumptions founded on my embedded faith and enter uncharted territory.

This requires leaving the typical life standpoints of certitude and self-assurance and replacing them with an exploratory standpoint that embraces uncertainty and creative curiosity in the face of the unknown (Killen & DeBeer, 1994). I see this as similar to my stance as an art-based inquirer enteringthe unknown of the liminal space to seek answers.

Theological reflection can be viewed as requiring the three processes of experience, reflection, and response (Dickey, 2006). In theological reflection, the space in-between stimulus and response is the reflective or contemplative space. Those who develop contemplatively "gain entrance to a larger world" (Griffin, 2004, p.16) and in doing so extend the space between stimulus and response. The creative purpose of being in this reflective space is to bring "awareness to what is already present but often deeply hidden" and to open "ourselves to a Source deep within us" (Dickey, 2006, p. 2). To find a source deep within suggests there maybe a connective link between the deeper levels of the psyche and Spirit.

The theological reflective process has much in common with Jung's transcendent function. Both form a bridge between the conscious and unconscious. In fact, Jung viewed the "process of individuation as a religious impulse" (Ponte & Schafer, 2013, p. 606) and understood it as being essentially concerned with the Godly in the human, thus linking the process of personal development with a religious quest for transformation.

From a Judeo-Christian perspective, there are many stories describing mythic and heroic rite of passage journeys through liminal spaces. Bunyan's (2003) allegorical tale of Christian's progress is a classic example of a metaphoric rites of passage journey from the preliminal world of the City of Destruction through to the postliminal arrival at the Celestial City. Christian passes through the Strait Gate into the liminal stage of his

journey where he faces tests, trials, ordeals, and seemingly insurmountable difficulty before he can be joyously welcomed into the Celestial City.

The lives of some mystics also describe journeys through liminal space. These mystics engage in deep and enduring processes of reflection and contemplation. They recognize liminality as a conducive environment for inner work and spiritual development. "All human transformation takes place inside liminal space . . . If God wants to get to you, which God always does, the chances are best during any liminal time" (Rohr, 2010, p. 224).

How is it that the psychological and mythic underworld journey can parallel the spiritual journey so closely, especially if the essence of the religious quest is union with the Spirit and not with the psyche? Some modern forms of the spiritual journey are psychological in nature and focus on the interior psycho-spiritual growth of the individual. These modern forms promote a model of spirituality based upon an innate inner divinity (Gleig, 2012). Trousdale (2013) depicted this as embodied spirituality. She suggested this concept of embodied spirituality was present in the early roots of Christianity. Eigen (1992) viewed the unconscious as a bridge to and mediator of the sacred. This bridge, he suggested, links the "un-representable one" to psychic life (p. 41). When Jesus declared, "the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21 King James Bible), did he mean the kingdom of God is to be found within the psyche? If the kingdom of God is a metaphor for Spirit, then Spirit is perhaps not of the same nature as the psyche, but may in some way, be known through the psyche as Eigen indicated.

McAlpin defined spirituality as "the human desire to integrate all life with a lived experience of God" (2009, p. 16). For Christians, this lived experience of God translates

into knowing "the presence of the Holy Spirit revealed in Jesus, the Christ" (ibid.).

Where does one know the presence of the Holy Spirit? Is it a resonance perceivable in the

psyche? Trousdale (2013) observed that it was not until St. Augustine introduced the

concept of original sin that God, in Christian theology, became distanced from psyche

and soma. She contrasted Augustine's view with that of St. Julian of Norwich who "saw

no difference between God's substance and our substance, but, as it were, all God" (p.

22). Julian of Norwich appears to indicate that in his experience psyche and Spirit are

one.

I propose that knowing the presence of Spirit in the psyche is like dropping ink

into water; as the ink spreads through the body of water, it changes the nature of the

water and is indistinguishable from it. The ink transforms the nature of the water. Perhaps

this is what Julian of Norwich was suggesting; that the psyche is transformed through the

knowing of Spirit. In terms of an individual's developmental journey, such a

transformation would likely represent a climacteric of personal development and would

indeed be mythic in proportion to an everyday journey.

To know the presence of Spirit as direct experience within one's life, it seems the

individual must learn the ways of mystics and contemplatives and undertake a deep inner

journey (Teasdale, 1999). As the "pioneers of inter-spiritual wisdom" (p. 31) did before,

the individual must forge his or her own path to realize such wisdom. It appears to be a

long and arduous journey in which the egoic orientation of the self is gradually stripped

away and a fundamental change in perspective is arrived at (Stein, 1998). Such a journey

requires a lengthy time spent in liminal spaces, where one is willing to openly meet with

shadow energies and enter ever deeper levels of unconscious realms.

Jung, quoting alchemist Gerhard Dorn, said, "in the body of man there is hidden a certain substance of heavenly nature known to very few" (1975, p. 93). Is this substance known to very few a privileged knowledge that we cannot access without first crossing thresholds into deeper levels of the psyche? Is the substance indeed so subtle it is easily overlooked? Perhaps such inner discernment requires years of quiet contemplation before this heavenly substance reveals itself. If "religion is really about one thing: awakening our souls [psyche] so they will be ready when the Teacher [Spirit] arrives" (Rohr, 2010, p. 233), then the spiritual journey quest does appear to run parallel with the psychological quest to "reconnect what has been disconnected. To heal what has been divided" (p. 233).

The Archetypal Influence

A component of the Quiet Magic workshop involved exploring archetypal energies. In their version of an archetypal journey, Moore and Gillette (1991) view the Divine Child archetype as the unseasoned precursor of the King archetype. Both Jews and Christians speak of the king archetype as the *imago Dei*, "The image of God" (p. 49). Jung (1985) traced the mythological roots of the Divine Child back to stories of child gods growing into mature gods. He viewed the Divine Child as the pivotal archetype of the individuation process, the pivot on which the Self grows towards wholeness and integration. Jesus is acknowledged as the archetypal Divine Child of the New Testament.

Judith (2013) asserted we each embody the Divine Child archetype both individually and collectively and "this child is nothing less than the future itself" (p. 216). Myss (2010) described this archetypal energy as "associated with innocence, purity, and redemption, god-like qualities that suggest that the Child enjoys a special union with the Divine itself" (p. 1).

