

Appendices

Appendix 1

Transcribed interview with Damo Mitchell

John: Damo, how are you?

Mitchell: Good. Hang on. I've just got to sort out this thing (Skype).

John: Hey. Nice to see you again.

Mitchell: It's been a lot of years eh?

John: A lot of years but it really doesn't feel like it.

Mitchell: Time goes fast.

John: (laughs) I mean erm yeah. It doesn't feel like it Damo. Yeah. Well, how are you?

Mitchell: Well I've been busy.

John: (laughs) – Okay. So thanks for doing this. I know you are busy.

Mitchell: No. No. No. I'm more than happy to catch up with you as well. I want to know what you've been doing as well. It sounds interesting.

John: Oh God. Yeah. Really interesting. I suppose if I have to analyse it – the long and the short of it – is that I'm trying to genuinely impact education while respecting the way it is at the moment.

Mitchell: Big time education?

John: Yeah – without compromising the Taoist approach. You know a lot of times I think when people start to include things like meditation and all of that it's always done in such an awkward way. And it's almost like it doesn't – like they're trying to make something fit in an environment where it just doesn't fit. So what I'm looking to do – erm especially with the doctorate – is to find a way where you can be completely aligned with Taoist principals but without having to conflict with the way education is at the moment. In other words it can be pure, but it just works on a different dimension. So therefore people can choose – teachers can choose – I'm doing it in a form of educational coaching but – I'm doing lots of coaching of teachers – senior teachers – at the moment – and erm if just say that within educational coaching erm – a dimension of Taoism can permeate – and teachers can just choose to opt in or out – it's not like this thing you must do it – this is the right way to do it – it more- and this is what's happened in the doctorate – 'this is what I've found – it's really interesting – it works like this – this is what I've noticed – if you're interested and you really want to get a more holistic wellbeing dimension into education this is one way that you might consider doing it'. In that way it's just going to attract the people who are looking for something like that. And the idea is that they then develop the core and it grows experientially because – it's all about – it's all about inspiring people to be inspirational people themselves.

Mitchell: Okay. Yeah.

John: So it's not about keep having to come back to me or back to the coach it's about – and I've written about this as well – it's about – my coaching model is all about this idea – the idea that the coach inspires people to be inspiring because that's the only real sustainable model. If you have to keep coming back to the coach all the time, then it doesn't grow organically.

Mitchell: Yes. Okay.

John: You know and it's not like martial arts where you do need to keep coming back – with coaching you can sort of start the ball rolling – and then if the momentum is genuine enough it will then continue to roll within the person or people especially as they begin to inspire others – so it becomes consolidated in them too.

Mitchell: Okay.

John: And so the long and the short of it is that that's why I've looked at (experiential) transmission. I really felt that it was something – if people – if I could just get – not a hold of it but an idea of the essence of it.

Mitchell: Okay. Sure.

John: Like I said in my email – it's all about theorising – it's not about this is it – more this might be it – because I don't think that you can say that. Erm it's about themes converging and the ideas coming – So (experiential) transmission is it – this is why I am so interested to talk to you – and what I've come to at the moment is that it's a way of being. So it's your beingness that denotes the level of transmission. It's not anything anybody does to anybody else – it's the fact that somebody is this way – and so naturally because they are that way in their being they affect others?

Mitchell: Yeah.

John: That then permeates the environment. In psychology you've got social contagion which is the same kind of thing but obviously in a psychological frame – it's not really the same thing because it's mostly about how things are presented – body language and expression – rather than the person behind the mask. How that permeates and affects. That's kind of where I'm coming from so obviously then talking to you about this will just be so handy. I'm babbling.

Mitchell: (laughs) Well. I shall be as helpful as I possibly can be. It's a tough subject to explore eh?

John: I think it's difficult – erm – and it took quite a while working with my tutor to find a way of aligning it with doctoral format and principles –

Mitchell: Sure. Okay.

John: Because it is so erm – so indescribable – I'm coming to the fact that a lot of it is what it is not – it's a lack of superficiality – a lack of acquired learning – it's the heading towards stillness - nothingness – and then when you get to a sense of nothingness it's about how you grow and evolve from that point.

Mitchell: Okay.

John: And that whole process is kind of – (laughs) transmission – it's about the development of the way of being – and that's sort of the pathway that I'm following – and so I've come in looking at Western ideas of what learning from experience might be and then sort of followed it to the East – so we are learning through experiencing the beingness of the person. I'm babbling again.

Mitchell: I was wondering about what level this is going to be talked about on.

John: Well – what guarantees would you like?

1.1

Mitchell: (laughs) There are no guarantees I don't think. If it's at doctorate level, then that's fine. These things are pretty well guarded anyway. The Tao Te Ching has its own way of not letting people in too far who are going to misuse it. The use of metaphor is one. Plus this is your

interpretation not *the* interpretation because there is none. There is the known by some and the known by almost nobody.

John: Ah – in what way?

Mitchell: Leading down the wrong paths mainly – you can only take in as much as you understand. It preserves the genuine line. You can only learn from the Tao Te Ching as much as you are ready for. I just wanted to know – it's the sacredness (smiles).

(5 minutes of discussions surrounding the secrecy of Taoist principles – and the sacred nature of the information – not transcribed.)

1.2 Mitchell: Maybe it's best to start with how the Taoist Inner Door view the traditions themselves because that is kind of the basis of where transmission comes from for them. Basically the traditions are viewed

1.2a from – I always think myself that it's almost like a radio station. So the human body is like a radio able to pick up certain different radio stations – but the problem is that people aren't tuned into it so Northern Taoism for example would be considered a station, Southern Taoism would be considered a station Buddhism would be considered another station – these are different frequencies. So as much as anything if we like look at the complexity the basis of how we experience transmission in Taoism is that we switch the frequency over to – until it's in line with the frequency of the tradition. Essentially that what's called being 'Bisherd (sp?)' or initiated into a lineage. They change the frequency you are perceiving so

1.2b that they can – you can – continue the tradition. All of the transmissions that are used are targeted – deliberate ones are trained to pull you to that frequency so that you can understand the practice.

John: I see. Okay.

1.3 Mitchell: And then another side of it I suppose which is more similar to what you are talking about is like passive transmission. The whole of who the person is is transmitted.'

John: Yeah.

1.4 Mitchell: Which is taking place all of the time – which is trying to get the core lessons to unfold within the people you are teaching. So we have two types – and they do call them yin and yang forms – Yin shin yin or Yang shin yin – are the two types of transmission

1.4a yeah. The passive ones became the basis for what they call 'satsang' or 'sitting with the master' within other traditions or things like this or with Taoism it became the basis for the Tzur (sp) Wang Alchemical.

John: This seems to relate to a coaching situation in a sense. You sit with your coach.

Mitchell: I think it's similar. It sounds like the yin shin yin to me – the sort of passed on qualities that come through behind what a person is teaching. It sounds similar. The thing that surprised me when I started looking into Taoism and going further into it – I mean since I left you – since I last saw you – my next step after I left was to learn Chinese which was the next thing I did and then from there meet several people and get handshakes

1.4b to introduce me to the Dragon Gate and once you get to a certain level then they start to give you a series of teachings so that you can understand what the tradition is. And the view really is that all of the states that they talk about – enlightenment – at the highest ends of the tradition aren't the same from tradition to tradition. It's like a modernism to say that they are actually aiming for the same thing but it's not actually

- 1.5** | the case. So for a teacher to teach, what they have are their external practices which can be Chi Gong, meditation, scripture – whatever the tradition is based on – but then on top of that they have a kind of internal teaching that is passed through to you which is a kind of initially like a rewiring about how you perceive things – and so you are subconsciously changing – basically in the way that you process information when it comes in through the senses – that’s all. Your perception starts to change then after that they start to lead you into a ‘precepts’ which ultimately are external guidances to once again adjust the frequency about how you perceive things and once you get to a certain place – it’s like changing to the right channel on the radio station – then you receive what they call Shen. Yeah?
- John:** Yeah.
- 1.6** | **Mitchell:** So Shen is the spirit of the transmission the omph goes into your body and gives you a sudden awakening regarding the teaching of the tradition. The Chinese character for Shen shows spirit – yes – somebody kneeling while a lightning strike comes down through their erm centre basically.
- So once a person has done that then they are said to be in line with the tradition – initiated into a lineage – erm once that’s happened you then receive a series of teachings where they show you how you can initiate and take people into that same process. And so in that way the tradition
- 1.7** | continues to unfold. So classically in Taoism and Buddhism that was the prerequisite for someone to become a teacher or a coach of one of these arts. That they had to be in line with the frequency in order to encourage it to spread out – so the outer door teaching were based on what people would encounter – exercises – alchemical techniques – and the inner door teachings are the transmissions and are passed on from teacher to student.
- 1.7a** | **John:** Ah. Okay.
- Mitchell:** Did that makes sense at all?
- John:** That makes complete sense to me. It’s so interesting. That’s so interesting. It leads me to believe that the thesis might be the first step of something. It’s definitely experiential.
- 1.7b** | **Mitchell:** It is.
- 1.8** | **Mitchell:** Well the basis of every tradition right is basically to do is what is the mental quality that is trying to be put through – through that tradition. So if you take something really obvious like erm Zen okay (laughs). The Japanese interpretation of Buddhist teachings is very much about erm almost austerity in the way they do things – discipline or something – Taoism has a slightly different stance on it where they have three key mental qualities: one is humility, the second one is humour – which is always valid – and simplicity. Humility, humour and simplicity are the three qualities that are tried to instil in people that are based in the tradition. Because they view the type of person who is more likely to pick up or give transmission if those three qualities are inherent within their range of being basically. So Lao Tzu and the Tao Te Ching epitomized humility – the whole point of that text was to show the meaning, rational and importance of humility – Chuang Tzu was the epitome of humour which if you read it it’s just jokes.
- John:** Yeah. Oh yeah.
- 1.8a** | **Mitchell:** Flippancy yeah – crazy things – and then simplicity is within

many of the other writings – and these three qualities became vitally important. The reason was that – as you know that within Taoism they talk about Chi – whenever anything happens in your mind it has a component within the energetic body and the physical body as well – it's their model of the mind body connection. So if a person has humility – true humility not false humility – not a pretend state – but something deep within themselves – what happens is a vacuum is created in the person. Humility is a spacious mindset – so when someone is humble they can receive – it's kind of their teachings – so humility is the first thing someone needs in order to receive transmission.

John: Okay.

Mitchell: It's epitomised within the common saying that comes from Taoism that

1.8b says that you have to empty your cup before you can be taught. It's kind of a lesson. Humility was developed through the classical teacher/student relationship in the old days – but also then with reverence to deities though the more religious traditions as well through a lot of the prostrations in before deities and rituals and things. It's not so much about offering to the god as we would understand it maybe in Western society – but it was about offering complete humility so that such a vacuum was created so that you can receive the teachings that came down from that particular radio station.

John: Okay. Okay. Yes.

Mitchell: Making sense?

John: Making sense.

1.9 **Mitchell:** So Lao Tzu was basically trying to teach people about how to receive transmission through the act of humility so that past teachings could be passed on as efficiently as possible basically. And that is what the Tao Te Ching is about – the traditions survive.

John: Wow.

Mitchell: The next one is humour. So if you think about what happens when you laugh – just an obvious one – everything comes up – you don't often close up. It is an expansive warming spreading energy, right? So the idea was that if the thing that was stopping people being empty was life experiences so it's difficult to be calm while you're extremely stressed about something around you – just on an obvious level – the idea that the human body and nervous system stores all of these things all of the time and this prevents a person from finding that centre – so if all of life could be seen with humour – almost – some people don't like the word but certainly what Taoism was after but 'irrelevant' what happens is when those experiences hit you they just burst – spread you know – nothing can anchor into you in your mind or nervous system if it's spread – so that became the second quality – so humour would allow you to deal with the outside life without it affecting you and humility would open a vacuum on the inside of you then the teachings would be received. And then the third quality – sorry I'm trying to keep this brief –

John: However you want to explain it.

Mitchell: Sure – the third quality is simplicity because the idea was simply a change called po (sp) which is simply about how you then transmit because the idea was that if there's too much complexity in your nature – too much complexity in your being or in the things you are doing then you couldn't find that essence that could be inserted into the

students' humility. If you like.

John: Yeah.

Mitchell: So that's the basis of their teachings for it. And then from there there's lots of different mechanisms and things as well.

John: Okay. When erm – obviously don't answer if you don't want to – (laughs) I know you won't anyway.

Mitchell: No worries.

John: I'm really curious as to your personal experience of it so

Mitchell: Okay.

1.10 John: First –what –what does it – what does it feel like to align?

Mitchell: To align – okay – it's different for everybody. I think.

John: With the energy. What does that actually feel like. What did it actually feel like to you?

Mitchell: Well the process of them doing it first. Do you mean aligning with the tradition?

John: Yeah. So the actual moment of transmission I suppose.

Mitchell: So I've been initiated one, two three times now by different teachers – the last one was about eight months ago – prior to that was about seven years ago – so it only happens so often.

John: Right.

1.11 Mitchell: They call it a Shin Yin which means to – a yin is a seal – you know the red chop that marks ledgers and things? And the shin is that space within the centre of your being – so what it means is they literally stamp a seal within the centre of your being. So first thing after they've done it you feel really stoned (laughs) for quite a while – it's a mind wipe – if you're already very close to the tradition you are essentially dragged a very little amount so what happens afterwards is erm a feeling of openness or maybe clarity – that people can associate with the meditative experience – if you're still quite a long way from the tradition then it can be quite a violent drag towards that state so for some people it can be quite debilitating – it can leave you with feelings of depression, anxiety erm even sometimes physical pain – that you might feel for quite a long time because of the sheer distance you've come in order to touch that state.

1.11a Once you're then in the tradition and everything's settled down – then lots of strange things happen – the first thing is that you understand all of the teachings just like that (snaps his fingers). It's like becoming a complete know it all over night – in the tradition – even to the extent you can pick up an arcane classic within that line and it's like reading a DVD manual. It's very clear. Anything the teacher says you can understand – and also, they can pass on teachings mentally to you – they can transform the shape of your body by their intention – and things like this or – transfer moods or even visual information to your mind in a psychic manner which they can't do if you're not in that tradition. So inner door has a whole telepathic psychic aspect to it that the outer door teachings don't have.

John: So basically people are more strongly on the same wavelength to the point of that they can communicate.

Mitchell: Yeah. The radio is on the right station.

John: Completely tuned in and once that happens a lot of other stuff happens.

1.11b Mitchell: Yeah. I hope I haven't made it sound like transmission is only like a deliberate thing. The view is that transmission happens all of the

time – between all of us. It is a total natural experience – a full on – like a natural phenomenon. I can't have a conversation with somebody – especially if I'm in their vicinity – without some kind of transmission taking place.

1.11b What Taoism is doing is taking a natural process and heightening it – getting it under your control a little bit – that's all. But essentially even charisma is a person with very strong transmission, right? In my opinion – I'm sure there an aesthetic to it – and body language as well – to charisma.

John: I entirely agree. What I'm sort of looking at is this idea that you know when people are putting on the front of something their actual transmission is contradictory because what you actually have is the real person – for example a teacher pretending to be authoritative when it's not in their being will always come across to the students as being conflicted rather than having a genuine sense of authority.

Mitchell: (nods)

John: While someone very centred in their being can be quite quiet – can control an entire class because they don't actually have that sense of contradiction. What I think I'm saying is that transmission is the honesty of your being – of who you are – If you are not then all you communicate is that confliction. What do you think?

Mitchell: The confliction is that people aren't simple

John: (laughs)

1.12 **Mitchell:** Of the three qualities it's the simplicity that causes the honesty.