During Quiet Magic workshop discussions and in post-workshop interviews a number of participants alluded to this archetype. Cathy remarked that for her "the Divine Child is really resonating with the journey I have been on and am still in—this idea of returning to the Divine Child." She added, "my way forward is in the sense of whimsy, so for me that's tied in with the idea of the Divine Child, and I'm excited to explore that more." Jill referred to it as that part of herself which often went unacknowledged as a growing child, especially as a creative energy. "Do I listen to that divine inner child or give in to having to, and forced to, and not complete what I want to do." Ben said, "I can identify with the Golden Child. I had that as a child and I still have it, but in going forward with that it hasn't really come through that much." He added, "I think we are taught to be in our minds instead of in our hearts and in our soul. That's where the self-doubt comes in." Dawn remarked on how, "we have learned to be disconnected from that realm of the universal spirit by being too much in our heads, too much thinking and organizing," and Alice added, "I think that's why we meditate to try to get back there, to reconnect to that awareness of Spirit."

These participant comments are indicative of a sense of having lost touch with something of great value, something of our experience of being in the world has not been supported. The growth and maturation of the Divine Child, as the guardian of inner divinity, appears to be stunted through too much head-centeredness and not enough heart-centeredness. Judith (2013) observed that "if home is where the heart is, then it may be that the last leg of the hero's journey . . . is the 18 inches between our head and our heart" (p. 304).

The Heart of the Matter

Various references were made to the importance of the heart in the workshop. In speaking of his archetype painting Ja. 3, Jack remarked "what this work was all about is that the solution is here in the heart centre, and in living and coming from that heart centre from now on." Sam also spoke of the importance for him of making a heart connection. "I was coming to this heart understanding of how this whole sexual patterning thing works. The more I relate to heart understanding and the truth that I see, the less I'm pulled into those things." "The heart," Judith wrote, "is nourished by celebration and play, pleasure and beauty, creativity and laughter" (2013, p 264). I see evidence of this heart nourishment in the slideshow of images referenced in the results chapter.

The heart is not simply a physical organ; it also has the quality of being an authentic presence within the psyche. Research from the Institute of HeartMath indicated the heart generates a measurable field that extends beyond the self, is much stronger than the brain, and is in fact "the strongest field in the body" (Judith, 2013, p. 302). There are a plethora of metaphoric expressions about the heart in many cultures (Perez, 2008). What many of these metaphoric expressions seem to point to is the relational nature of the heart, indicating it is not simply a centre for the flow of blood through the body but also a centre for the flow of information, of inner knowing, of connectivity in the psyche. The heart of the psyche, like the physical heart, is never empty. Psychological states infuse the heart on a regular basis. They capture attention, preoccupy the mind, and often dictate behaviour. A heart charged with negative emotion can spill out psychically into the surrounding atmosphere and be discernable by others. Similarly, a love-filled heart

can communicate as a recognizable field but with a vastly different resonance to the negative charge. In the Bible, Samuel is informed that, "the Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (I Sam. 16:7 New International Version). Many religions view the heart as a spiritual centre and "the deepest part of who and what we really are" (Teasdale, 1999, p. 12).

The heart as a doorway is a visual metaphor in Sallman's painting *Christ at Heart's Door*. This painting, inspired by Hunt's *The Light of the World*, is an iconic image of Christian faith. Both paintings draw their inspiration from the Bible quotation: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock" (Rev. 3:20 King James Version). In both paintings, Jesus stands at a threshold that represents an open or closed heart. Jesus remarked that when the doorway is open, "I will come in to him" (Rev. 3:20). In my view, this is a description of Spirit entering the psyche through the doorway of the heart. Perhaps the open heart is the doorway to the "substance of heavenly nature known to very few" that Dorn described as hidden in the body.

The heartless head and the closed heart have no access to Spirit. Hillman wrote "the desert is not in Egypt; it is anywhere once we desert the heart" (1998, p. 304). Ezekiel, called to prophecy during one of Israel's darkest times, declared "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26 New International Version). In the New Living Translation, a heart of flesh becomes "a tender and responsive heart" (Ezek. 36:26).

Is such a tender and responsive heart made possible through an inner journey, one that involves facing the shadow side of the underworld? Bunyan's (2003) pilgrim faced

hardened, faint, sorrowful, covetous, honest, and good hearts in his journey to the

Celestial City. His heart was opened and softened through various trials and ordeals and

by his resolute decision to complete his journey. In the Greek myth of Psyche and Eros

(Bullfinch, 2010), Psyche, the goddess of soul, is separated from Eros, the god of love.

Psyche is made desolate by this separation and sets out to find him. Psyche has to suffer a

series of trials and tribulations before journeying into the underworld to find her love. By

following the inner promptings of her heart, Psyche is reunited with Eros. In my view,

this myth represents the reunion of psyche and Spirit, made possible by the inward,

underworld journey.

The Spirit of Community

To complete this theological section, I explore the notion of communitas and its

relationship to liminal space. Turner (1967) coined the term communitas in reference to

an observed phenomenon of a group undertaking a rite of passage together. He described

how communitas rose out of this unstructured, relatively undifferentiated community of

fellow travelers moving through a liminal phase. The spirit of communitas engaged "the

whole man in relation to other whole men" (p. 127). In this spirit of wholeness, the group

became creatively infused, generated metaphors and symbols, and produced art and

religion rather than political and legal structures (p. 128).

S. Levine (1997) described both liminality and communitas as the basis for art-

making. He viewed communitas from the premise that people make art to be seen.

Artists, Levine suggested, "must undergo the suffering of liminality in order to receive

the gift that they will give to others" (p. 54). In the liminal, underworld group journey of

the six weeks of six sessions Quiet Magic workshop, emergent forms were generated

through participants' art-making experiences. Even though individual participants often worked alone, they shared a common bond held within the field of creative flow. Sam captured this idea of the communitas spirit.

> I felt this moment when we did ours [group art-making activity that involved a threshold crossing ritual] where there was that silence for quite a period of time and it felt like to me that all that was there was our lights - like our hearts or something. No one was talking or using their minds or saying anything. It was just like everyone was there together and there was this sense of being together.