1.12a Somebody that's received the transmission at a very high level or who is able to teach to that level is called a 'genuei' (sp) (pronounced gen-u-eh) – it means a true person – someone who is speaking from truth – I think that the tradition agrees one hundred per cent.

John: Great.

1.13 **Mitchell:** I'm just struggling to explain I guess because I've never had to put experiential transmission into words before (laughs). It's a very difficult thing.

1.14 **John:** What about the concept of what it's not then? For example – is it a release of something – it does to me seem like – in the Western – when we talk about learning it's about putting things on to yourself whereas it seems to me what you're describing is the antithesis of that – like it's getting rid of all the rubbish so the energy can begin to grow – so assuming then that what you're describing is cutting yourself completely back to nothingness where you are really in tune with the thing – and then bang – and then the growth happens.

1.15 **Mitchell:** Basically that's right. That's right. Every tool within the Eastern traditions – with the exception maybe of Confucianism – was really about exactly that – taking everything back to basics and taking everything off of the human that wasn't helpful erm at that particular moment – so they even did that externally – you had to have uniforms and drop to give you a new name – in order to enter into the tradition – they were even taking away your identity – every aspect of yourself – then all of the internal work was again to strip away all those things you related to that weren't help and then all that was left was what was moulded – it's also why there was a lot of – there had to be a lot of trust between teacher and student because that can be quite a disempowering process obviously. But in my opinion in any education there's always a certain degree of

disempowerment when it comes to trust because you're almost being submissive to that person while you are receiving the teaching. This is why abusive teachers or manipulative teachers of anything can be a problem right?

John: Oh yeah. Absolutely. So what do you think then of this idea of – I suppose what I'm saying is that there could be another dimension to coaching.

Mitchell: Yeah.

John: And if coaches begin to become aware of their beingness in this type of way

Mitchell: Yes.

John: Say – just become aware of dropping the idea of acquired learning as being important in some way

1.15a Mitchell: Yeah. Sure. I get you. All of this is to do with improving your way of being. It's not the goal. It's a type of benefit (laughs).

John: And what I'm sort of saying is that you can't entirely let go of acquired learning – what I mean is that in education there are some things you have to do – in teaching – even though they are artificial – but if you see – if you know that it's acquired learning then actually that's probably enough because you then have that sense of knowledge and then you just keep on with that – so the acquired action loses its power because you know it is acquired. This might then nourish your sense of beingness to begin – just to begin – erm just through your passive transmission – your yin transmission – erm erm to improve the environment – to improve the health and the wellbeing – especially coaching in a small room.

Mitchell: Yes.

John: Even if we can't get as far as every coach or teacher might be thinking about this – the concept there is – and I mean there's also something very interesting again in – in all the coaching that I listened to – and that was that there really is a moment of unveiling that's important.

Mitchell: Sure. Yeah.

John: That's like – you know – you – I was just instinctively doing this as a coach anyway – it just seemed like the right thing to do – that if something was superficial you'd just say it – just call it – and use it to help the client – and when I listen back to all my coaching regarding transmission it really has been about undoing the superficial and seeing things with more clarity because of it. There has also been a sense of fun – definitely – and I've called that within the thesis the theme of undoing.

Mitchell: (nods) Okay. Yeah.

John: Just because I wanted to erm incorporate the Taoist side of things and the Western approach and that seem broad enough to accurately encompass them both.

Mitchell: (nods) Sure. Okay.

John: I've called the moment that it happens unveiling

Mitchell: Okay. That's what we call 'Shen' in Chinese.

John: Okay. Shen. And after the Shen you've got what I've called evolution.

Mitchell: Right. Okay.

John: Rather than the concept of things improving in a linear way – I think it is quite similar to what you described – you know – we evolve holistically rather than in a linear way.

- Mitchell:** Sure. Yeah. Okay.
- John:** How does that sound?
- 1.16** **Mitchell:** Yeah well – so in Taoism the person has to be stripped away so that they can find stillness – and stillness is extreme yin – and then yin can't last for long – something has to manifest – and that's yang. So a person then goes through a type of evolution on the other end of that scale.
- John:** Oh yeah. Right. Okay.
- 1.17** **Mitchell:** So the evolution is a result of the stillness. As you say evolution is not a particularly linear thing – so that's probably not the best word for it – but there is an adjustment to the centre of your being. The nature of sitting with a teacher – sitting with a Master – or something – should be that the teacher puts themselves into – I mean they do manufacture it a little bit
- 1.17a** I guess – erm but they put themselves into a state of stillness – erm – within the centre of their being – and then essentially – it does feel like a magnetic field. I mean have you ever sat with anyone who's very very good at achieving stillness – essentially 'Samarti' – that balance between focus and absolving of acquired thinking – then the whole room goes ooomm (gestures closing in) – like it draws in – and at that stage when you're sat with them the work that's taking place is a result of the stillness that the teacher has achieved themselves – it's like being drawn in – drawn in – drawn in (gestures a wavy line from top to bottom) and in that way the teachings are passed on – I mean they are deliberately after a very specific thing – it's to lead your mind to stillness – that's pretty much all they are trying to do – but I've – in a weird way – more akin to something like Ti Chi than mediation – I assumed when I was going to do this interview with you or talk to you it would be about the transmissions from meditation but it's not actually – it's more like the Ti Chi stuff – because Ti Chi is almost more like an active form of transmission because it's a lot of hands on stuff – there's a lot of communication – a lot of touching erm but still that transmission is there in the background but it's not the profound trying to lead someone to complete emptiness type of transmission it's more of the transmission from the teacher where they are trying to pass on a skill.
- 1.18** **John:** So it's who the teacher is behind the skill they are trying to pass on?
- Mitchell:** Yeah.
- John:** So in other words it's being with the teacher who is teaching the skill?
- Mitchell:** Yes.
- John:** Wow.
- 1.19** **Mitchell:** Which is why everybody hunts to the edge if they have sincerity in these arts. It's not enough probably to go to your community centre – everybody what to find the heart of it – it's not to hunt out the oldest – it's that the closer you are to the lineage the more likely you are to get the transmission so then the essence of the art is passed on – to someone like myself – that's why it's very very important – and it's very difficult to say what you were taught – beyond the idea that something has changed –
- 1.19a** your skill – if you do the same exercises – I do exercises with this fellow who's very very good, but he's not had connection with the transmission

– and I do the same practice – the same exercises – spend the same amount of time with this guy who’s very very close to the transmission my skill goes a lot higher with that guy. It just exponentially grows like it just goes up and up and up and up and up. It’s the same with meditation as well. The more time I spend with those people – even just being in their presence – even out of practice – have dinner with them and sit around -

John: Yeah. Yeah.

Mitchell: I – the understanding of my own nature – goes up as a result – as well.

John: I miss that so much – I’ll have to pop down for a cup of coffee

Mitchell: Be great to see you.

John: The way I see the whole thing working is that those people who are excited by this type of thing – this way of thinking in education – become naturally attracted to it – so it forms a type of natural centre – and from here it grows organically as more and more people are genuinely attracted. For some people in education I know this will be exactly the sort of thing they have been looking for – a kind of way of dealing with the superficial whilst at the same time bring in something very real and nourishing to the wellbeing of the entire environment. – One thing that is so interesting to me is that you are saying – without a doubt – that it is experiential.

Mitchell: Yeah (nods).

John: It’s not an intellectual activity at all -

Mitchell: (shakes his head in agreement)

John: It’s more like a holistic experience.

Mitchell: Yes. Yeah. Yeah. Even the techniques that are taught – because they do use very specific techniques to achieve it – are still experienced based – you have to feel how it works and you have to broach it that way in order to understand it – erm – there’s a lot of experiential learning involved. For example in one transmission technique there’s something called a ‘shin fa’ which is literally a ‘heart mind teaching’ right –

John: Right. Okay.

Mitchell: Where the teacher actually inscribed a series of geometric patterns into the centre of my mind right. They will deliberately inscribe them into the centre

1.19b John: Wow. It seems to make sense of magic.

Mitchell: (laughs) This is probably the most contrived version of transmission I know (laughs) that I’ve come across -

John: Sounds exciting.

1.20 Mitchell: The metric pattern creates a type of frequency in the realm of your shen then changes the way you see things and perceive things which will create anything from visual phenomena – which is how the sense functions are now processing that information through to then how you can understand and do things – including the development of ‘seedee (sp) ’ and stuff – skills that some people would consider extraordinary come out of those types of teachings as well – those types of transitions are the most refined ones I’ve met – found – but they’re still very very jealously guarded – but still to me it’s just being – those are just a refinement of the natural process that happens – from human being to human being – the more somebody finds that simplicity that resonance of humility and truth within themselves the more that passes over anyway.

1.21 | This is because the Taoists are a fairly clever bunch – they took the process and refined it to a very, very, very, high level. The process is central to the coaching paradigm. This was over a very long period of time.

John: That's amazing. It's been so good to talk to you. Thanks so much Damo. Really and truly it's been whackingly helpful. This is nothing I could have got anywhere else.

Appendix 2

Candidate interview transcripts

2.1 Faith's interview

- John:** How's it been?
- 2.1a Faith:** Busy as usual.
- John:** Okay. I've got a series of diagrams to show you.
- Faith:** Right.
- John:** What I've been looking at is something called experiential transmission.
- Faith:** Right. Ooo.
- John:** Okay. If you look at it in a coaching situation it would be something like 'how would the coach behind the mask affect the success of the client?'
- Faith:** Right. Okay.
- John:** Erm. Experiential transmission specifically looks at that – that – looks at the quality of what you would need to be like – the person under the mask – what I'm sort of calling their sense of beingness – in order to really inspire the person opposite you.
- Faith:** Right.
- John:** For example someone else could say the same things as me as a coach and be much more effective. Be more inspiring because their beingness is inspiring.
- 2.1b Faith:** Okay. Yeah.
- John:** If they – What is that sense of beingness like? You know – where are the clues as to how you have to be in order to really inspire somebody?
- Faith:** I agree with that – I think you see that in teaching – teachers might teach the same specification, or they teach in the same lesson – but some teachers are just more effective than others.
- John:** Yeah.
- 2.1bi Faith:** And you look at their personalities and I just think – I was having this conversation with my students yesterday and they were saying how they connect – they do better in subjects where they – not 'like' the teacher exactly – it's about their personality – their whole personality – and they might really love maths for a little while when they've got a certain teacher then they swap teachers and they hate maths now – they can't do it.
- John:** Yeah.
- 2.1c Faith:** They are teaching the same strategies but it's more about who that actual teacher is as well.
- John:** Absolutely. And you could argue that the Head Teacher sets the entire tone of the school in the same way.
- Faith:** Yeah.
- John:** For want of explaining it better – it really can permeate. The doctorate is sort of about this dimension of permeating.
- Faith:** Right. Right.
- John:** My research of course involved listening to all your recordings – finding clues – the doctorate isn't about finding conclusions.
- Faith:** Right.
- John:** It's about exploring it from different people's angles – their lived

experience of it – how they make sense of it.

Faith: Right.

John: So for example with our conversation today – I'd explore your understanding from your angle – I might look at themes and patterns compared to other participants but it's not about drawing a definitive conclusion. Are there themes that converge? Are there themes that diverge? It's just never about getting to one thing like it's this.

2.1d Faith: Yeah.

John: It's just exploring it and finding generic patterns. So I've come up with a set of themes. So here we go to diagram one.

2.1di Faith: Okay. Ooo. Exciting.

John: Diagram one. Okay – before we go into the themes too much just look at this. Now what we have what in a Western culture we might think is a paradox. The diagram itself represent what experiential transmission might be like – or one possible take on it – so 1 goes to 3– there's like a linear movement here – and this is 4 – non-linear. So there's movement within the context of everything together.

Faith: Hmm.

John: What's your initial reaction to this?

Faith: Can you give me an example?

2.1e John: Yeah. So for example – erm – well if I introduce the themes – so moving towards nothing is 1 – moving from nothing to something is 4 – and everything together is 4. I'll explain these as we go along. How do you feel about that?

Faith: A bit – erm –

John: What springs to mind – anything?

Faith: So movement 4 is from nothing to something?

John: Yeah. Basically.

2.1ei Faith: This is confusing.

John: In the environment of everything together.

Faith: I don't – my brain's just going.

John: Okay. If you just let your brain go for a second what's there?

Faith: My reaction is that maybe that's the journey (points to 1 leading to 4) and I think you find – that was interesting when you said you moved towards nothing – the idea that you are on a journey – that here (theme 1) you are just all over the show – you've not got a clear direction – er – it might be that the obstacles that are in your way – reverting all over the place – you're just kind of going a little bit – does that make sense?

John: Erm – it doesn't really matter whether it makes sense or not – it's just your honest reaction which is exactly what I'm looking for – so perfect.

2.1f Faith: Maybe from 1 to 3 is a linear pathway – makes me think that's where you are – you've found your – you've got purpose – you've found where your goal is – your desire – the object of what you need to achieve and that linear pathway (points to 1 leading to 3) is you working effectively – it's teaching and learning – that's what you strive for – you've got a goal in front of you and you've worked tirelessly to achieve it but what you don't take into consideration is all the outside factors (points to 4) that are literally going to just get in your way all of the time and then you become frustrated that you aren't able to get to that one place because there is too much going on and I think that's teaching in general and teaching and learning.

- John:** Alright. So how then do you understand the environment 4. How does that fit into what you are saying?
- 2.1fi Faith:** I feel like – It's a bit like doing a bit of a dance in a spotlight this isn't it. (laughs) – I think 4 is like everything else – like you've got this 1 – you're trying to move to something and 4 is just everything – it's maybe outside factors that could – just outside factors – I think from a leadership perspective it's the outside factors of your actual life that interfere – if you have one – (laughs)
- John:** (laughs)
- 2.1g Faith:** I think that 4 is everything else asides from this (1 and 3). So 4 negatively effects 1 and 3 – the obstacles as we used to call them – talk about having blocks in the way – and finding your way through and around those blocks – not letting your – what's the word – momentum – stopping that – you know – this 4 is like what's trying to prevent your momentum.
- John:** Anything else?
- Faith:** I can definitely relate this to the coaching sessions that we've had.
- John:** Okay.
- Faith:** One hundred and ten per cent. I would be in number 1 trying to get to number 3 but I would totally sometimes let number 4 overwhelm that and push me off course – and I would let that – I would emotionally react to number 4 from the outside. At the start I before I came to coaching I would almost be fire-fighting number 4. And I would lose my way and number 3 would just be getting further and further away (laughs). That kind of thing – and obviously through coaching it was more about being solution focused instead of wasting time and getting emotional. And that's the way we removed number three – part of the way – you can't remove it – it's always going to happen – and accepting that number 4 is always going to happen as well. And then you eventually get to number 3.
- John:** How about the idea that 1 and 3 are linear and they exist in a non-linear context – a paradox? So you have two things that contradict each other happening at the same time. So how might you explain linear movement in the context of something that isn't linear?
- 2.1h Faith:** Okay – (long pause) – I'm a visual person – I'm visualizing.
- John:** Would you like to draw something or write something down?
- Faith:** (quite abruptly) No.
- John:** So what is it you see? What do you see?
- Faith:** (pause). I visualize (long pause) so – I don't know maybe if 1 to 3 is the ideal – linear – you're getting there in the most direct way and number 4 is the reality of (pause) is the reality of the situation – the reality of the journey. I don't know.
- John:** So you see 1 and 3 as the journey and 4 as the reality?
- Faith:** Number 4 is probably the more realist view of the route.
Pause
- John:** Okay – next one (diagram 2). So how about the idea then that 1 leads to 3 that then equals 4. So you achieving your goal creates 4.
- 2.1j Faith:** Okay – so a better feeling of wellbeing say. I think – I don't think that this is realistic – not realistic – I don't think it's real. I think it's more likely that when you get to 3 you are more likely to go back to 1 because the momentum doesn't ever stop there. YOU might achieve whatever it is you set out to achieve or it might be like with coaching you know come in one week and say, 'this is what I want to achieve and this is the bigger

- picture and this is where I want to go.' And – maybe sometimes – may be sometimes you don't get to 3 because you've found a different path. You get half way and you think 'Oh – this is working for me now' or 'That's not important'. The outside factors of 4 from diagram 1 have changed my true pathway – to somewhere slightly different.
- 2.1ji** **John:** Okay.
- 2.1jii** **Faith:** If I were to change that diagram I'd make it more of a cycle.
John: So 1 leads to 3 leads to 4 leads to 1?
Faith: But if it was wellbeing at the end – if it was hypothetically – you then become empowered and you want to start your cycle again. You've kind of gone 'Oh god this is amazing' then off you go again. But my interpretation of that is entirely different to my interpretation of diagram 1. I feel like I'm thinking of a new idea there.
John: So are you saying something like by going from 1 to 3 it broadens who you are as a person. Then you expand – so this process is essential – it's almost what you described in the circle.
- 2.1k** **Faith:** Yes. Okay. That is a bit more accurate. So 1 to 3 leads to the expansion of who you are then able to understand 4.
John: I think it's like you are able to sit in the position of 4.
Faith: Yes. I think that a lot of people work very hard but don't actually ever embody 4 – they never let it in. Oh my God – so this is why they don't expand as people and still remain narrow – this is good. You keep achieving all these things, but you never really grow.
John: Yeah. Yeah. I can see how that works.
- 2.1ki** **Faith:** So I have that experience and I feel more enlightened I suppose – and if I allow that feeling to permeate – to be around all the time – then each time I become more and more enlightened as a being rather than as an intellectual. Does that make sense? It does to me (laughs).
John: This is very interesting to me.
- 2.1kii** **Faith:** So my circle isn't appropriate because it doesn't imply growth.
John: Maybe. It's like –
Faith: A martini
John: What's in a martini?
- 2.1m** **Faith:** Erm Vodka and Vermouth I think – so it's like Vodka and Vermouth to make a Martini.
John: (laughs) Yeah. You drink a martini – that is the pleasure – the thing as a whole it not think of it as a mixture of the two (diagram 4).
Faith: That makes sense especially in relation to that (diagram 1).
John: In what way?
Faith: In that 1 and 3 – because of 1 and 3 you then become 4. It's that – I don't know.
John: Diagram 4.
Faith: Ooo. Okay.
- 2.1mi** **John:** Now this is 4. It represents 4's point of view
Faith: Yeah. I can see 4. This might represent a snapshot – of 1 and 3 being 4 on every dimension Because you've done lots of individual growing and each time – would I do it like that though? You've done lots of individual journeys and you've learnt from lots of individual journeys however I feel like there needs to be – I feel like that insinuates that as a person you need to focus on the next thing but in my head, I think that especially in coaching – I've done the small 1 and 3 then I put a circle around it as 4. And then I do another 1 and 3 and put a circle around it as

4. And another 1 and 3 – it's almost like – like a bullseye you know – starting from 1s and 3s – I feel like making that – maybe in my head – but maybe in coaching or teaching or leadership – I think that each one folds into the next – it starts small and you get bigger and bigger.

John: Okay.

Pause

John: So. If I go back to number 1. Diagram 1.

Faith: Yeah.

John: Now the theme from – heading towards nothing – in Taoist culture doesn't mean the Western form of nothing.

Faith: Oh. Okay.

John: Instead it means the potential – the true potential for everything. It means stillness and it means quietness. It means the seed that hasn't yet sprouted. It's not what we mean by 'I did nothing today'. It's not emptiness. It's absolutely the potential for everything.

Faith: Okay. So it's like learning to swim is linear but moment to moment personal growth as one is learning to swim – because you are learning to swim – is a holistic experience then'

John: Yes. So when we say we're moving towards nothing there are two themes that I've identified – two subordinate themes – and the first one is erm undoing. And the second one is unveiling. And these are things I've noticed – certainly in our coaching sessions that have happened – happened a lot. Now the undoing was the undoing of the superficial.

2.1n **Faith:** Yep.

John: Okay. And in the Tao Te Ching, it's described as acquired learning. So everything you've learnt that is meant to be 'right' everything you've learnt that you have acquired – that is kind of artificial or superficial – erm – the moving towards nothing is actually the removal of the superficial – what I've realized from our recordings is that you know it all already. It really is getting rid of all the superficial rubbish so that you can see things clearly. So this is what 1 represents – undoing. How do you feel about that?

Faith: Yes. Definitely. I think – just in my experience – if you've got an idea of something already – if you've got a preconceived idea about what something is – like you know – you know what good behaviour is but you – your actions aren't – hold on – right – okay – I'm trying how to word this – I know what I'm saying in my head.

John: Most people have difficulty putting this into words. I can be really difficult.

2.1p **Faith:** Okay. So if I use as an example one of our first coaching sessions where I was a new leader – I came in wanting to do everything for everybody –

John: I remember.

2.1pi **Faith:** And I was just running round. I knew myself that wasn't the right thing to do – so I had the kind of knowledge behind – you know – but what you did was question – through questioning – you never told me anything outright – I discarded the idea of me having to run around and please everybody and look after them – because that wasn't working and it wasn't sustainable – so that would disappear – go to one side and I'd be left with the idea of the nothingness from which to build say structures and expectations in the team that would work and would be sustainable. From here I go out and improve – I go out onto that linear journey at the

same time growing holistically as a leader.

John: Okay.

Faith: Nothingness just means getting rid of all those preconceived notions – or even all the barriers that you’ve put up – have you created them yourself? Are they artificial? Where are they coming from? Clearing this up takes you to that place of nothingness where you can start to grow more genuinely. Then you get to that place of ‘oh I’m empowered now’ and you can go away and do it for real – and it’s so much easier.

John: So for you then it is – undoing – erm – it is quite a simple process really – it’s getting rid of all the stuff that is superficial. For example if you want to be a better manager and leader rather than keeping adding to your skills you actually instead you get rid of all the stuff that you thought it was, but it isn’t.

Faith: Definitely.

John: Are you saying –

2.1q Faith: It’s an epiphany like – Oh my God – then ‘why didn’t I think of that?’ You’re like stuck in that little rut or firefighting – and you don’t take a step out of that or take time to questions.

John: I have found that to be entirely true – in fact what you have just described is exactly what I have observed happening. It’s interesting that you somehow knew that was the next step.

Faith: (laughs).

2.1qi John: It’s true. Because basically what happens – and what happens in – erm – in the coaching sessions quite regularly – are the moments of epiphany. Sometimes they’ve happened outside of the sessions and you might come in – ‘Oh yeah – oh my God I thought about that and’ – and it turns out – the way I see it – is that moment of epiphany – is worthy of note – in other words 1 leads to 3 – there is a moment that I’m called unveiling – so undoing leads to a moment where – for example even now I notice it – we’ve just had one of those moments.

Faith: Yeah. Yeah.

John: Are you able to describe the exact moment?

Faith: No – no.

John: And how do you feel now – compared to before – a few moments ago

Faith: Erm – freer – happier – well freer – released – like all worries are gone – everything is easier – and enjoyable – like it’s all those things together – I’m not really describing it well – it’s beyond this really but very normal feeling too – not that helpful I know – lifted compared to when I came in – but when I came in I was really happy – it’s just – I don’t know (laughs) – relaxed – fluid.

John: On the contrary it’s very helpful.

John: (shows diag 7)

Faith: Oh my God. So basically these two touch – then in the nothingness there’s an explosion that expands me as a person – that’s – I don’t know.

John: Anything else?

2.1r Faith: I think it’s wellbeing – very different from mindfulness –

John: In what way different?

2.1ri Faith: Much more real – immediate – much easier – and it’s about consistent expansion rather than doing the same thing again and again just to stay in the same place.

John: Interesting.

Faith: It's an important moment – everything becomes clearer – and easier.

John: Now I'm certainly not saying that I'm some kind of guru. Of course I'm not. And that fact leads me to believe that all you need to be is aware of it – to be on the journey towards it – that coaches themselves need to be on the journey of looking at and removing the superficial – that this will inspire the clients to do the same. That might be a clue as to how to be a better coach – not in what you do but your way of being – and if from here your way of being means that say you ask more appropriate questions as a coach then it will be worth it – the questions will come from your expanded way of being rather than from a learnt series that's repeated.

Faith: So if you notice those epiphany moments it doesn't mean you've created them – it means by being yourself you have inspired them. It is not something you can consciously do because then you've created it artificially – it is an artificial moment – not the real moment that cannot be artificially created. So it's more a way of being.

John: And because you are who you are this inspires you to say what you say.

2.1s Faith: That makes sense. Rather than in education when we actually pretend to do it. I think that teachers get mixed up with what is acted and acquired and what is real.

John: I think I would agree. Let's jump to the last diagram. It seems to be the right thing to do here as you've hit this so quickly.

Faith: Right. Okay. It's so funny – the first diagram seemed impossible at the time – I had to go on my little journey and have my epiphany – now I get it completely – well ish.

John: So with this diagram you've got this idea of expansion.

Faith: Yeah.

John: Okay.

Faith: So the linear moment happens –

John: Okay – then the unveiling moment happens

Faith: Right. And the person then is being with that feeling – and this is what this represents.

John: What do you mean?

Faith: And then the same thing happens again – and that expands the whole thing again. Yeah. And each time the feeling of expansion – of wellbeing – gets more and more certain – and therefore you have more effect on people – on your coachees. Do you think this might be one way of describing experiential transmission?

John: Well the themes seem to converge and to suggest something like this.

Faith: That's so interesting. That that inspires others to have moments of this.

John: Yeah.

2.1t Faith: I agree with this a lot. I can totally relate to this in my capacity as a teacher. Going back to what I said about my students 'Oh. I don't like that subject any more' and it's about the person. As a teacher the best moment ever in the classroom is when you are working through a problem or you're giving them the tools to work through a problem and then they get it themselves and it's almost like (intake of breath) 'Oh.' And

then they're on to the next thing with energy and 'Oh yeah – I get this now' and they do it alone.

John: Surely it is something about you though because another teacher might teach them, and they will have none of those moments and they might end up for example totally reliant on the teacher?

Faith: Yeah. And it is interesting that I always find – not to blow my own trumpet – but I always find myself having really good relationships with my students. Always – really positive – where they feel they can be independent in my classroom – they feel like they can be creative – they can explore – it doesn't matter if they make a mistake – it's not about mistakes it's about what they do after them – they're willing to give up a lot of their time to come and rehearse – or you know you're developing young people there – and the conversations that you have – I can see that – I can see that even with the personal relationship that I had with my sister

John: Yeah. Yeah.

Faith: That really rocky relationship that we had.

John: I'm not really describing a process what I'm trying to describe is a sort of beingness.

Faith: Yeah.

John: And the way that our beingness can grow. So the unveiling is really important because it – if you don't have the unveiling you end up is always within 1 and 3 and just going to different places in the same environment.

Faith: Yeah. Yeah.

John: In other words you don't actually expand. And not only do you need the unveiling moment – the epiphany – you also need to be able to sit in that moment and work from that moment – and 'be' that experience in a sense.

Faith: That makes sense.

John: Also I've come to think that's probably why some older people erm stop growing. It's because they stop having those moments in their lives – being open to having those moments.

Faith: Definitely yea.

John: And also young people who for various reasons stop having joy in their lives – for various reasons.

Faith: Yeah.

John: I think this might be a very important moment now – it might be somewhat underrated. Okay. Onto the next. So we had moving towards nothingness and the two subordinate themes were undoing and unveiling. So that takes you to a certain point. I then looked at the concept of nothingness. And just explored it a bit more within the Taoist culture and found in a nutshell it was the absence of superficiality. It's the absence of acquired learning. Erm and erm also interestingly you cannot describe the moment of the epiphany here either. We don't realize we are having the epiphany. It just has happened.

Faith: Yeah.

John: And that's also very interesting. So in a sense it is a moment of nothing. So we move on from there. Now there's quite a theme of the mysterious pass within that moment. What do you think of that idea?

Faith: I like that term.

John: It's passing through the doorway. Taoism uses that a lot.

2.1u **Faith:** That's really interesting. I can really resonate with that because I look at who I was – back when I lived in – when I was at uni or when I lived in Rotherham – and I look at the kind of person I was – the values that I had – very different to what I am now – and I can see that now – totally – crystal clear – but then I look at my sister who moved away a long time ago as well but she still holds similar values to before – similar – I would say – a little bit closed minded and things like that – but she – and then I look at what separates us both – like how I compare my journey with hers – we both had a close relationship with our mum – erm we both didn't have a great start in life – both of us came from a very poor background – and then it's just really interesting – and there's my brother as well – he's more like me – I'd say – but just the way we view life in general and the world around us – and our values – I feel like especially this last year – maybe two years I feel like I have had – probably gone through that doorway again and again and again and again – I don't eat meat anymore – I've got really strong opinions on things – kindness – being mindful – mindfulness is like this big thing for me – and so totally I can see that – and I feel like those doorways I've gone through have been quite drastic – past five or six years.

John: Also you've already described epiphany moments when you described the students and what they're doing so a lot of the time people find epiphany moments in being with young people.

Faith: Oh Yeah.

John: So being with them and experiencing what they go through in the shows and the dancing is also an epiphany moment for them and for you – it is like being with someone who goes through that moment can really inspire it in you if you let it and are able to sit with it.

Faith: Yeah.

John: Would you say then that your sister has many epiphany moments?

2.1v **Faith:** No. I don't think she ever takes the – I think that she is just 1 3 1 3 all the time. She never gets to 4. She's a bit like – I describe my sister as a whirlwind – going round in circles – just fire-fighting – day to day – never – it's always like day to day tasks.

John: So what would be quite interesting then from a coaching perspective was that if she was coached from a coach who understood the importance of those moments – it may be the epiphany moment that takes you out of the pattern and pushes you more into the 4.

Faith: I think in teaching this could be so powerful because I think even for young – from a curriculum perspective – but even to develop young teachers and young people – when they come to us they have all of those preconceived ideas – superficial – it's not their superficial it's what their parents have told them – they've been conditioned – this will allow them to become more independent to question those and that's when they have those moments of revelation.

John: So we've got moving towards nothing – and that takes us towards the epiphany moment – that happens – at that moment then you've got the concept of growth – of what I'm calling evolution – so it's not like a linear growth – we evolve as people.

Faith: It's almost like when 1 and 3 touch there's a type of explosion that pushes out the general beingness of 4. Awakened might be a better word.