Such moments of communitas can engender experiences of sacred togetherness, a "genuineness of mutuality" (Turner, 1967, p. 134). Mutuality as a deeper and more genuine way of relating is also a central concept in the feminist writings from the Stone Center. Here, mutuality in connection is viewed as the natural way for the feminine psyche to relate. Connection, rather than self or even self-in-relation, "is at the core of human growth and development (Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004, p.2). This idea suggests that the group itself, when taking part in a shared journey experience, can promote development and provide support through periods of transition. Many tribal and ritual practices indicate as much. Similarly, many religious and spiritual groups that come together in acts of worship, contemplation, and ceremony are symbolizing the forming of communitas. Jill remarked of the workshop group experience, "it was nice that spirituality could be shared on different levels. We're very universal in the sense of being part of the universe."

Closing Thoughts

Covey's (1998) space between stimulus and response represents the movement through a period of transition. Moving through a period of life transition provides opportunities for growth and personal development. One can conclude then that when space between stimulus and response takes place it becomes a liminal space. Journeying through the liminal creates opportunities for newness of response and creative change to become apparent. When the liminal is linked with the inner world of the psyche in its deeper levels, the inner journey opens doorways to new ways of seeing, being, and doing.

In this and the preceding chapter, I have indicated how art-making, done within the context of a metaphoric and mythic journey, can facilitate this inner journey. I have sought to show how intra-psychic art-making, done within this journey context and supported by a creativity-enhancing group dynamic, can elicit four magical ingredients that may contribute towards moving successfully through a period of transition. These ingredients include an increased awareness and ability to think metaphorically. Alongside this is a willingness to forge one's unique way forward on a journey that takes place in the imaginal world of the psyche. Here, through the agency of art, new forms may emerge that, on reflection, can reveal themselves as wisdom gifts for further development.

Supporting this individual journey and bearing witness to the returning gifts is the presence of the group as a whole. Jordan wrote, "most change occurs by our being able to bring aspects of ourselves into relationships with other persons where we get new responses, build new images, and create new actions" (Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004, p. 53). Having made a liminal journey together, these times of group witnessing may

engender the sacred spirit of communitas in which open hearts may meet together in a mutuality of shared experience.

The deeper the journey taken on this road less travelled (Scott Peck, 2003), the greater the riches unearthed. In the theological section of this discussion, I have suggested the heart as a portal between psyche and Spirit, and that a Spirit-infused psyche presents an expanded potential not only for personal development but also for transformation. In the concluding chapter, I pull together some of the threads of the journey this study took me on, one with its own version of trials and ordeals to navigate.

Conclusion

"The most important frontier for art-based research is the empirical study of the process of art-making" (McNiff, 1998, p. 55). The research at the heart of this study was a live event that provided opportunities for a small group of participants to use art-making experiences in support of their transitional journeys. The post-workshop interviews provided time for participants to reflect upon the artwork produced and the experience of participating in the workshop in general. The iterative cycle of inner exploration, outer expression, and quiet reflection characterized the workshop process, the research process, and my own personal methods of inquiry as an artist and art therapist.

The Quiet Magic workshop journey took place over six weekly sessions with eight participants. Once the workshop had concluded and I had completed post-workshop interviews, the transcription of verbal data, and collation of video and photographic material, I immersed myself in the data as an arts-based researcher. I identified four themes that emerged from the data using constant comparison inquiry as a method of analysis. These themes of metaphoric thinking, emergent form, personal process, and metaphoric and mythic journeying, I envisaged as magical ingredients in the Undry of creative flow.

My immersion in reviewing the research data paralleled participants' immersion process of art-making during the workshop. Participants were inspired in their art-making experiences by the context of undertaking a metaphoric and mythic journey that was a metaphor for a liminal intra-psychic journey. In the two preceding chapters, I used participants' verbatim comments to illustrate how such an intra-psychic journey can

make room for something new to emerge. I suggested the inner, liminal psychological space is also the inner creative space and that activation of this creative space provides the necessary conditions for something new to enter the space between stimulus and response. I argued that when the liminal is treated as an extended creative space, then developmental growth becomes more likely. The Quiet Magic workshop facilitated the opening of this creative space for individual participants. I viewed the four overarching themes that arose from participants' immersion in this creative space as important ingredients with the potential to inform and support developmental change during a period of life transition.

The thesis writing process, a journey made over many months, was one that was not without its own trials and ordeals, false turns, and periods of confusion and uncertainty. As the process drew to a close and I reached my own post-liminal phase, I entered a time of returning from "that yonder zone" (Campbell, 2008, p. 188) back to the everyday world. A successful return from the inward journey is one that requires integration of what took place. According to Campbell, there is a gradual recognition that "the two kingdoms are actually one. The realm of the gods is a forgotten dimension of the one we know" (p. 188).

My thesis journey involved exploring the nature of liminal space as a psychological phenomenon that required making a descent into the underworld of the deeper levels of the psyche. It is from here that art images can emerge as new forms, ones that carry metaphoric messages and offer new insights and fresh perspectives in symbolic form. Part of my journey, and perhaps also for some participants, involved an inquiry into the connection between psyche and Spirit. Participants' art imagery that depicted the

elements of new light and heart connectedness pointed to this association between psyche and Spirit. My own theological reflection led me to perceive the heart as a connecting doorway between the two.

Each traveler who enters these psychic depths makes his or her own journey on what is mainly an uncharted path. Led by a quiet or insistent call to grow, develop, and change, each one may find metaphoric and mythic signs, symbols, and supports by which to navigate liminal space. Each must face his or her shadow side as well as discovering the possibility of inner light before returning with the fruits of his or her quest.

Fruits of the Journey

Metaphoric thinking.

Metaphor is the poetry of the psyche and metaphoric thinking. It has the ability to convey richness of meaning and form a counterpoint to the often plain lifelessness of the rational-factual language that tends to dominate the outer world. Metaphoric thinking provides a bridge to the messages and subtle promptings that arise within. Such metaphoric thinking is naturally creative as metaphoric images are drawn from what we see, know, and feel instinctively and imaginatively. As a bridge, metaphors exist in the in-between "as if" world as a third force. They bridge the faculties of seeing, feeling, and thinking and creatively shape those experiences. The metaphor of returning with fruits of the inner journey shapes this concluding chapter.