John: The question then is at that point how do we grow? What do you

- think of the theme of magic to describe this point?
- 2.1w** **Faith:** I'm just thinking about my best friend who had – how can I describe it – a mental breakdown – and she always says because of that she had this epiphany moment – where she more or less said 'I've just got this realization now and I'm looking around at other people saying what are you doing?' She was so enthused about it – when the revelation first happened – and when I look at her now and she's more calm about it – but she still holds those values. Like when you've got all that energy and you stand a bit taller and you sense that energy how do you then transfer that into something – I don't know.
- John:** The thing is that it might be all about focusing on yourself and the way you are being. You don't have to do anything to anyone or say anything – it's how you are holistically that affects people. What do you think?
- Faith:** Well I think it might be all about sitting in that moment and being in that moment. She's not changed in the way that she's still the same person – it's just that she's so – liberated – Oh my God yeah. She realized where she went wrong before and why she hit the rock bottom and now she's determined not to let it happen again. She had to really stop and take a look and then she had that moment of getting rid of all that exterior stuff – then she was ready to develop – ready to grow – and since then she's just been – she's like Wonder Woman. She's so inspirational. Being herself and now knowing who she is.
- John:** So with your friend with clues of what I've observed in my studies I think that we might be expanded by our epiphany moments.
- 2.1x** **Faith:** It's more of a spiritual approach but a very grounding one at the same time because it's something tangible – we can see it and actually notice a difference.
- It is actually something most people – everyone has actually seen or felt. So then – if you want to inspire your kids it's how you are – also how many moments of that you have had and whether or not you have allowed them to permeate who you are or not.
- John:** That might be the case.
- Faith:** I went to see this woman once for crystal healing stuff (laughs) I know – it was interesting – and she said that I had the type of energy that people become not addicted to but they are attracted to that – oh you've got so much energy there that I want to be in it – and then you get people coming to tell you their problems that you hardly even know – and you think of that idea of just being – and it's so easy. Because the moment you start thinking about it is the moment you stop doing it.
- 2.1xi** **John:** Yeah. So it can't be who you're pretending to be – it has to be who you really are.
- Faith:** And actually when I get stressed at work it's always when I let all the superficial things – and then you suggest that I step away from all of that and I just go hhhhh (breathes out). What's the bigger – what's the bigger picture – I think that sometimes just realizing that something is superficial means that it doesn't have its power.
- John:** Okay two more questions: What do you think about describing the last stage as evolution rather than linear progression? What's your view on that after our discussion?
- 2.1y** **Faith:** Visually I see something expanding from every area. I don't see it as a linear journey at all – I don't see it as you moving onto A then

moving onto B then moving onto C. In truth that's not how I feel it happens. I think working in a linear way is what you think you are doing but that isn't true growth – but it makes no sense as nothing really links in that way.

John: Okay.

2.1yi Faith: Like for me on our honeymoon – we went trekking – that was an epiphany moment in itself (laughs). I realized when we were there that there is so much more than I was thinking in my little Western bubble – what was I thinking! – This was amazing – I had an amazing experience – I learnt a lot about myself – and you know on this journey – I might do a little journey here and then do a show and then a little journey there – all these experiences don't necessarily have a linear connection, but they do have a type of holistic personal evolutionary way of working as a type of growth. If you are open to it each thing is making you grow – making you expand outwards which is why I had the idea of the dartboard – you grow outwards in every direction – which is why I had the idea of the dartboard and how it gets bigger with circle circle circle – that kind of thing.

John: But also – and I'm sure you have met them – I certainly do around and even when I was travelling in India and China – people who are so narrow that they don't seem to grow – even in those environments.

2.1yii Faith: Oh God yeah. They just want to tick every box and to say they've been there and show the photos – to say they've done it. When I was in Peru the people there were so – are so – their mindset is amazing – so refreshing – so totally – like it's all like nature – they've got this bigger picture – they just get it – and plastic – and they're totally on it – they've just got this higher – and it's all about the little things – and it's all about like wellbeing – and mental health and physical health and they're asking me about my job – and why? – why are you so stressed? – Why are you even doing that? – I mean like what are you doing? – I don't know what am I doing?(laughs). It's so refreshing – I mean people can do so many different things and like my sister she's thirty-six – and she's done different things but she's still in the same circle and it's never got any bigger.

John: Yeah.

Faith: She's just playing in that same – playground. She's not changed her environment – she's not lifted her environment. She's not changed the environment in her head and I think that's where you need to.

John: Very last question.

Faith: Yeah.

John: What now do you think after our discussion is the nature of inspiration?

What do you think being inspiring is?

2.1z Faith: Being you – and this sound really fuzzy – not fuzzy, fluffy – almost like being true to who you are as a person – committing to who you are as a person – and being real – and (pause) it's hard to put your finger on isn't it?

John: Exactly.

Faith: Yeah. I don't know.

John: What is the nature of inspiration? What do you understand by it?

2.1zii Faith: When I'm inspired by someone its – I don't know – it's – when they are doing their thing – it's watching them doing their thing and then going – so being inspiring is (points to diagram) – when people are in zone 4.

When they are in that moment.

John: Are you saying that that is the place where people are both inspiring and inspired?

Faith: Yeah. Yeah. As an actor as a dancer as a teacher – when you read something – if it's from 4 and you are able to receive it then you will be inspired. Stayed teachers as people will never be able to be inspired teachers because they are never lifted by the student's work. They never get to 4 – and because they never get to 4 the students will never be inspired – it's a vicious circle.

John: I think you've put your finger on it – that nature of inspiration might be that if I am a coach and my zone 4 continues to grow then I will be an inspiring individual.

Faith: I think with coaching – when I've been inspired in our sessions – you're just so like – you make me question Faith why? – Okay I don't want to do that anymore – why would anyone do that? When someone's inspired me it's changed the way I thought about something – I think what I'm saying is that what inspires me is when I can somehow see better than the superficial more clearly than before in whatever whole way that comes about.

John: Faith that's fantastic. Thank you very much.

2.2 Adela's Interview

Introductory chat then:

John: Okay – so what I've found is that experiential transmission is likely to exist within what Western society might see as a paradox.

2.2a **Adela:** Right (laughing).

John: So. The paradox is this: that essentially the environment in which it might exist is linear – but it also might inhabit a non-linear environment simultaneously.

Adela: Okay.

John: And that's the paradox. Now one of the transcripts I've been looking at is the Tao Te Ching. And the Tao Te Ching is full of paradox. However, this is because it is likely that the emotion it is trying to convey is subtle and multi-dimensional. We do not need to work out the paradox just accept it and the feeling that comes with it. For example to say something is subtle but concrete if we let go of the contradiction actually evokes a subtle type of emotion.

Adela: Okay. Yeah.

John: So I've been looking at ways people – you and the other participants interpret and maybe express this in relation to possible clues as to the personal experiences of experiential transmission. So that's kind of where I'm at.

Adela: Yeah. Okay.

John: Okay. So I have a series of diagrams to show you and I just want your reaction – what you understand by them – so respond in any way you want to. I'm looking for your opinion. Now social contagion. As a sociologist and a psychologist I'm sure you're aware of it – so I'll quickly narrow it down to the area that looks like it might support the study. If someone walks into a room who has genuine calmness – not demonstrating it but really having it – really being it – then it is likely that they might influence those less calm in the room depending on their level of beingness in their calmness and depending on how say tense the other people are and how attached to their tension they are. This in itself might be described as a type of transmission. So it is the quality of your beingness and the strength or certainty of this quality that denotes whether or not your beingness naturally permeates the environment and influences people. The same might be true of experiential transmission – that it's the quality of our beingness that denotes whether or not we can affect our environment in an inspirational way. So here's the first diagram. What do you think? What's your view of this? What comes to mind?

2.2b **Adela:** From a personal perspective -

John: Okay.

Adela: (Defensive tone) What we've talked about in our sessions. Where are you? and the realism of all that. And where would you like to be? But I suppose because of the environment of 4 you can't just easily go from 1 to 3 without being affected by that – the general environment. All of 4 is impacting you.

John: Are you saying that the general environment of 4 impacts the 1 and the 3?

Adela: Yeah. It's the idea that we can be negatively or positively impacted by our environment and this is a more subtle example of that.

2.2bi It's like all of these are moving all the time – they're transient – all will

affect all at some point or another – or all the time. I suppose from a personal perspective linear movement represents goal setting – in our coaching. All of 4 is impacting you. I teach reciprocal determinism where you are both determined by and become a determining factor in.

John: Okay.

2.2bii Adela: (raised and excited tone) So that's what I'm seeing – is the part of I will have an impact on 4 or 1 and 3 will have an impact on the environment – they are in it and they impact it.

John: So for you then – stop me if I'm wrong – I'm just looking for impressions – so for you then 1 3 and 4 all permeate each other.

Adela: Yes.

John: At the same time?

2.2c Adela: Yes. And that's how you get a sense of the three existing together. I suppose from my experiences of working with you and afterwards where it was just like where are you? Where have I started and where would I like to be? So it's like here's 1, I want to move to 3, and I've got to acknowledge all the things that are around me that represent 4 in order to get there truthfully. But sometimes it would happen that 3 would appear to me. So it happens the other way round where a goal would find me. I suppose there's a point where 4 becomes an affecter as opposed to permeating. This is the point where you acknowledge it as facts you have to deal with...

John: Yeah.

Adela: And that you have to acknowledge it as something that has permeated.

John: So for you what's the difference in feeling between something that has been an affecter and something that permeates?

Adela: For me I suppose it's my acceptance of it. So things that are happening to me are just things – they permeate the environment but don't necessarily affect me personally because I am focusing on something else. Those that affect me then become affecters. Remember when we were working together and I had put myself in a bubble to protect myself – and I found that wasn't a good idea for me because the separation was becoming more and more – I just had to learn to be in the environment with my own sense of momentum and forge a groove through towards where I wanted to go?

John: I remember.

2.2ci Adela: Well then, I was sort of adding an extra circle to the diagram around 1 and 3 –so I wasn't affecting it and it wasn't affecting me. The moment that changed everything changed. It was much more fun – it was sort of alive and different. You just start saying this is life and I accept it as well as acknowledge it. If you do that then it will permeate.

2.2cii

John: Interesting.

2.2ciii Adela: Sometimes that's not good or bad – it's neutral. It's a fact. (pause) So to summarise 4 negatively impacts 1 to 3 – negatively impacts the journey – they are impeding factors. (pause)

John: Okay I'm going to explain a little bit about the themes. They are very broad – they have to be because they need to incorporate –well I mean offer the opportunity to observe both Western and Eastern concepts and contexts side by side and holistically.

Adela: Right. So they appear on very different levels?

John: They do. So I was looking for generic themes concerning experiential transmission that appear in both. So here goes. Theme 1 is the experience of moving towards nothing. Theme 3 is the experience of moving from nothing to something. And Theme 4 is the experience of everything together.

Adela: Okay. Yeah.

John: So broad – So as you may see experiential transmission is broad so the two fit together quite well.

Adela: So it can't be compartmentalized?

John: Well it is a sense of beingness, so I don't think so: – although I am happy to think otherwise. You can only really describe what it is not – to try to describe what it is means

2.2d Adela: that you are not describing what it is – you are describing what it was and as it's transient you cannot ever describe it.

John: Yes. Now trying to fit the three themes together in some way can obviously be confusing so we are just exploring one way that they might so-exist or sit together. (diag 2). The first idea of how to solve the issue is more of a Western concept.

Adela: (looks at linear diag. and seems a little crestfallen in comparison to the first – like all of the participants so far!) So if you are or do 1 that will lead to 3 and that then will create 4. So in other words the experience of moving towards nothingness and from that point the experience of moving from something to nothing will equal 4 – the environment you want.

Adela: I see where the Western ideals are in that in the idea that as one door closes another door opens that's what happens.

John: Okay.

Adela: That's the kind of thing I'm describing.

John: That's an interesting analogy.

Adela: But I don't think that's necessarily what has to happen. Why do you have to have nothing to get something? That completely gets rid of the idea of building. You have to go down to nothing.

John: That's it. It's interesting. And it does – the evidence suggests that you do have to go to nothing. It's absolutely the opposite to the Western concept of building – but at the same time you do get stronger and more powerful and certainly according to the recordings you get happier.

Adela: I wouldn't consider that to have been my experience.

John: There is another diagram to make things clearer it looks at 1 minus 3 equals 4.

2.2di Adela: So there's a type of summing that happens there (pause). How can something experiential be truly mathematical? Or have I got the wrong end of the stick?

John: What do you mean by that?

2.2e Adela: Well. As part of where I've come from in coaching I've lost some stuff I've added some stuff that's mathematical – plus and minus – I've – but – I'm not so sure that that equals 4. I let go of the wall I was putting up – I let go of everything holding me back I thought I should – so I can see I did this, but I wouldn't say I got to nothing. I definitely added stuff such as a new energy when I started something new. And having a different perspective on things.

John: What is interesting to me at this point is the Western idea of building.

Adela: Right.

John: And from that perspective I think you are right. In order to achieve something we need to increase what we are doing – to build upon it. We'll come back to that in a moment. Now diagram 3, What do you think?

2.2ei Adela: It's not the end goal – it's not the equals. It permeates but that diagram suggests that it's not always there. So there's 1 plus 3 merging so they become 4. It looks more organic, but it doesn't sit particularly well with me.

John: Why's that?

Adela: This (diag 2) is more what I think than that (diag 3). With this I'd still want to put 4 around the outside. I get the idea of the Venn diagram – that some people's experience is going to be entirely losing unburdening getting rid of – for some people it's going to be entirely building and there are going to be people where they need to do a bit of both. So I like the overlap of 1 and 3. So these people don't get 4.

John: To me – they kind of just merge – it wasn't meant to be a Venn diagram, so I think I need to add some arrows that indicate that.

Adela: Yeah.

(pause)

John: Okay. Next one (shows diag 4).

Adela: (laughs. Again this is the same uplifted energetic reaction from all interviewees about this diagram – they like it.)

John: This is 4. Even though it is not labelled as such because 4 is so broad it cannot be labelled it is I suppose a representation of 4.

Adela: Yeah.

John: How do you think?

2.2eii Adela: Yeah. And have you got the idea there that that's like lots of different people?

John: What does it mean to you?

2.2eiii Adela: Cos I suppose that's just my attitude to it. It's like my classroom – all of the students are 1 and 3 and I'm looking at it – I guess that all of the diagrams would be constantly ebbing and flowing.

John: Okay.

2.2f Adela: Then – I think that the problem I have with all of the diagrams is that they should be fluid – we have to see it in movement – because for me for all of these – it is almost as if they have to be animations.

2.2fi Because this person might not have fully merged and this one might be on the cusp of merging and this person might find it difficult to merge. This person might be separating and this person might be on their way. So I kind of need to see movement.

2.2fii John: Okay.

Adela: Or I impose movement onto them. Also I am affected by the experience of my students as much as I affect them.

John: so if we're talking about social contagion – well my interpretation of it – it's who has the strongest...

Adela: You hope it's the teacher. But it doesn't necessarily...

John: No. You're right.

Adela: And you are massively outnumbered.

John: So – but lots of teachers learn to be relaxed and still in control of the class – like you for example.

Adela: Yeah. Yeah.

John: Okay. Moving on?

Adela: Yeah. (laughs) This is going to get slowly more obscure.

John: Okay. Now. I'm going to start to talk about the themes now and how they're represented in the recordings. And how they are represented in the Tao Te Ching. So within the Tao Te Ching everything to do with experiential transmission is essentially linked to types of processes of initially undoing.

Adela: Okay.

John: And the reason that is the case might be because once we undo we reveal the true thing that's already there. Without first undoing the rubbish – call it the superficial – So if I am a coach and I try to build on my technique – it's the opposite to that – so it's like okay the first thing I need to do it to let go of all the superficial rubbish. And once I've done that all the 'shoulds' and 'doesn't matters' begin to evaporate – and actually it's not really an action it's more a feeling – an experience – It's not about physically going along and removing the superficial – it's more like not being superficial in the first place.

2.2g

Adela: So it's just like a feeling of release?

John: Yes. To remove every bit of superficiality will be too much. And too damn boring. So it's a release – and of course in Taoism 'nothingness' is of course the polar opposite to how it is described in the West. Nothingness equates to stillness and calmness – even wholeness. It equates to the seed being now ready to grow healthily in healthy soil and in sunlight.

Adela: Yes.

John: So in other words we have a system that promotes getting rid of the rubbish getting rid of the superficial which is leaving us with the freedom to then actually grow properly. So it's very different – so experiencing moving towards nothing involves a type of process of undoing.

Adela: Right.

John: So undoing is what we've just implied. It's the conscious linear process of getting rid of the superficial stuff so that we can see more clearly. And listening to our session we did that a lot. Not that I knew that's what we were doing.

Adela: Right. Yeah.

John: But because in the coaching my attitude was always to look for the truth of the thing I wouldn't let people get away with being superficial – it was like a radar or something. I developed a real sense to it.

Adela: So this means that you can't grow – can't genuinely grow until you lose the excess negativity.

John: Yes. It might do.

Adela: Yeah. And I suppose like the first diagram where I was saying that I don't like the idea of going down to nothing – come to think of it I do think a lot of our first sessions were about acknowledging my approach and well (laughs) undoing it.

John: A thought that has sprung to my mind is that experiential transmission involves taking that a lot further.

Adela: Hmm. Yeah. So this then is your new dimension to coaching?

John: (laughs).

2.2h

Adela: It would mean that if anyone wanted to take coaching – be truly inspirational – according to this – there first has to be the sense of

2.2hi

releasing all the stuff on top. The stuff that is stopping you in the first place. I can also see it in the students – in things like psychotherapy – in parenting – like in all of it if that is there first – until you – gone – the excuses the blame – if I think about the

students I've worked with – the one's that started off as D's and got A stars in the end – the starting point with all of those students was to let go of their impressions of themselves – you are not a D grade student – that does not define who you are. So getting rid of superficial ideas.

John: Lao Tzu explains this type of negativity as acquired learning

Adela: That's perfect – in fact acquired learning is definitely negative – I can see that now – It's stripping away their bad habits – what have you been doing? Well that's no good if you want to achieve a high grade. It's all about stripping it back. And then they have the openness the willingness to listen to things that might help them better. And if I think about the ones that I've tried to work with who are the same sorts of students where it didn't work it was because they didn't listen to the first bit about the undoing.

John: Okay. Moving on?

Adela: Yeah.

John: I did discover a type of pattern in my research. I'm just going to say it because it was definitely in your recordings – the second subordinate theme. So you have undoing as the first – the second – at this point you also have unveiling. Undoing is like a linear structure but unveiling I've found – happens in an instant – it happens in such an instant that no one even notices or can remember it happening in the moment that it happens.

Adela: (laughs) Yeah.

John: Okay. So you can work towards that moment. But in the recordings, there are various times – sometimes a lot in a session – of people realizing that they have moved on – suddenly realizing – or even coming into the session after that moment has happened in the week with an entirely different energy and holistic – well approach. They only realize it when they begin to look back on how they were and their comparative lift that they are in now.

2.2hii

Adela: Yeah. So you don't mean a gradual thing – you mean the actual experience of unveiling is like bang. You don't remember the moment of the explosion only after the explosion. And this is what this theme is about. So (looking at diagram) you're here (points to Theme 1) there is an unveiling and suddenly you are there (points to Theme 3) only knowing that you must have got there somehow. And from this position you understand everything better – everything – it's like holistic growth. Is that what you meant?

2.2j

John: That's what it seems.

Adela: So it sounds as if you are saying you're lifted.

John: It's difficult to describe
(pause)

Adela: Now there is a feeling directly after it – something holistic. It seems like what you're describing is wellbeing.

John: that might be it – pretty much it.

Adela: It seems like what you're describing – it's a type of in the moment holistic multidimensional lift that can last quite a long time – and this is an opportunity on which to build.

John: (joking) What happened to Adela the psychologist?

Adela: (laughing) No idea. No idea. You always used to say only make important decisions from a place of balance as the decision will more than likely reflect this – this seems like an advanced version of that.

John: It may well be. Everybody in the recordings – including the one's I didn't use – started talking more freely – with more natural energy – it was like completely lifted and so there was no – consciousness – of falseness – it just wasn't in that ballpark. People were just being.

Adela: No observational self

John: Most probably not. Laughing – everything was more released, and it actually caused – and this might be seen as strange – or maybe magical depending on your viewpoint – something out of the ordinary to happen – something really positive almost always to do with the goal we were working on. For you it happened a great deal. For example for someone else they wanted to move jobs but didn't know to where. There was a moment such as this in a session and that night she got a phone call out of the blue offering her a job in an entirely different environment. She's there now and loving it.

Adela: It was almost always things I wanted at work – things would just happen.

John: The interesting thing was that for those clients who weren't as engaged in the coaching – who didn't have those moments of realization – these events never seemed to happen.

Adela: Actually I've got an example at the moment.

John: Go on.

2.2k

Adela: Erm because of this whole pregnancy thing and being in the first trimester I've felt – well – awful – I've not been out not seen a lot of my friends – I was at school but just getting on with it – whatever – and I don't know if I told you but I'm in a LARP – a live action role play system whatever – I'm one of the organizers for it – and we were having a planning thing for that. And I have been feeling so exhausted before that. And I suddenly realized that during the meeting – this feels so good – oh this is what I like doing – I remember now – it was that sense of I found me – and it is – it's a renewed energy. It was all linked to coming out of the first trimester, but I don't remember the moment of it happening. Just afterwards.

John: That's so interesting – like this example after the moment of reveal people are different.

Adela: This is important I think – I've not read about this before – it's exciting. I think for me in our session that level of raised energy became the expectation – I can't remember ever not feeling it

John: It's also about the classroom – certainly me – I'd no idea that when I saw that – how important it was. I think now I'd treat those moments very differently. Not sure how – but differently – more importantly.

Adela: Yeah. And it's the importance beyond the now. Finding out who they are as people – who we are as people. So essentially this comes about not by building but by unveiling and undoing.

John: There is some evidence to suggest that it might work that way. Yes.

Adela: I think that the problem is that there is no holding on to a process to unveiling – if you try to make it a process then it cannot happen – what

will happen will be the artificial version of it. And when this happens you are actually increasing superficiality and acquired learning rather than decreasing it.

John: That is such an interesting point – really.

Adela: Also it is nothingness because there is not an actual millisecond where it happens – we are only aware of it afterwards – so literally it comes from nothing.

John: I think it might.

Adela: It seems like it is an indication of how you are genuinely being. If you see this in front of you then you are being a certain way. But the moment you try to be that way – artificially – rather than genuinely be that way is the moment the whole situation becomes artificial. I think with what you are saying there will be lots of people trying to do it and thinking they are doing it when what they are actually doing is encouraging superficiality. I think they will try to manufacture moments of unveiling in order to validate themselves.

John: I think that is extremely likely to happen. But I also think there will be some such as yourself who play it for real – and you will begin to make a genuine impact. To backtrack a bit. Am I right in thinking that what you were saying before is that what I see is an indication of how I am genuinely being?

Adela: Yes.

John: That's so interesting. So I couldn't suddenly change my way of being if that wasn't working because that would be artificial. I have to go away and work on my undoing and then just notice the results in front of me. Wow.

Adela: Yeah. You can't get out of it – it has to be real.

John: I would describe this as your sense of beingness.

Adela: This also increases your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of everyone around you so it's not exactly a chore to do.

John: Would you say it works on a different dimension to what we are used to.

2.2m Adela: I'd say yes. As teachers and coaches we are not used to being so immediate and so genuine. I think that certain teacher training programs hold up a version of the perfect teacher and say that's what you need to be like – and then young or new teachers spend their entire careers trying to be like that. Trying to emulate.

John: So when we are moving towards nothingness – it's just that – it's an undoing of the superficial – of acquired learning

Adela: There are moments in that of unveiling that mean that we sit in the experiential holistic seat of 4 – therefore you know it must be there already – for all of us – because everybody jumps there. They don't jump anywhere else.

John: Yes. It's nothing you are putting on – nothing you are forcing – it's just something that happens after that moment. So with your original example you did not pinpoint the moment it happened – you just knew you felt differently.

Adela: Yeah. So the unveiling causes a type of revelation. So if as a teacher you want to inspire people via experiential transmission – those moments are an indication that your beingness is on the right track.

John: I would have thought so.

Adela: that's because they take us out of the linear environment straight

into the holistic one. There's not gap.

John: Yes. (diagram 6), we have the idea of everything permeating everything else. Like what you described at the start of the session as your reaction to diagram 1.

Adela: Yes.

John: (7 and 8 were skipped over. Back to Diag 1 then on to final diagram) – I'm really interested in what you think.

2.2mi Adela: Yeah. Well after our discussion I understand it hugely more. I think I would add a word in I suppose.

John: What would you say?

Adela: Possibilities.

John: Why's that?

2.2n Adela: Because if you take this bit here – you are not narrow minded – you are more focused on this one thing. Once the revelation happen you realize oh I didn't know those other things existed – you've expanded.

2.2ni The possibilities arise.

John: Oh I see. So more possibilities are introduced.

Adela: That's what the revelation would be to me. Every time those moment happen there is more and more possibility. It's like a type of holistic light bulb moment that opens the door to increased possibility – on every level – broader than you thought before.

John: Yes. I just had an idea as you were talking and that was perhaps the only reason that people stop expanding is that they stop having their light bulb moments. For some reason the process switches off – they then stop and stand. From here it's just about –

Adela: I think that's about this is good enough – I've done it now. So they start doing this (shows moving around within the environment rather than expanding it.

John: Yeah. Like that's enough. I think that to some people this happens very early, and they close off to the possibility of that type of growth happening.

Adela: Yeah. So they end up wandering around this area here.

John: Yes.

Adela: And they never get out of it. And because of that it might even cause shrinkage.

John: Just getting smaller and small and smaller and smaller.

2.2p Adela: With some of the students I work with their horizons aren't getting any bigger. They set a goal and achieve it within a small horizon and that's that. There's no sense of genuine expansion.

John: Would it be fair to say that they stop evolving?

Adela: Definitely. But more than that. If they don't have their light bulb moments, then there is automatically a shrinkage – it's just human nature – the way things work.

John: So it doesn't just stay as it is – it actually starts to shrink again, and everything starts to collapse in.

Adela: it is human nature – you can go even broader than that and starting adding it to things such as friendships. Collapsing and then the excitement of new connections.

John: Yeah. This is so interesting.

Adela: Because that's I think how I've experienced it most obviously.
(pause)

Adela: I think that if we take like the YOUSITT stuff

John: Yeah.

Adela: And the idea of natural momentum towards the goal – this fits in really well as a way of generating sorry inspiring momentum in the client – so who you are as a coach – your beingness – inspire these moments that generate a natural and holistic momentum in the client.

John: Yes. Yes. Yes.

2.2pi Adela: So traditional coaching might be like chasing specific goals around the same space – but YOUSITT coaching is all about evolving the space and growing the space – and achieving our goals as you go.

John: Wow.

Adela: So your goals are about expansion because of the use of the light bulb moment.

John: And if this sort of expansion is about increased well being

Adela: Then this becomes an integral part of the process.

John: It can't not happen.

2.2pii Adela: Yeah. Expanded horizons.

John: What do you think about the theme of evolution in relation to all of this?

2.2q Adela: I suppose after talking to you today – the stuff that's within you? Like – a bit like the genuine and the fakeness – you could say 'I want to do this' and if that is a goal you don't really want – you just know you should want or is the next logical progression for you or for whatever it is you've been told is right – then healthy evolution doesn't really happen – it's distorted – like you might get the thing you want but you don't evolve – you don't get those holistic moments where you become a fuller or better person. Actually if you hoop jump I think you get I am now a better person rather than I am now a genuinely fuller person.

I think it's what you always said in the coaching – that there's a big difference between thinking you want something and genuinely wanting something – I think that explains it well. I think there might be other subtle levels to it to.

John: Well thank you. This has been really helpful.

2.3 Alice's Interview

2.3a

John: Ok. So let's get started.

Alice: I'm really interested – so I have a vested interest in that sense.

John: You might be able to make a guess at this but have you any idea what social contagion might be?

Alice: I can make a guess.

John: What might that be?

Alice: People – how they mirror behaviours, or you can have those hysterical moments in society that can be contagious. That's what I would say.

John: Yeah. So basically it works in lots of different ways but there are really two types – behavioural and there's emotional. Also the person most personifying their behaviour might well influence the others to be the same. For example if I am calm and with a couple of stressed people if my calmness is secure in myself I may influence them to be calmer. However, if I'm not that confident in my calmness they might well influence me to become more stressed – especially if I am with them for any length of time. A really good example is if I'm their boss or something. Now social contagion is really about how you act and the emotions you show. What I was looking at went a bit more – thorough than that. I looked at experiential transmission which really is who you are being and how that affects your environment – the people around you. It is who you are as a person because you can't pretend to be something on a fundamental level. The fundamental level would reflect that. So you might seem calm, but the reality is you are pretending to be calm and so the truth isn't calmness the truth is someone pretending to be calm.

2.3b

Alice: So you put the work in to becoming it otherwise you end up the contradiction – personifying the contradiction of what you say you want to be.

John: Yes. So I see this all the time as a coach. I was coaching someone who was a wellbeing coach in a large organization. They were really busy and really really tense – and from this stance they were coaching relaxation techniques. All they were saying to me is 'Oh John. I'm just so busy' looking for me to agree with them and sympathise. But instead I'm thinking – and saying to them – don't you think there's a contradiction there? But they just didn't get it at all. They thought it was all about how you acted in the session as a coach – the techniques you used and what you said – rather than who you really were.

Alice: So they weren't accepting the truth?

John: Yes and no. 'True' is a kind of compartment. I'd prefer to say that they weren't 'being' what they were trying to inspire in their clients. The beingness is about how you are. So what I was looking at in coaching was a movement on from that.

Alice: This is interesting.

John: So with my studies I was looking at a step on from that. That if experiential transmission was this type of person to person communication what would that be?

Alice: I see. So when someone comes in as a person you learn holistically. You change.

John: Yes. And what I was looking at was all about that. That in the Tao Te Ching the sage is reported to be able to inspire without doing

anything.

Alice: Just by their way of being?

John: That is certainly the implication. So how does that translate to the lived experience from the point of view of the client and the coach.

2.3c

Alice: so the question is how does your beingness affect how you are as a coach?

John: Yes. And how can you possibly explore this and enter this whole experiential realm? And that is what the thesis is about. What is your interpretation of this so far? What do you think? What is your reaction so far?

Alice: I – what do I think so far? I can feel that. I can understand that. I – we live in such a culture that everything is presented to us and everything is about common viewpoints and common thoughts. So it's interesting you are doing this at this time where there is so much that is being about confrontation – so much is about taking sides in education – in this country – and elsewhere. It's so interesting that you're looking at actually living a type of truth. I don't be surface truth – I mean that utter sense of being. It's that utter coming from a place where you are centred – and settled. And seeing how that then affects others. Or even what you draw to yourself. I'm intrigued to know how – how – my worry is for humanity. How many people truly want to get to the nitty-gritty of what you are saying...

John: Yeah.

2.3ci

Alice: (realization) ... and therefore instead they put on persona because they think it's how they should currently be acting. And that they give in to all those pulls and pushes in life that take over the fundamental of – of – of why you are doing something. And also making sure those people who are coaching have that. And how do you judge that?

John: From my perspective the thing is that you don't judge it – you can't. Because if you do it instantly makes it something it isn't. I mean what would you judge it against? Instead what you do do is – just offer it for those who want to take it. There was an interesting quote on the internet lately: 'The electric light did not come from the gradual development of the candle.'

2.3d

Alice: Yes (laughs).

John: So to answer what you said before. The way you do it is completely different. You say if this genuinely interests you or resonates with you this is one thing you might want to get involved in to inspire you. Off you go. There's no pressure. If you want to get involved you do. And maybe those people who have been looking for something like this will find ideas here that might help. No pressure on anyone.

Alice: Yes.

John: They will find it and perhaps begin to incorporate some ideas into their work and therefore it might begin to grow organically and naturally through genuine interest.