Metaphors were first used by participants to describe changes they hoped and planned to make and later to illustrate developmental progress they saw reflected in their artwork. It was necessary not only to make openings for these images to come forth, but also to "actively translate this wisdom through exploring their stories and meanings"

(Malchoidi, 2002, p. 105). Participants were able to recognize the potent, meaning-making nature of their metaphoric art images and see them as reflective of their inner processes and feelings. They discussed how art-making ignites and stirs a metaphorical meaning-making process in the deeper levels of the psyche and spoke of how metaphors can be powerfully packed with associative meanings. In the reflective phase, participants demonstrated the importance of reading metaphorical significance in their artworks. This crucial task of meaning-making appeared to me to be central to participants gaining insight, new perspectives, and motivation for moving forward in life.

The emergent form.

Art images emerge as messengers from the deep "when we surrender to the mystery and allow something beyond our selves to come forth" (Malchiodi, 2002, p. 89). Participants reported how images arose spontaneously out of their absorption in the space of creative flow. They remarked how music, often subliminally, supported this flow. They spoke of the delight of being playfully immersed in using different art materials and mediums and of the genuine surprise at finding new colours and forms emerging in their artwork. They described the powerful immediacy of feelings and kinesthetic movements that helped form images and recognized how these emerging metaphors and symbols could be applied to their transitional processes. Some spoke of the necessity to dig deep to find these authentically emerging forms. Some commented on how emerging forms gave substance to something beautiful felt and known within, while others remarked on how emerging images could shock, disturb, and surprise. Each participant was able to recognize that their art images gave access to the hints, prompts, and urgings from their

inner world. Such visual messengers could later be acted on as new information to guide their ongoing development.

A personal process.

"Universal human themes unite people just as much as their differences enrich us all" (Corey, 2009, p. 316). Within the group setting of the workshop experience, these enriching differences were apparent amongst the individuals present and later in the post workshop interviews. One person's way forward could be quite different from the next. The uniqueness of participants' perspectives illustrate how each looks through one pair of eyes and has personal preferences, history, values, beliefs, and a cultural background that guides and shapes his or her particular life journey. Valk (2009) suggests personal perspectives are embedded in a larger context of worldviews and that these worldviews become as much "ways of life" as they do "visions of life" (p. 70). To capture the differences that shape individual personal development processes, I adopted the notion of an innate image as one that guides individual potential and calls to future possibilities (Hillman, 1997).

In the workshop experience, there was both a sense of the group being "a band of travelers" (Cathy) and of "inner psychological development that was more private" (Jack). For some it was easy to become immersed in playful creative activity, while others had to wrestle with voices of self judgment, awkwardness, and disconnection. Each participant viewed his or her art-making as a way of "finding me" (Pam). Some felt supported by the group energy, while others felt separate from it. Each, however, was influenced and creatively motivated by one or more of the other group participants.

A metaphoric journey.

"By nature we are storytelling beings" and "to be human is to have a story to tell" (Malchiodi, 2002, p. 106). Stories help people make sense of their lives, and mythic stories help make sense of inner journeys. Mythic stories "are metaphors . . . they take the facts of life and relate them to the psyche" (Campbell, 1990, p. 43). Perhaps what is most needed to counterbalance the outer focused, fast-paced world in which we live are heroes of descent. Hillman (1997) urges each individual to "grow down" (p. 243) if he or she is to develop in the face of superficiality. The metaphoric and mythic journey was intended as a growing down experience, one that included elements of the heroic, the archetypal, and a rite of passage. The art-based nature of the journey was based on my assumption that "we need to use the power of metaphor to touch the inner truths of the images we create, because metaphor is the authentic reflection of artistic creativity" (Malchiodi, 2002, p. 106). I employed mythic tales as signposts to support growing down. I believe they helped each participant, at different times, to different degrees, to enter and become playfully immersed in the liminal space of creative flow. From within this space, emerging authentic forms could appear and be given expression through art-making. These art images served as meaning-filled messages provided on the inner journey and thus helpful for later reflection. On occasion, embodied images could be viewed as archetypal messengers that channel archetypal energies.

Most participants related to some but not all of the elements of the mythic journey as presented in the workshop. I believe this is how it should be. No one size—or story— fits all. Some participants had limited experience of myth and found it provided "a new way to view the journey of change" (Dawn). Two participants saw their personal

mythology had "more meaning to it than classical mythology" (Jack). Some found the transitional metaphor of a rite of passage helpful, while others discovered that meeting with dragon forces provoked powerful and revealing imagery. A number of participants found themselves facing thresholds that revealed the possibility of turning points in their outer circumstances. Each did undertake a personal version of an underworld journey and some discovered they were exploring themes of darkness and light, perhaps encountering their shadow side. A few participants commented on how the metaphoric journey gave more dimension to their art-making and took it "out of the personal and made it more universal" (Pam). Each participant had some personal sense of moving through levels within the psyche, such as "the deeper deep" and of connecting with an energy that was "not concrete and it's different than the usual self" (Ben). Responses to the archetypal element of the journey were mixed. At least two participants had difficulty relating to the mature archetypes as presented by Moore and Gillette (1991), while others found this session juicy and revelatory.

In retrospect, I could have done more justice to the archetypal aspect of the metaphorical journey by allowing participants to uncover their personal mythological figures through the emerging forms of their artwork. I believe this approach would have been truer to an art-based experience where "the process of forming and reforming oneself in relation to the world is a primary method of artistic practice" (Kapitan, 2003, p. 98).

Limitations of the Study

It is hard to determine whether the effects of a six session workshop experience are lasting and transformational. Selves are not easily changed; inner journeys can

continue over a lifetime and bring only incremental outer developmental change. I do believe, however, there is real value in taking the inner journey as an arts-based, mythic voyage. From the Quiet Magic workshop experience alone, I believe there is sufficient evidence to indicate that workshop participants were able to gain new insight and recognize changes in perspective to guide their current life transitions.

My research was limited to contextually based data of personally reported experience and artwork confined to a six session workshop experience with eight participants selected through purposeful sampling. The thematic content, art activities, group processes, and post-workshop interviews were guided by my particular style of facilitation. Art-making experiences were, to some extent, influenced by my choice of background music and the introductory slideshows. Art examples brought to the post-workshop interviews were self-selected by participants and may not have been representative of their whole experience. Given these contextual limitations, I view my study findings as a contribution towards an ongoing, broader discussion about how expressive art-making can support personal development and life transition.

Where Next?

Despite criticisms of Campbell's version of the mythic journey as representing outworn patriarchal, self-centered values that fail to reveal the inner journeys of women an example of gender role stereotyping (Downing, 2007, Frankel, 2010) there is room to develop more multi-cultural, multi-perspective versions of the metaphoric inner journey. The Quiet Magic workshop series referenced mythic tales of Greek mythology and further research could use mythic stories directly related to the cultural origins of workshop participants. How for instance, would a workshop for Australian aboriginal or

Native Americans look if their traditional myths and stories were used to illustrate a transitional journey?

Blackie (2013) provides an alternative to the hero's journey, depicting instead a fool's journey through the major aracana of the Tarot deck, with the fool being a metaphor for innocence. Some participants spoke of developing their own archetypal images and characters, rather than relying on the pre-ordained archetypal characters from myth or the mature archetypes of King, Magician, Warrior and Lover described by Moore and Gillete (1990).

I also believe future metaphor journey themed workshops would benefit from extended time spent in the liminal immersion phase, so as to better reflect the initiation stage of a rite of passage. In a rite of passage, initiates leave the outside world for an extended period. This was not possible to achieve in stand alone, three-hour sessions. A three-day residential, or a five-day intensive workshop, would provide more opportunity to establish a creative space for deep immersion in an inner journey. It might provide more opportunity to employ intermodal approaches that could include music and movement, dramatic enactment, and writing, as well as extended art-making experiences. Ritual could become a more prominent part of group interaction and provide more opportunity for communitas.

Some Final Words

As an arts-informed inquiry, this thesis has given a central place to the created image and its ability to convey intra-psychic meaning. I previously mentioned that while writing this thesis I continued to engage my personal creative process. I was not consciously linking the paintings I was working on to this study. However, in retrospect,

I see that one of my paintings captured something of my thesis discussion. The image *Taking Flight* (Appendix G) was an acrylic painting that used a mixture of greens and oranges to symbolize a transition of the seasons from summer to fall. A figure on the left side is sleeping. The painting captures the inner world of her dreams and reminds me of Joseph Campbell's statement that "once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid ambiguous forms" (1990, p. 19). A dark forest surrounds the female dreamer. "They've moved out of the society that would have protected them, and into the dark forest, into the world of fire, of original experience" (Campbell, 1988, p. 41). A on the right conjures a flow of emerging forms and a bowl, or egg-like shape, opens to give flight to a golden bird. As I look now, I see the bowl representing the Undry cauldron, and the smaller female figure the feminine energy of the creative flow. The bird is only partly formed and remains in liminal space. It takes flight as new movement and heads towards a golden sun suspended above the sleeping figure. I envisage the newly emerging bird as flying towards new light; finding a way forward revealed from the depths of the psyche. For me, the whole scene is symbolic of a transitional journey, one of personal development and perhaps transformation.

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Appendix A: Quiet Magic Workshop

Session Number and Title	Events	Notes
Session 1		
The Call to Adventure *The pre-liminal phase*	1. Drumming circle	• Attuning as a group
	2. Introductions and housekeeping	• Getting to know one another and journey starting points. • Group norms, safety and art material considerations.
	3. Introduce key ideas: Slideshow: *An introduction to the Quiet Magic journey – a story told in images*	• An arts-based journey • Rite of Passage as a journey metaphor, the pre-liminal phase • Separating from the familiar, hearing the call to adventure • What do you need to let go of?
	4. Art experience 1 Responding to the call *Individual mixed media artwork Create 1 or 2 images –where you are now and what is involved in moving forward*	• Explore: what is calling you to change? What is supporting you? • Use words selected from pre-workshop transitional point writings as image triggers (not included in appendices)
	5. Art experience 2 *Individual clay bowls – your travel bowl*	• Setting out on the journey, the begging bowl being emptied out and open to the unknown
	6. Group discussion and art-based homework (art experience 3)	• Pandora's Box • Create a box containing objects that symbolize what you want to leave behind on the journey
Session 2		
Mapping the Mythic Territory *Entering the liminal phase*	1. Drumming Circle	• Attuning as a group
	2. Discussion circle	• Exploring idea of myth and metaphor – the Grail Legend
	3. Sharing activity	• Participants share their Pandora's boxes and contents • What to leave behind? Issues and difficulties involved in letting go.
	4. Art experience 4 Creating a mythic landscape *Group art activity - mixed media on canvas. Second stage adding plasticine figures to the landscape representative of mythic guides and helpers*	• The mythic journey. What elements of the mythic will you find on the journey?
	5. Art experience 5 Creating and decorating journey begging bowls	• Adding lights to carry on the journey and placing bowls on the mythic landscape at your chosen starting point.
	6. Group discussion	• Being fellow travelers on individual journeys
	7. Closing circle	• Making music together

Session 3		
Entering the Underworld *The liminal phase*	1. Slideshow of photos taken during previous two weeks	
	2. Group discussion	• Identifying stages of the journey
	3. Entering the underworld *Group creation of ritual entry to underworld using bowls and lights placed on mythic landscape*	• Group going on a shared journey with individual pathways
	4. Presentation of underworld myths and underworld slideshow images	• Myths of Orpheus and Eurydice, Innana, Demeter and Persephone • Discussion "what does the underworld represent to you?" • Joseph Campbell's thoughts on the connections between myth and psychological inner journeying •
	5. Art experience 6. An art-based journey into the underworld *finger paint medium for 1ˢᵗ piece mixed media for subsequent artwork.*	• A fluid entry point into unknown territory
	6. Group circle discussion	• Each individual brings an art piece that is his or her "most….something" to share •
	7. Homework – *journal booklets*	• Jotting down words, dreams, images that come during the week
Session 4		
Thresholds and Dragons *The liminal phase*	1. Drumming circle	• Re-forming as a group
	2. Group discussion	• What is a threshold? Personal examples of threshold crossing. How do threshold relate to boundaries and comfort zones? Notion and examples of threshold guardians (Cerbus)
	3. Art experience 7. Small Group art work (groups of 4) *Creating a 3D threshold piece + a threshold crossing ritual*	• An art-based journey to and through a threshold of your choice • Individual and combined artwork and small group rituals • One group is witness to the others ritual threshold crossing
	4. Group circle	• Reflective discussion on threshold experiences
	5. Meeting dragon forces on the journey slideshow of images *facing/defeating/befriending dragons*	• Art-based exploration of dragon forces in your current life situation • Are they helping or hindering?
	6. Group discussion	• What are dragon forces? Examples in life experiences. • Introduce Jung's concept of the