2.3di

Alice: I completely understand that because it won't resonate with those who aren't interested. And therefore it proves itself – it's entirely organic and natural – it makes sense. Really interesting. I feel I want that for myself. I feel I've explored a situation in school when I was there that was horrendous. Looking back now it was horrendous. What a difference a year makes. Looking back now I was almost (laughs) self-harming – not that but you know what I mean. Now I'm enjoying my experiences.

New job – new perspective – entirely different.

John: That's interesting because a major theme with my research is undoing and it feels to me that you've undone something to reveal the happiness underneath. What do you think?

Alice: Spot on. That's interesting. The thing we want is always there – we just have to undo the crap.

John: Interestingly too Lao Tzu in the Tao Te Ching in this instance doesn't describe what perfection is – he describes the process in terms of what it is not – getting rid of the superficial.

Alice: So does this mean that when the genuine is revealed underneath it can be fully experienced because it hasn't been compartmentalized?

John: I think that is a very concise way of observing it.

2.3e

Alice: So if we say then that it is a lack of superficiality then the result is different for everyone. Therefore we become our multidimensional selves. I also think that for me that wouldn't be fixed either because you move through that as you develop and change. I'm 55 this year and there are certain conventions that are expected of you. I should be moving to a retirement home apparently. I've had loads of stuff through. Instead I'm exploring things and enjoying that. Lots has happened this year but I'm still feeling that youthfulness in it. I feel absolutely younger.

John: Honestly you look much younger than when you were teaching.

2.3ei

Alice: Well I feel absolutely younger and I feel my attitude has changes since leaving school. I feel I chose school in a weird kind of way to truly contrast. Now I know I have got rid of the thing I didn't want. I was so sick of the artificiality.

John: Well in my research two themes have emerged about 'getting rid of superficiality' and the importance of it. One of them is a sense of undoing. In other words ways of undoing the superficiality and being able to let that go. Interestingly you said, what you just described, is about the second theme which is unveiling. During your session you had a moment that you described as things having evaporated into air. In your actual session. This is the sense of unveiling – and we don't seem to know the unveiling moment when it happens we just know how we feel after it's happened and from this viewpoint we can see things – our past and our future much more clearly – similar to what we have just been discussing about how you feel now about how things were at school. From my perspective you are much clearer now than you were at the time.

Alice: After the unveiling there's a different energy.

John: I think it broadens you – you can see things from a different angle. Not just see things feel things from this perspective.

2.3f

Alice: I'm more playful than I've ever been. I'm good at my job. If it works out it works out. I'll always have that risk adverse nature – I know it – that sense of fear – but now I'm in a different place.

John: So listening to your tapes there was certainly a journey of undoing – then it was about figuring out what you really want – which you couldn't identify precisely but you knew the feeling you wanted.

Alice: Which is what I now have.

John: Yes. And then there's a kind of moment. something arrives – an opportunity – a phone call entirely out of the blue to potentially offer you the thing that satisfies that need – what you really want. There was like a moment when you decided that things were going to change and after that there was a type of energetic shift – the sessions felt different and

sound different – then we had the phone call and the opportunity.

Alice: Do you think that one caused the other – the new energy made the phone call happen?

John: I don't know the answer to that. Originally, I listened to ten people's recordings before narrowing it down. Three hundred all together. And every single time that your phone call type of coincidence happened this seemed to be the case. That some kind of unveiling happened – it changed the energy in the room – it was more fluid and free – my observation was that something like that happened in line with a goal that the client wanted.

Alice: Like a door opening.

John: Yes. It got to the stage where one person described their perfect job, in their perfect location – laughed about how it couldn't exist – then the next day opened their local paper only to find it advertised.

2.3g

Alice: And I think actually – what I have found so useful about the sessions – I've always thought in a more spiritual – esoteric way – I feel I know – but I don't know – like I'm just under the surface. And there was no one else I could explore it with. I seek the answers. It can be quite lonely. I have a wonderful friend and we are very similar – but when I talk about things like that it's more like 'I'm just not sure about where you're coming from Alice.' So I can be lonely at times with it.

John: I know what you mean.

2.3gi

Alice: I think that our coaching uplifted me. I don't know how to say it in my clunky language – because what it did was something I was searching for. I knew I wanted some kind of change, but I didn't know how to actually make that happen. So my risk adverse nature and the feeling of being spiritually alone – and what I feel now afterwards is a calmness and a – I can very quickly get excited. And I know when this isn't happening because everything feels tight. We worked a lot on the physical side of releasing tension as a type of key and now I get it – I know that it is – it's a great indicator. So to release the tension is to put me back on track. So I would like to take this and develop it. I still feel very new to it.

John: Welcome to the club.

Alice: The Tao Te Ching says that not knowing on the surface is the sign of a sage – it's what's happening at the root that counts.

John: It seems that you are instinctively being careful – taking your time.

2.3gii

Alice: I need it to be real for me. It's not a confidence issue in your terms it's a beingness issue.

John: Okay – research. I'm going to show you some diagrams one at a time and I'd like to know what you think. Okay. The concept is to find common themes – themes that are common to the Tao Te Ching and the recordings.

Alice: Right.

John: I had to decide on themes that offered opportunity to both Western and Eastern approaches therefore they ended up very broad. So the themes I chose at the end of the day were 'from something to nothing', 'from nothing to something' and the third theme is 'everything together'. This is what it looks like diagrammatically (shows diag 1). Now from a Western perspective there's a paradox there. How can linear themes – from something to nothing and from nothing to something – be described in a non-linear context – everything together. What do you

think?

Alice: This is so interesting. There's hope.

John: So any ideas – or do you just let it be you know?

2.3h Alice: I think – if I were with another head on – what you would do from this stage is to open up the diagram and try to explain it in a different way. But that wouldn't be the truth of it would it. You would undo the two ends of that circle and make it a linear design and kind of ignore the fact

2.3h that in doing so you are actually destroying the essence the quality of the thing you are actually looking for. So in actuality how do you solve the conundrum? – you overlay it somehow – that's too normal and it's not worked before – not really. In my personal life with my career – and my partner has had exactly the same sort of thing happen we have both had a kind of undoing process – and now we are really stimulated in our careers. And if you wanted to quantify that feeling of breadth of centredness or happiness that's (pointing to diag 1) what it would feel like. The feeling is the big circle – or everything together. It's were we are at the moment. I can see in my partner a desire to go out every day. Career wise this (points to the broader circle) has created a new reality for us. If that makes sense?

i2.3hii John: Can you phrase it in a different way?

Alice: For me – I'm so clunky in how I'm saying it.

John: I don't think you are – I think it's almost impossible to put into words – we just have to do our best.

Alice: What – for me this does. It allows you to explore everything that Western linear culture doesn't allow and that in itself is liberating. The inner bit represents the language of what is seen as progress in our society – a judgement on you at every level –

John: Okay.

Alice: So that everything that you do is judged – there's pay packets – everything is about that progression – that trajectory about feeling successful being getting promoted regularly – earning more money and getting the better car – I used to have a basic car but do I now have the top spec – I can't possibly move to something that takes me into a more diverse place – I can't think again – for me the broader circle – the outer circle – represents what it could be – broader and more holistic it allows us to think again.

John: Go on.

2.3j Alice: The broader circle is about thinking outside the box. Because for me I feel that I left something that I was emotionally invested in, intellectually invested in, and also monetarily – my reward was good in that job – and extracted myself – bearing in mind my risk-adverse nature – and challenged myself to do something completely different. Still using my skills – I knew I could use my skills – so for me that (pointing to bigger circle) is that movement – that movement having happened. So the three (bigger circle) represents where I am now – the feeling of where I am now. And I know that I will never put myself in that position again – never do it again – it's time to move on.

John: Anything else?

Alice: It was as if – if I could see myself – was possessing myself – exploring something – knowing really I would be going in the end. Like I'm testing this – it's as if – and actually – it was like part of me was separated.

John: Do you think you saw that clearly then or is it clearer now?

Alice: I was aware of it then but it's much clearer now with perspective. Everything is clearer with perspective.

John: Okay.

Alice: But isn't that the coach's perspective?

John: What do you mean?

Alice: Well the overview.

John: I've not thought of it like that – but I will do now! But that does make sense. Your situation at school was so obvious to me and I could see your struggle. However, I could also see a distinct movement heading you out of the door of the school. (laughs)

2.3k Alice: (laughs) Maybe I made it more dramatic than it needed to be. For me I feel I have a long way to go.

John: I think we all have a long way to go – providing I am on the learning curve of this then that's all I can ask of myself.
(pause)

Alice: For me you see I think your timing is perfect with this. We're in a real physicality of wanting shallow answers – black and white – and I think there are people – and I think there's more than just a few – teachers, coaches, who are wanting something that is not met by that very basic level of identification.

John: Lao Tzu takes the analogy of the tree. He says that if you focus on the root then the tree grows in a healthy way. If the focus is on the branches and leaves then we lose sight of what is important to natural growth.

2.3ki Alice: Of course. At the moment in education we are focusing so much on the leaves of the tree – how the tree looks – completely – we are – perception – we are so perception driven – everything is – Twitter – Facebook – well the whole of education is – it's lost its essence.
(looks at diag. 2)

John: 1 leading to 3 makes 4 happen.

Alice: For me – I still like this (diag. 1).

John: What about this

Alice: What's that?

John: 1 minus 3 equals 4.

2.3kii Alice: (claps and laughs) Yes. Yes. Yes. It's lovely to think that we can take something off of ourselves and be free – freer. It's like – well – what I said previously what is happening to me now – since our coaching – personally at the moment.

John: so then I moved on to this. 1 merging with 3 creates 4.

Alice: Okay (pause) Yes. But I'm now unsure. I'm – It's interesting. But it still doesn't answer the paradox of all three together. I don't think it does. Not for me.

John: I agree – there is still a linear process because 1 has to merge with 3 to create 4. What do you think?

Alice: I still like the first one and I'll tell you why.

John: Go on.

2.3m Alice: Because I think actually if – if – if someone understands the transient and paradoxical nature of their feeling and emotions and is okay with all of this counter-existing and say something happens – a life shock – that they have to deal with – the situation – and – it's a situation that hurts that they have to deal with and work around – life – we see

things as a linear progression – we're young we're a teenager we're an adult. It's this – and this is what I felt coming in and coming out and coming in and coming out from the middle section to the outer section that it's an exploration all the time. And sometimes I'd very much be in this place (points to outer circle of diag 1) and then I'd have to jump to here (points to inner linear situation). I jumped into this. And this is why sometimes I felt I know what I'm doing here but I'm still doing it anyway. Maybe I don't want to do it, but I'm drawn to to do this bit.

(pause)

John: Okay. Moving on. (diag 4) This is 4 although there's only 1 and 3 written down.

Alice: (laughs) Yes. Yes. I think this is the experience that most people would have.

John: Okay. Why's that?

2.3mi Alice: That you are going – because life is that journey of moments where you re-visit so you're – you're – because life is layered there are different aspects to each of us – different levels to each of us – there are different expectations for each of us – there are dimensions we don't yet understand. Nevertheless these might still be affected – how I have to behave at work or how I have to be perceived by clients if different from the parenting of my child. So actually these are different parts of that where – I see myself as that person trying to get above – the journey – what a cliché – it describes the journey – the constant visiting of 1 and 3.

2.3mii And we can see this from the perspective of 4. Funnily enough with all of that that happened last year that was a sense of – broadness – that meant I had an idea of what I was doing. That improved everything.

John: Okay here's a question – if you had known to emotionally engage in the perspective of 4 and allow that to educate the situation would that have made a difference do you think?

2.3n Alice: (pause) It would have absolutely made a difference. I could see and watch from that perspective and it helped but it didn't really improve it – it helps to see things objectively but if I'd allowed it to educate me emotionally rather than sort of intellectually and knew how to do it I think it would have made a massive difference.

John: Interesting.

Alice: so broadness instead of just being an insight actually can help you emotionally resolve the situation – that is really amazing. I was aware of the machinations I was putting myself through, but this would be able to emotionally educate myself rather than using it as a type of distancing effect to be able to better understand my situation before going back in. I think I was using it as a type of rest bite before going back into battle. But to use it to emotionally educate myself and to grow as a person means that it happens all the time – so while 1 and 3 are happening 4 is emotionally growing – all the time.

(pause)

John: Say whatever comes to mind.

A; Being the whole but being multifaceted at the same time. It's really really interesting – I feel slightly emotional about it actually

John: In what way?

2.3p Alice: I think because it almost describes being aware of – aware of – and I thought – it describes what I'm feeling quite a lot of the time. It's like being aware of yourself – like being inside of yourself and outside of

yourself at the same time. It's like have something that's not fully opaque – a net curtain – at the same time I am happy in where I am.

John: (diag 5) This describes the moment of the unveiling. Someone described it as walking through a doorway – you described it as a sudden evaporation into air. With the doorway you walk through it and only then can you see that you're in a different room and see more clearly the room you were in too. Very much like your situation previously to now.

Alice: Yes. Yes.

John: So this happens (shows rest of diagrams in sequence) –and because this happens the whole of us is broadened. And because this has happened to the whole of us

2.3pi **Alice:** It's like breathing.

John: All we've done is to take a step back and allowed ourselves to sit with this emotion. We've gone 'I see this event happening and from this position of my new perspective I have the opportunity to feel differently. Therefore the movement and me can co-exist.

Alice: I can see that – yes – absolutely. So every time we are doing it from a broader and broader perspective if we allow it to emotionally educate us.

John: Yes. Then we do it all again – continuously. Okay?

2.3pii **Alice:** Yes. Also our ability to see that and to use these experiences to be around them expands.

John: Hmm (meaning yes) Okay – final subject. In the recordings of the coaching I have found some examples that I suppose I might call magical and I was wondering what you might think.

Alice: Okay.

John: I – sort of noticed two types – the type that might reflect stage magic – in other words it's the skill of the magician who makes something seem to appear out of thin air but there's also the type that we might not yet understand how it works.

Alice: Very interesting.

John: Okay – well I noticed that in all of the recordings – not just the one's of the four participants here – that when the coachees are in a certain energetic state – I suppose I might describe it as free flowing and, in the moment, – something seems to appear for them that seems to be out of the blue. These seem to be patterns – so I'm throwing this at you – what do you think? I mean for you – you got that phone call out of the blue offering you the potential of the type of job you were absolutely looking for – that would give you the feeling at work that you were looking for.

2.3q **Alice:** Yes. Yes. In my own experience when I have been at my most – I

2.3qi would describe it as being centred – I'm infinitely happier – because that's exactly what I mean emotionally and holistically – where I feel that flow – I've always been my most successful. When I was in sales I almost invariably got the sale I was after. And things seemed to progress far more easily. And it was only when I would physically resist or when I felt I was not in that – where I would seem to encounter more resistance.

2.3qii The way that I would either throw myself into water – here's a metaphor – arms flailing, or I would dive in stream line – allow myself to be as streamlined as possible. And when I feel the most contented I feel the most creative. Whether that's me making something or the universe

responding to that. It's just like the universe shifts in your favour.

John: It got to the stage where someone talked to me about a perfect job they wanted and where they wanted it – that was really impossible – and the actual job ad appeared in their local paper the next day.

Alice: I can absolutely – I agree – I agree

John: And yet people who struggle – people who insist on using coaching as a type of technical advice place – of what to do – and don't go any deeper – or they want to use the sessions as type of psychotherapeutic thing – always going back to the past – where they want to explore the feelings of the past – don't ever seem to have this sort of thing happen to them. Well not according to my recordings.