		shadow.
	7. Closing drumming circle	
Session 5		
The Archetypal Journey – *Invoking the major archetypes* *Remaining in the liminal*	1. Drumming Circle and slideshow of workshop images from previous two weeks	• Gathering together • Where have we been so far?
	2. Group Discussion. Archetypal energies *Introducing the mature archetypes; Divine child archetype and the idea of an archetypal journey*	• What are archetypes? Male and female archetypes • Jung's concept of collective unconscious;
	3. Slideshow of archetype images from mythic tales	• Link archetypes to mythology
	4. Art experience 9. *Body mapping and mixed media individual artwork*	• Art based exploration: Which of the mature archetypes are you drawn to? • Invoking your archetypal image
	5. Art experience 10. Pre-cast masks and mixed media decoration	• Art-based activity: Creating a mask and persona for your archetype
	6. Ritual enactment Embodying archetypal energies	• Creation of group ritual with images, masks ands drums to enact archetypal energies
	7. Group discussion and outline of final session	• Follow-up reflection on what participants discovered during archetype session
Session 6		
The Return *Post-liminal phase*	1. Watch clip from Barry Long autobiography https://vimeo.com/89688800	• Example of returning to ordinary life after being on a transformational journey
	2. Group Discussion *Returning from the journey*	• What is involved in returning? • What are the issues/difficulties • What do we return with? • Maintaining change
	3. Art experience 11. Choosing a mentor and creating a presentation installation of art work made during the workshop period	• Working in pairs to help and support one another's installation process
	4. Witnessing the installations and 'wisdom presentations'	• Creating a music based ritual for group to circulate round and view each presentation in turn
	5. The Spider's Web	• Ritual ending and sharing activity
	6. Outline of workshop follow-up and post-workshop interviews	• Interviews held 2 – 3 weeks after workshop completion • Each co-researcher brings three art pieces from the workshop to reflect

		upon

Appendix B: Co-researcher Letter of Invitation

St Stephen's College

Date:

Dear

This letter is by way of a follow up to your informal expression of interest in being part of my thesis study. I would like to formally invite you to participate in a study I am conducting as part of my Master's degree in Psychotherapy and Spirituality (Art Therapy Specialization) at St Stephen's College, University of Alberta. This letter provides you with information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

A brief synopsis the project

I believe that our lives are not simply a journey through historical time. As we grow and change and deal with the difficulties and challenges we each face we also take part in a universal evolutionary journey that is described in the myths and stories of all cultures. Author Joseph Campbell describes this as the mono-myth of the hero's journey. Campbell identifies the common features of this mythic journey. They include a call to leave behind the old and move beyond what we have known. As we respond to this "call" we enter a process of change where we face individual trials and ordeals, and meet thresholds through which to find a way forward towards real change in both our selves and in our lives.

A core component of this mythic journey is known as a *rite of passage*. We each navigate a variety of rites of passage during our lifetime. Some of these passages relate to our surface lives, such as being born, moving through adolescence, entering a committed relationship and starting a career; while others connect more to our inner and deeper change processes. These may include such processes as dealing with loss and grief, finding new meaning and purpose in our lives, and spiritual awakening and transformation. My assumption is that each of us is at a point in our own mythic journey.

A rite of passage has been characterized as having three phases. These are a) a pre-liminal phase that is a time of separation from the familiar. It may be a time of ending, leaving, losing or letting go; b) a liminal phase that is an in-between, limbo stage of our journey, a bridge between the old and the new. It can be a time of uncertainty and unknowing, and also one of new learning, creativity and discovery of new resources,

abilities and ways of being; c) a post-liminal phase that is a re-entry or returning stage, where the changes that have taken place in the previous phases are brought back, grounded and integrated into our everyday life.

In this thesis project our primary focus will be on exploring how art making experiences within a group setting can facilitate movement through the liminal stage of a rite of passage that is relevant to each individual's current life circumstances. At the heart of art therapy is the creative process which is both a journey through time and a symbolic metaphoric exploration—a rite of passage—in which you the artist, leave your familiar space, enter the studio space and wrestle with the creative process, to eventually return with new and original creations to support your life journey. This creative liminal phase can be one of innovation, renewal, and a time to try new modes of expression, ways of being and thinking.

What your participation will entail

a) A brief pre-study written assignment to identify your current "transition points" that you wish to explore during the six sessions. This assignment will also include any concerns you might have about participating, as well as describing how you understand your current experience and what you hope to get from your involvement in this project.

b) Attendance and involvement in a series of six weekly three hour group art-based workshop sessions. Time and dates to be negotiated with group members.

c) Completion of a mid-course feedback form.

d) Brief weekly writing assignments that should not take more than 30 minutes to complete.

e) Post-course debrief interview lasting approximately one hour at a mutually convenient time.

f) One or two follow-up discussions, at a mutually convenient time, to ensure I have accurately represented your thoughts, feelings and experiences in my thesis.

Please let me know by email or telephone whether the above is agreeable to you, and or if you would like further information before agreeing to participate. I look forward to our working together.

Warm regards

Michael Wallace

Appendix C: Thesis Study Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this thesis study. The workshop component will take place between **March 6, 2014** and **April 3, 2014**. Each of the **six** weekly sessions will take place on a Thursday evening between **7.00 – 10.00 pm.** This form details the purpose of this study, a description of the involvement required, and your rights and commitment as a participant and co-researcher.

Purpose of study:
To explore the therapeutic effectiveness of individual and group art based experiences for adult men and women facing a period of change in their lives. The art based experiences will reflect a "rites of passage" theme. Further details of the foundational ideas behind this study can be found in the Information Letter that was sent to you previously by email.

Benefits and risks of study:
Benefits
- To identify art based experiences that promote and support change and transition processes for adult men and women.
- To explore the value of using a metaphorical theme based approach in promoting and supporting change and transition.

Risks
- The nature of the workshop experience and its focus on change and transition may mean that personally disturbing or distressing content may arise for you during your art making experiences. I will make every effort to provide a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for you to manage and process whatever arises during the course of the workshop.
- As you are taking part in a group process, interpersonal issues may arise. I will at all times act as the group facilitator, and will seek to help resolve any interpersonal difficulties in a way that respects and keeps safe each group member.

Methods used to conduct study:
- Brief pre-workshop written assignment to identify the "transitional points in individual members" lives. (approx 1 page)
- Participation in six consecutive weekly 3-hour art based workshops
- Brief weekly written assignments (15 – 30 mins maximum)
- Completion of mid course feedback forms
- Post workshop debrief interviews (approx 1 hour duration. These will be audio recorded)
- Digital image recording of art making processes and completed artworks
- Selective audio and video recording of workshop discussions and post workshop interviews

My agreement with you as a co-researcher
You are encouraged to ask questions or raise concerns at any time about the nature of this study or the methods I use. I am available to discuss and clarify both the *Information Letter* and this *Thesis Study Consent Form* with you. I want to be confident that you have fully understood the nature, purpose, and obligations involved in this study.

In addition to co-opting you and your fellow co-researchers, I will engage a research assistant who will record audio, video, and photographic images but not otherwise participate in the program. Selected components of the workshop experience, and the post workshop interviews, will be audio and/or video taped to help me accurately capture your art making experiences, thoughts, and insights in your own words. On each recording occasion, everything will be recorded unless you withdraw consent. As part of the post workshop follow-up, you will have the opportunity to review the study material and, if you have concerns about any recorded inclusions, we can discuss editing these out from the final study. These tapes will only be used by me for the expressed purpose of this study and will be stored in a safe and secured place offsite.

I will take the following measures to protect your privacy and maintain the confidentiality of your information. Where specific details or direct quotations from and about particular individuals are pertinent to the study, I will first obtain permission for their use and will *always* use pseudonyms to identify group members. No personal details of yourself, your life, or your family will be disclosed in this study.

You have the right to withdraw from this study without penalty. In addition, if you choose to withdraw from this study, you may remain a part of the group for the rest of the series of workshops if you wish. In this event, all information relating to your participation will be either be returned to you or destroyed and omitted from the study. You also have the right to decline participating in a particular task or activity and to not respond to questions if you so choose.

You also have a right to a copy of the completed study if you so choose.

St Stephen's College actively encourages the publication of research data and findings in professional and scholarly journals and other suitable venues and I may be encouraged to consider publication for all or parts of my thesis documents. In this event, I will provide you with an opportunity to review, comment upon, and request exclusions from written, photographic, audio or video material that relates directly to your participation in this study prior to submitting documents for publication.

If, as a co-researcher you are upset by actions on the part of myself as the research student and believe a formal complaint is warranted, then you may, in the first instance, contact the Chair of the MPS Program, Janice Dicks. If further action is warranted, the matter may be considered by St Stephen's College Research Ethics Committee.

Your agreement as a co-researcher
To the best of my ability I will:

- Attend and participate in all workshop sessions
- Write brief assignments as requested and as necessary for the purposes of this study
- Be available at a mutually agreed time and date for a post workshop interview
- Be available at mutually agreed times and dates, on one or more occasions, to verify that the information contained in the study material is an accurate and authentic representation of my experience and my verbal communications.

This study forms a part of my thesis for the Master of Psychotherapy and Spirituality, Art Therapy Specialization, Program at St Stephen's College, University of Alberta Campus, 8810 – 112 St. Edmonton, Alberta. T6G 2J6.

Contact Details:
Research Student: Michael Wallace.
Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Julie Algra.
Program Chair: Janice Dicks.

By signing this consent form I certify that I understand and agree to the terms of this agreement.

Print Name: _____

Signature……………………………………………. Date ………………………

Please retain a copy of this *Thesis Study Consent Form* for your records.

Appendix D: Confidentiality Agreement for Research Assistant

Study title:

Thesis Research Student:

_____

[   ]   I understand that all the material I will be asked to digitally record and transcribe
          is confidential and the sole property of the Thesis Research Student.

[   ]   I understand that I will be responsible for maintaining the
          confidentiality and privacy of all digitally recorded photographic and
          video files while they are in my care. I will keep them in a password
          protected folder according to instructions provided by the Thesis
          Research Student.

[   ]   I understand that the contents of all digital recording files can only be
          discussed with the Thesis Research Student.

[   ]   I will not keep any additional copies of these digital files nor allow third parties to
          access them.

[   ]   I will delete all workshop and interview files from my computer after recording
          and transcription is complete.

This study forms a part of my thesis for the Master of Psychotherapy and Spirituality, Art
Therapy Specialization, Program at St Stephen's College, University of Alberta Campus,
8810 – 112 St. Edmonton, Alberta. T6G 2J6.

Contact Details:
Research Student: Michael Wallace
Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Julie Algra.
Program Chair: Janice Dicks.

By signing this consent form I certify that I understand and agree to the terms of this
agreement.

Research Assistant's signature: _____

Research Assistant's name: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Thesis Research Student: _____

Name of Thesis Research Student: _____

Note: The Research Assistant will be given a copy of this form to retain for her/his records

Appendix E: Structuring the Data

<table>
<tr><td colspan="8">**THE QUIET MAGIC JOURNEY**</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Components of the Workshop Experience:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Art making</td><td colspan="2">Mythic</td><td colspan="2">Group</td><td colspan="2">Personal</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Rites of Passage Phases:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">**Pre-liminal**</td><td colspan="3">**Liminal**</td><td colspan="2">**Post-liminal**</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Hero's Journey Elements:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Transitional Starting Points</td><td>The Call to Adventure</td><td>The Mythic Landscape</td><td>Entering the Underworld</td><td>Thresholds and Dragon Forces</td><td>Archetypal Energies</td><td>The Return</td><td>Art-based Reflection</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="8">Emerging Themes:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">**Metaphoric Thinking**</td><td colspan="2">**Emergent Form**</td><td colspan="2">**Personal Process**</td><td colspan="2">**Metaphoric Journey**</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Black, dark and light and color symbolism</td><td colspan="2">Embodied images</td><td colspan="2">Personal perspective – new/shifting perspectives</td><td colspan="2">Levels of awareness</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">An underworld inner journey</td><td colspan="2">Creative flow, play and letting go</td><td colspan="2">Personal change journey and goals</td><td colspan="2">Rite of passage phases</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">My influence in shaping workshop</td><td colspan="2">Influences of others</td><td colspan="2">Development of self awareness</td><td colspan="2">Crossing thresholds</td></tr>
</table>

including introducing slideshow themes			
Relating to mythic and metaphoric ideas such as liminal phase of rite of passage	Ongoing life of the image/ valuing the image	Group influence on individuals	Dragon forces, Underworld and shadow themes
Image as informative and revealing of self journey	Image as a mirror	Personal creative process	Archetypal energies including Divine Child and heart connection
Art image as reflective of new meaning	Sensory influences on art making process and aesthetic appreciation	Self themes: Detachment and authenticity, self-judgment, being seen, finding me; connection and disconnection	Communitas and group rituals
Head, Heart and Body imagery	Influence of music on art making process	Spirituality, personal theology, worldviews	A new way to view one's personal journey
Image as personal motif and universal symbols	Quiet Magic moments		Difficulties in the return
	Spontaneity and surprise relating to emerging art forms		
	Emerging art forms as both process and product		