2.3qiii Alice: I think this happens a lot. It happens right in front of our noses. We just don't see it that way – as being that important – it's just a way of life. Teachers put on acts all the time – it is what we're taught to do. I think – we – they see it as black and white – you put up a front or you lose control of your class. But that's not it. What you are saying is that we get good at our technique – I think this is it – so it becomes part of who we are when we teach – we don't hide behind the technique – more we merge with it (pause). How interesting that you – because what you're showing me is that what we feel in the moment creates a type of serendipity. It exists. It's existed for me and for all those people.

John: What do you think that implies?

2.3qiv Alice: What's implied? – implied by this – is that – is that it is who we are that fundamentally and holistically inspires others as opposed to the focus being on what we do. Naturally – I would say – say the two are linked – intrinsically linked but what I think – am suggesting – I think – what could be suggested is that as teachers, coaches and therapists we might consider focusing on our core – our 'beingness' – our core – the quality – first and from here what we say and do will be inevitably connected to this balanced and natural state.

John: It's an interesting aspect to the phenomena surrounding experiential transmission. There is a sort of essence of something sort of magical about it – only magical I think because we don't understand the process. With stage magicians it's not 'oh that's magic' it's 'how did they do that?' and that's more the angle. I have the same sort of intrigue.

2.3r Alice: People hold onto the physical so much – that's why it can sometimes be difficult to talk about. Coaching can be all about boxes and what we are describing here isn't that.

John: It certainly isn't... well thanks very much.

2.3ri Alice: (pause) (laughs) If this is where we are starting imagine where we are going.

John: I might just have to quote that line (laughs). Thanks. Any

Alice: Honestly – it's a pleasure – thank you John.

2.4. Hilda's Interview

2.4a **John:** Ok – so I'm going to start from the very beginning.

Hilda: Right.

John: I've been studying experiential transmission

Hilda: (laughs)

John: (laughing) All will become clearer as we go along – so erm experiential transmission is a type of erm Eastern method of teaching if you like and I was looking at it from the lived Taoist viewpoint and the lived experience of yourself and the other participants through the coaching recordings... In this way of teaching it is sort of reported that you can pass a whole lineage of information down the line via a type of experiential learning that we don't necessarily recognize in the West. I was looking for clues as to what this type of experience might feel like in a Western context – clues to understanding how people make sense of it if you like. In coaching. What I have found are some clues that indicate that experiential transmission might feel like it exists on a kind of different plane if you like. Different sort of way. Have you heard of social contagion?

Hilda: No but I can probably guess...

John: ...guess what it is. Okay. If I'm a stressed person walking into a room of calm people, it might be that my stress affects the room.

Hilda: Yes. Okay.

John: It can work positively too. If I am a calm person – this is just an example – If I am a calm person I might affect the room the other way round. So it's really to do with how emotions and actions 'contaminate' others. This can happen on very large scales such as national characteristics. So it's about the people you're surrounded by. Because they 'are' that way then you 'are' that way too. So what do you think about that so far?

Hilda: I've already observed it – talked about it to other people who I train. But also personally. My boyfriend – ex-boyfriend used to have such a big personality that he could change the mood of the room just by walking into it. If he was in a foul mood everyone would just react to that and it would spoil the party. If he was in entertaining mode everyone would line up. And it's the same within my own family who are all high energy stressed people that they walk into a room and the energy just gets frenetic. And you see the dynamic change when certain people come into the room. You see it all the time. And I've seen it in the classroom with me. A few years ago I had an horrendous class that even as an experienced teacher I could have left teaching over.

John: Yeah.

2.4b **Hilda:** (suddenly lifted) And I thought – I remember at the time thinking these are not going to defeat me. And I remember at the time – I used to physically have to compose myself. Calm – I'm not going to get ratty. It's just about getting through the hour. And I used to get stressed about it – but when I calmed myself down invariably I never had any problems.

John: Right.

Hilda: Because I was so mindful of going in calm – I'm not going to rise to it. I'm not going to shout. And I realized I was a catalyst in this situation. I've seen it in lots of different situations.

So like social contagion experiential transmission could be a way of being. It's not something you do to somebody – it's something that affects

others by the way you are.

John: Just to be clear what we are unlikely to be talking about is mindfulness. Interestingly the psychology of social contagion is often about how people 'present' and how that affects the environment. This is more about how people genuinely are. There is no distancing effect between how we present and who we are. It's like we're taking it a step back. Obviously how we present is because of how we are but we are looking at the fundamental connected thing. Okay?

Hilda: Okay.

John: Okay. How does this make sense to you so far? That experience transmission is a type of social contagion?

2.4bi Hilda: Well I think it's logical (laughs). I remember when I was leading the leadership groups – what I wasn't doing was presenting myself as a leader.

John: Yeah.

Hilda: I wasn't looking like one, talking like one, acting like one. It's the kind of same in my mind parallel. If you want to be a successful coach, there is no point in presenting yourself as a stressy miserable person.

John: Why not?

2.4c Hilda: Well because it forms a contradiction – who you are being is not the personification of what you are saying.

John: I know lots of wellbeing coaches in organizations that don't have personal wellbeing. Lots. H And that's exactly what I mean.

John: Basically then they are presenting a paradox – being one thing and doing another. And where does this leave the client?

Hilda: Exactly.

John: so on one level they were saying one thing and on another they were basically presenting the opposite – so social contagion or experiential transmission is confusing. What exactly are they presenting to the client – probably a paradox. Therefore how can the client move forwards from there? Okay what I'm showing you today is very diagrammatic. Visual.

Hilda: (looking at diagram) Very visual.

John: So what I'm trying to do is find out about the texture of experiential transmission – different people's views on it – and how they make sense of it. It's just a series of diagrams I'm going to show you one at a time and I just want to know what you think. So.... (shows diag 1)

Hilda: (laughs)

John: So initial impressions before any explanation. What do you think? How do you make sense of this? What comes to mind?

2.4ci Hilda: (Warmly) Well I'm thinking about our coaching. You and me in our little room.

John: What do you mean?

(ause

Hilda: Erm... I suppose if we're talking about experiential transmission this is you transmitting to me? I'm not sure.

(pause)

John: Right...

2.4cii Hilda: It looks like a science – GCSE scientific project – I like the shape of it though.

John: Well – yes. The clues I've found to experiential transmission in a Western context is that it lives within a paradox.

Hilda: (laughs) Right

John: A complete and utter paradox. Opposite things. And this is because fundamentally clues sort of suggest that it might be a movement from one thing to another.

Hilda: Yeah.

John: You know experiential transmission seems to happen and someone is affected. So there's movement. In other words someone walks into the room and the people in the room are affected by who they are. That's the analogy. But also if you look to the diagram it's this linear movement contained within this area. The issue is that this area is essentially non-linear. So what we actually have... it's a paradox... we have movement within a non-linear context.

Hilda: Hmmm.

John: And a lot of what seeing what experiential transmission might be about is trying to look for clues within the lived experience, within how people make sense of this phenomenon, as to how this might be understood. And this has turned out to be a West and East situation.

Hilda: Right.

John: So Western and Eastern contexts. Now within my observations three themes have come up. Came up. I had to make sure they were broad as this was really the only way of incorporating everything that was seeming to begin to emerge. I couldn't be too specific to any culture because then there was no way it could embrace the two. But experiential transmission was thought to exist in Taoist Eastern culture, so the themes naturally alluded to this side of things. So an Eastern concept was explored in a Western context. Also I had a feeling that experiential transmission might permeate – might be broad and so the themes were broad too. I didn't want a small theme with something that might be big and natural. So theme 1 is moving from something to nothing. Theme 3 is from nothing to something. Theme 4 is everything together.

Hilda: Okay.

John: So you see we have a complete paradox. We have linear movement – from something to nothing that then moves from nothing to something all in the context of everything together. What do you think?

Hilda: I have no idea (laughs) Are you talking about you transmitting something to me during our coaching sessions?

John: I have no real idea. Just some clues.

Hilda: (laughing)

John: From what I've looked at clues suggest that it is more like me being how I am as a person intrinsically affects who you are as a person – nobody does anything consciously to anyone else. It's something that just happens as a type of natural event. It cannot not happen. What do you think about the theme from something to nothing?

Pause

2.4d Hilda: Well my initial thought is that it is the initial problem that then goes away.

John: Go on.

2.4di Hilda: That's what springs to mind... I mean in our coaching sessions... (remembering) John I've got all these issues with boyfriends or jobs or something... and then... with your coaching... it kind of goes away. (Arm action to the air as if something has lifted or even vanished.) You

wouldn't get that with GROW.

John: So this is obvious movement. How can this be explained in the context of non-linear movement?

Hilda: Well because I don't think – I know personally that I know what's happened to me over the past few years whether I'm talking about professional development or personal things – it doesn't happen evenly you kind of have... I see things as waves normally.

John: From a Taoist perspective something to nothing is getting rid of superficiality so that the real 'you' can come about.

Hilda: Okay.

John: So from something to nothing might mean getting rid of the superficial stuff. From nothing to something could mean genuine and healthy growth – it's non-superficial.

Hilda: Okay.

John: In Taoist terms nothing is a great place to be because it contains the seed of genuine growth – nothing can be replaced by the word stillness or emptiness – it's all full of potential.

Hilda: Hmmm.

John: What do you think?

Hilda: I'm just drawing parallel to my own life. That's where my mind's going. I feel that personally I'm at a bit of a crossroads all of a sudden in my life.

John: Interesting

Hilda: Towards the end of last year I had a new boyfriend, a job offer on the table, work coming in, erm and I thought I was on a path. Then all of a sudden broke up with boyfriend, job offer was withdrawn. I've gone into town today to sort my mortgage out so I'm reassessing where I'm living, and my daughter is going to school so I really want to change my job. And all of a sudden when you take away the job offer, the house and the boyfriend I can start again. I feel like I'm at this point literally now where I can head towards (I've got your coaching in my mind) what I really want rather than what I think I want. I'm excited about what's going on it feels real.

John: What you are saying is interesting because it relates to something I have noticed too.

Hilda: Go on

John: Within something to nothing there are two sub themes. One is 'undoing' which covers the linear process of undoing the superficial and the other is 'unveiling' – now one of the characteristics of unveiling is that there seems to be a light bulb moment – a kind of switch after which everything becomes clearer. In fact you described it on one of our sessions as moving instantly from one room to another.

Hilda: (laughs) I used metaphor?

John: You did. In what ways if any does this relate to how you are at the moment?

Hilda: I don't know.

John: How do you feel?

Hilda: Liberated.

John: One thing I've noticed is that after the moment of 'unveiling' there is a sense of liberation – freedom – sometimes for quite a while.

Hilda: I see it in the students.

John: It's not an uncommon moment. I have noticed that that release of

2.4e

energy is very important and that is because if we look to the diagram. It seems to feel... that for a time the unveiling, emotionally, takes us to a broader freer perspective... and from what I can gather we feel in the moment rather than on a linear journey. What do you think? So although you are on a journey you flick to being complete. There is no journey at that moment.

Hilda: Yeah.

John: So (introduces diagram 2) something within 1 and 3 takes you to 4.

Hilda: Yeah. Yeah.

John: Where things feel totally connected and the things is what it is. How does that sound?

Hilda: (exited and clear tone). There's a particular coaching session with you in my mind and it's stayed with me. I think it was around spring last year. I remember I had a really bad week and I remember it was really getting me down. And I remember, we see you on a Thursday, and I remember all week being tired and really stressed by it and aggravated and when I get like that I get tired and I don't deal with the world around me. And erm I remember going to see you and coming home. It was like something had instantly happened although I didn't realize it at that exact moment, we had talked in the session – I remember coming home and my mum went 'whatever you talk about with John that's worth millions. She said, whatever happens it just turns you around. And I felt it. I didn't know how to get out of that slump and then somehow I realize I was ... out of it. It completely recalibrated and refocused me. I was in this type of funk of crap that was going on and then I wasn't. I think for me it's about our sessions somehow putting for me things into perspective and I always found when I left the sessions – this is why I talk very positively about you – and our coaching experience. I always felt very motivated and energized after the session – and talking to other people when they leave the session – they feel light afterwards and 'better'.

John: Could this all be something to do with releasing the superficial?

2.4f

Hilda: I sometimes think like without considering this Eastern approach it's about getting things off your chest. Seriously when I look to all the teachers that are flaking around today –they don't have time to get rid of the crap. It's like Brian – If he just let go of the artificial crap then everything would be fine

2.4fi

John: Right. By crap – what might you mean?

Hilda: Superficial. Definitely yes. For me. Part of my process with you was to keep coming back to my values – where what's really important to my lies. When I look back over the last years. I think that's what the sessions over the years did for me.

(pause)

John: Okay diagram 2 – 1 leads to 3 and that lead to 4.

Hilda: Yeah.

John: So because there was a release there was an instant change.

Hilda: I think there's two things going on though. There's the getting things off your chest – then there's the second stage of putting this to some kind of use.

John: Might what you are describing the second stage relate to from something to nothing?

2.4fii

Hilda: Almost certainly. Yes. There are two things going on. The getting things off your chest urrrgh then the next things happen. That's what I got

from your sessions. So with what you are saying... so I'm saying I agree... I would come in in a bad mood – I would vent – so this is your type of releasing of the superficial your undoing. Then at that point something would be released – your light bulb moment – and then I would feel better – and this represents everything together.

John: Now diagram 3. What do you think?

Hilda: Yeah.

John: What do you think? Nothing to something merges with something to nothing and the merger creates everything together. So in other words A plus B becomes C. A and B becomes everything together. It doesn't equal it, it becomes it. What do you think?

2.4fiii Hilda: Well I have the most logical pragmatic brain. I feel safer in the linear environment so I like the A plus B equals C.

John: But again the 4 isn't all encompassing – there is some movement that has caused it rather than it being there all the time.

Hilda: Okay. But I think I would put in an extra stage.

John: What would that be?

Hilda: A moment of clarity – of seeing things clearly (turns the page of the book to the next diagram).

John: Shows diag 4 – So 1 and 3 are three. Just like the contents of the blood are the blood. In other words we are taking a step outwards. In other words something is within something. So you could have movement and singularity and the same time. The moment you broaden the context you have a singularity and within that singularity there is movement – so you have 'everything together' and 'movement' at the same time. The human body is a singularity by it contains movement.

Hilda: I was just trying to apply the coaching conversations we've had to this (laughs).

John: Go on.

2.4g Hilda: Like a coaching experience. A different perspective. How I'm viewing it is a more fluid experience – more holistic I'm trying to say. You know what when I first had my coaching training not with you before there was this dreadful very stayed triad session with the GROW model which I didn't like because it wasn't – to me it was very stilted. It seemed very staged – it wasn't real. And it made me cringe. And I didn't think much of coaching back then. What I liked about my experience with you is that it felt like a conversation where I came out feeling better.

John: We are beginning to answer the paradox by growing – by expanding our perception of things and looking at things from a broader perspective. (pause) Now 'unveiling' basically implies that the thing is already there.

Hilda: Okay.

John: So you unveil something to reveal the thing underneath that was already there. Undoing isn't that – it's a longer more linear process. In my research unveiling happens in an instant.

Hilda: Okay.

John: What is your reaction then? (to the theme of undoing)

Hilda: Honestly? It's different.

John: I'm a bit...erm... What's different?

Hilda: Give me a second... Okay. It's... I don't know... easier?... it's a relief.

John: I'm interested in that movement... from 'different' to 'relief'.

Hilda: I'm lost... can we start this bit again?

John: (laughs) You just said... Okay... You said initially that something was different then you described it as being a relief. How does that work? What happened in between?

Hilda: Not being as I was... usually... for a moment – stopped holding on and let go... just a bit.

John: So... You said it was a relief. What do you mean by 'relief'?