Appendix F: Post Workshop Interview Images

These Quiet Magic workshop images are the artwork examples brought by participants to the individual post workshop interviews. Coding is as shown in Results and Discussion Chapters

Sam

S. 1   **S. 2**

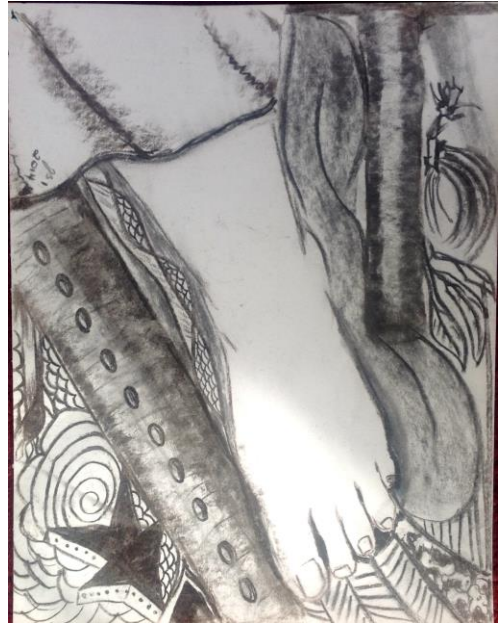

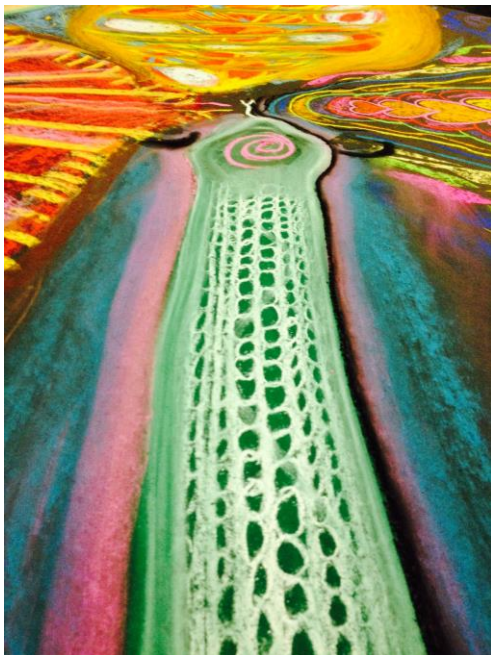**S. 3**   **S. 4**

Jack

Ja. 1
Ja. 2

Ja. 3

Alice

A. 1

A. 2

A. 3

Pam

P. 1

P. 2

P. 3

P. 4

Cathy

C. 1

C. 2

C.3

C. 4

Dawn

D. 1

D. 2

D. 3

D. 4

Ben

B. 1

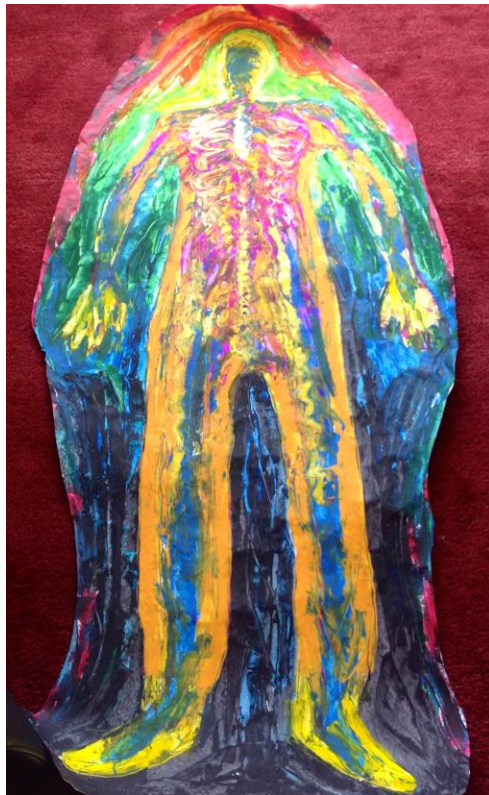**B. 2**

B. 3

B. 4

Jill

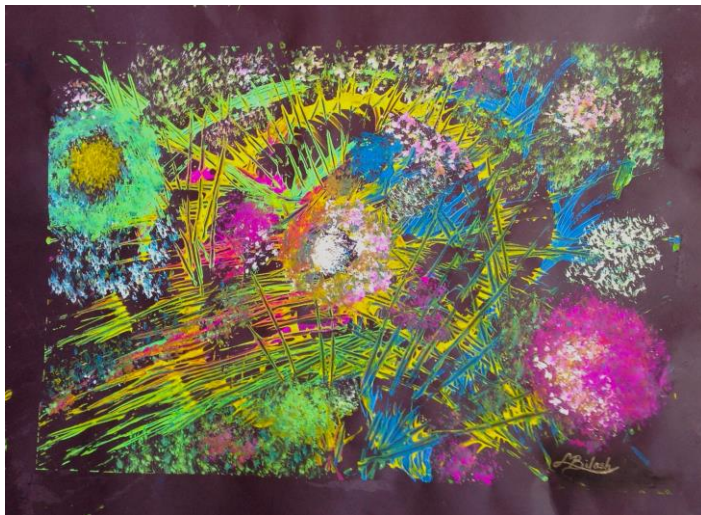**Ji. 1**   **Ji. 2**

Ji. 3

Appendix G: Personal Image Painted During Thesis Writing Process.

Taking Flight. Painted June – December, 2014.
Acrylic 48 in x 32 in. Michael Wallace.