Hilda: that you don't have to do things – to collect things – to prove yourself all the bloody time... you just have to become yourself – I'm probably talking shit, but you get my drift...

John: Go on.

Hilda: It's a ... difficult to describe... yes relief... Life's a mess... can be a mess... and to know that there's some sort of value... the undoing rather than the doing. It's completely the opposite to what we do as teachers. Isn't it? Imagine an exam that asks what things are not rather than what they are. 'Write an essay on what the atom is not' (laughs).

John: Do you think that would be interesting reading?

Hilda: I do. I do.

John: Why do you think that?

Hilda: Because it would be revealing about the person... what they chose... how they chose to express themselves.

John: Would it surprise you to learn that I've found more or less consistent evidence of this 'undoing' in your recordings?

Hilda: I'm not sure. What exactly?

John: Well... an obvious example was when we were talking about your PhD... that's just one example. You talked a lot about what you didn't want it to be... and in doing that eventually you made a decision...

Hilda: Finally. Yes.

John: It could be argued that a decision came about by the undoing of the superficial.

2.4h Hilda: Well – I certainly didn't want it to be superficial. That would be a waste of time.

John: Exactly. I mean we will never know for sure but how would you feel if I said that the lifting of the superficial regarding your doctorate seemed to lift you generally – put you on what you felt was the 'right track'. It was like you were freed – brightened. I think you... at the time... by not having to embark on something you felt was superficial and your tonality in the rest of the session was far more erm... I suppose I'd describe it as free... happy... not doing the superficial thing... what you didn't want to do... that seemed to cause a type of broad release. It seemed to make things clearer. The same seems to have happened again just now. Talking about this you seem to be even more lifted than usual.

Hilda: And is this what you mean by undoing?

John: I'm not looking to generalize – I just want your take.
(pause)

John: So undoing and unveiling are very different. After the moment of unveiling I have noticed that there is a type of release – a type of lift. It's like the penny drops and I'm there. So from this room you can now see where you are and where you were more clearly than before. Therefore that feeling of unveiling puts you onto the broader perspective – you have the feeling of the broader perspective.

Hilda: Yes. That makes more sense to me than that because I felt this.

That I can apply to me.

John: What is also interesting is that from my recordings I noticed that the instantaneous moment of going through the doorway is never remembered. All that you know is that you realize you feel different and so something must have happened. Listening to the recordings although things build towards this there is always an instant – a moment of transformation where things seem to tip entirely over the edge.

2.4hi Hilda: (laughs) What if the light switch went on and the magic appeared? If you remember it happened repeatedly for me – at one point in almost every session and I always felt so lifted afterwards. This is why I miss the sessions because I always felt re-motivated and re-energized and it happened to me frequently. Through that doorway we talked about earlier. Ermm, I always used to say that it re-framed my mind.

John: That's so interesting – so is what you are saying that it is the feeling of it that puts you onto a different level – into what feels like a more holistic dimension?

2.4j Hilda: Works like magic I'd say.

John: What do you mean by magic?

Hilda: I think there are things that we don't understand. Patterns of things. This happened too many times to be a coincidence. Therefore it's a type of magical pattern.

Hilda: Absolutely (this could be the feeling of everything together).

John: Would you say this was a linear or non-linear state?

Hilda: Non-linear – it was about feeling released and feeling happy – really happy – in the flow – in the moment.

John: So although you were focusing on the broader emotion of being happy the journey the movement was still happening?

Hilda: Exactly. Yes. I... yes.

John: So how do you make sense of this experience in the context of what we've discussed so far?

Hilda: It makes total sense. I worked towards it that's 'undoing' by releasing the superficiality although I didn't know it– then there was almost always a moment of unveiling that caused me to be happy – so moving into the broader emotional dimension.

John: So there's just a feeling that this is great?

Hilda: In that zone I always achieved more, and things would fall into place and if they didn't I always had the resilience because I knew that another door would open. You know I felt kind of very positive and motivated and if it doesn't work you just trust something else. I dunno it was very real. It increased my resilience in a very real way – I didn't have to pretend to be resilient. I was just because I was happy. I felt full (implies that it is a series of moments that nourish – so what I am describing happens time and time again).

John: How would you feel if I described it as dimensionally broadening? You still encompass everything. It a light, happy but full experience.

Hilda: It's like a kind of 'oh I get it' type of emotion. I suppose – not sure that's really it.

John: If you look to diagrams 5 and 6 – instead of the larger environment representing you it actually is you. In other words you personally have broadened.

2.4k Hilda: If I was going to paint my experience – it's like being a meerkat on a mountain. It's like all of a sudden you have this clarity – you can see.

Whereas for me sometimes I would just go into a session blinded – and now I can see again (this is an example of unveiling). So from the diagram I would get rid of the borders.

John: Completely?

Hilda: Yes. That's what it is. It is a clarity suddenly being able to see. In your sessions it was seeing a way forwards.

John: Moving on? How would you feel if I said that the actual moment of nothing actually is 'nothing' it doesn't exist?

Hilda: I would have no trouble agreeing with that.

John: So if we look to diagrams 7 and 8 we see that it's actually having experienced that moment of nothing – that moment of unveiling that might push you out to here. To the broader dimension of being in the moment. I'm talking like all this can be proved. It can't – it is just what is being suggested by interpreting the lived experience.

Hilda: Yeah. So eventually we become more of that broader person. So nothingness is when you get to where your true values are – where you know what's really important? The real stuff?

John: My personal observations are that it is much huger than that. Like the nothingness because it is so in the moment I think that it might be impossible to describe. What is interesting is that Lao Tzu and you actually don't tend to describe things that way. What you tend to do is to describe things by what they are not. A prime example in your transcript regarding you doctorate and what subject you might do you describe all the reasons why you don't want to do certain subject, and this led to your decision.

Hilda: Not to do it at all?

John: Exactly. In the Tao Te Ching Lao Tzu does the same thing with Te – Te is the natural personality that arises from the nothingness.

Hilda: So the feeling after the unveiling?

John: It might be. It might. So with Te you have a conundrum. You can't describe what it is because to do so will in one way or another limit it. So Lao Tzu describes it in terms of what it is not. He says it is an absence of superficiality. So when we get to that stage Te is naturally unveiled without limitation of any sort.

Hilda: Yeah – and that is such an interesting thing for coaching – we always ask what the goal is and work towards it. It's what I would say was wrong with GROW. It's too narrow.

I mean for me right now I'm ready to have a complete career change. I know with the journey I've been on in the last year what I don't want.

John: Right.

2.4m

Hilda: I know exactly what I don't want. But because I don't know what all the jobs are if I get a job that I've kind of half seen –or get a job I might end up not liking – you don't know what the reality is. So it's very easy to say I really want that job but actually I might be unhappy in that job.

John: But what this is isn't quite what we've been talking about I don't think. For me it's more like – it's not like make a list of what you don't want and then what is left is what you do want. More it's make a list of what you don't want so that the thing that you do want that's underneath all of the superficiality is able to come to the surface – be unveiled to be able to be recognized.

2.4mi

Hilda: So it's confidence. Real confidence. I think what some of our sessions gave me – looking back – was the confidence to make

decisions that I'm not very good at making – outside of work in my own life. Whether it's to do with making decisions about my personal life or work – perhaps – it's to do with my family and friends who are very judgemental and are very stressed and pressured in their own lives – I think our space – that coaching space – that non-judgemental non-pressured feeling – allowed me to make decisions – do you know what I mean? I don't know whether I'm explaining myself well?

John: I think you are explaining yourself really well

Hilda: Erm. And I think I've tried to emulate some of the... some of the conversations we've had in the coaching room outside of the coaching room – the environment – perhaps with my sister or my mum – that I would have with you – and when I've wanted to talk about important things – and their first response was always 'and you know what you need to do don't you.' or 'well what I would have done in your situation.' And it's like I don't really want to know – I want to work this through myself.

John: That's interesting – after my research if I was coaching anyone in a school now it would be about removing the superficial to let the genuine come through. So the real has a chance to come through. When you remove the superficial you unveil the real. We are all piled with so much superficial stuff so much acquired learning that to be able to let that go on some level can only be good.

Hilda: Yeah.

John: Ok onto the last one (diag 10) – this is the way I think that experiential transmission might begin to be explained from the viewpoint we have discussed. The coach by being who they are – via a type of social contagion – real not demonstrated – will affect the client. This will happen via a type of permeation. In other words if my say lack of stress is more certain than my clients actual stress then they will inevitable become less stressed. If I am not certain in myself about my lack of stress, then I will only ever be able to help the client to my level of what I truly understand. – not intellectually – holistically – they experience me and therefore I affect then.

2.4n

Hilda: I've just had a thought. It's not like the feeling of removing yourself from the situation – you are still in the situation it's just the feeling of being different within the situation. The feeling of being freer but somehow more in control at the same time. That might be what you are saying. This is a type of emotional answer to the paradox of movement and all at once at the same time. This makes sense – it really makes sense – the fact that you want to control something to sort it out, but it is actually when you are released that you see the problem and the solution more clearly. This also brings about the feeling of everything being great too. Everything's good because you feel good – feel released in the moment. Also if I relate this to your diagrams what we are talking about is actually the nothing to something feeling.

John: Can you describe what this feeling is not?

Hilda: Oh my God – it's not superficial –can you believe it!? And it's entirely real – there's no sense of being mindful of it – or pretending – it's actually real

John: So might what you be saying is that the lack of superficiality causes a type of switch to flick into a type of holistic feeling of reality?

Hilda: I absolutely am. Yes... Oh my God. So what you have observed is

true for me. That's honestly... well – I don't know what to say.

John: You seem to be describing something that's immensely enjoyable despite it being in the middle of solving a personal problem

2.4p

Hilda: Yes. And I think – I think – that the feeling might actually be the solution to the problem – because what comes from the feeling – well for me, what came from the feeling is the ability to see the solution clearly – so the feeling is where the solution derives from. Oh my God. Therefore for me the feeling was really important. That's what's been missing in my day to day stuff. Is that why I can't sort it out? That I'm looking for the solution rather than the feeling that creates the solution? This is so interesting.

John: So then how do you make sense of these findings?

Hilda: What springs to mind is that people are either taps or drains. Have you heard that analogy?

John: It rings a distant bell.

Hilda: It's one of those things that – hence if you're a tap you have a positive influence if you are a drain then you have a negative influence. It's about the effects people have on other people. So this is that on a far more subtle level.

John: What springs to my mind is that this might be a very subtle and different form of experiential learning that is entirely related to beingness – not what we believe but who we truly are. For example someone who believes in God might not be able to live the principles – so therefore belief and being are two different things. What that person is being is a contradiction.

Hilda: Imagine what the classroom would be like if the teacher was certain enough in their beingness of the thing.

John: Well it might happen already because different teachers attain different levels with the same classes.

Hilda: Yes. I see. I get that. So it's not really anything out of the ordinary – it's just where you choose to focus – it happens all the time – just it might be too big for us to take responsibility for.

John: Anything else?

Hilda: Well I always thought I was a big picture thinker anyway (laughs). I like to put things into the context of what is important. You can still be involved in superficial actions.

John: Well as a teacher or coach in schools you have to

Hilda: It's just understanding it differently. And I suppose if you understand a superficial action then this is a type of undoing of the superficial too.

John: That is such an interesting point. So over all any last comments?

2.4pi

Hilda: (pause) I think that sometimes people don't go for things because of fear of failing – well I think that's me actually – with the feeling of wellbeing that we are talking about – ultimate wellbeing – for me the fear still exists but the wellbeing is so powerful that it overcomes it. Maybe what we are describing is wellbeing rather than pretending to have it – I don't know.

John: Great. Thank you so much.

Hilda: No I've really enjoyed it.

Appendix 3

Candidate coaching transcripts (extracts used in bold)

3.1 Faith's coaching

(From session 2.9)

John: So what's going on?

Faith: Busy. Busy. Busy.

John: So you're busy then? (laughs)

Faith: I know I always say the same thing – god – yeah well – you know me.

John: You seem well – in good spirits.

Faith: I am. I am. It's just – well – god – I'm moaning again. All I do is come here and off-load.

John: That's all part of it – I'm all ears.

Faith: Well – it's just – I know it's silly – I feel stupid – It's just I'm sick at how complex everything is. You know me John, I like things straightforward – and all of this now – all of this mystery about why people are leaving and what's going to happen. Why don't people just – just say what they really think – are they just – I dunno afraid? Are they? Honestly – it makes things – things so difficult. If Fred – he's so annoying as a person – to be with – by the way – I have to really concentrate before I go into meetings where he's there – just made a clear and honest decision for a change this would mean that we could all do our jobs and the school would be a better place.

3.1i

(From session 2.7)

John: So?

Faith: Good Good – well okay – if I'm honest (pause)

John: Go on.

Faith: If I'm honest. It's awful – when I think about it now – it's just pointless and unnecessary and like the pastoral system and everything.

John: But this is the way things are – this is the truth of the environment in which you are required to manage and lead.

Faith: Yes. But it's just not fair. Surely...

John: Nobody is saying the school environment is fair – this is just the working environment you have. Your role... as we have discussed... erm many times (both laugh)... is to understand it for what it is and to manage and lead within it. The moment you start to judge it in this way... that you get frustrated by what's not there you well.... might become more frustrated.

Faith: Like I am now?

John: (laughing) you said it.

Faith: But...

John: (joking) Are we really going here... again? Really?

Faith: Yep absolutely.

John: Okay – but let's progress the erm... what can I call it...? The rant?

Faith: I'll take rant.

John: And add a context... Okay – what is 'wrong' let's put in the context of what you most care about... the students?

Faith: Simple. We say we value the individual when we are always telling them how to be. How can we sit by and not make a fuss about that?

John: So how might we rectify this? We discussed possibilities a while ago...

Faith: No idea. Forgotten.

John: Well if we see things as they are... the superficial as being superficial... like when we have to jump through hoops then it has no hold on us. We do it knowing it is superficial – we don't buy in. We still do it because it is part of our job, but it doesn't take hold. We don't judge the superficiality we just realize it's there and don't buy in by investing emotionally. We choose what we invest our emotions in and what we don't. It keeps things clear.

Faith: Oh yes... but the point is we don't do that... I mean schools don't do that. We think if we make the kids feel it's real then they are more likely to do it – we say 'good' you are a good person for buying in. There's no perspective. No true perspective. It's rubbish what we say and what we do. We say we do one thing, but the truth is we do the opposite. Honestly – it's rubbish.

3.1ii

(From session 3.3)

John: So -

Faith: How have you been?

John: (laughs) I've been extremely well thanks – things are going well. How have you been?

Faith: John.

John: Yes.

Faith: (laughs) It's been a... I dunno... weird week...

John: (laughs) Define weird.

Faith: Lots of ... well... I dunno really... what I think you would call momentum. I would just call it movement.

John: Okay...and?

Faith: Is it movement or momentum? – I know there's a difference but I

John: Well for me movement is more of an effort – momentum is a kind of driving force... It sort of drives the movement... Anyway you were saying (laughs)

Faith: Well... okay... this week has been like... it's been like... just because I saw things clearly it was like something... a thing... was lifted.

John: What did it feel like – I mean... sorry... what did it physically feel like?

Faith: If I had to describe it... I suppose (brrrrr) loose – like I can move.

John: Out of curiosity – move where?

Faith: Anywhere – everything's well easier physically that is.

John: ...and mentally?

Faith: Yer... that too.

John: And emotionally?

Faith: Okay... your gonna like this... ready?

John: Always

Faith: (laughing) The best way to describe it was like being a cat stuck in the mud and then getting out and being free... thing is I didn't realize quite how stuck in the mud I was.

John: You're right – I do like it – I like cats.

Faith: How is your cat?

John: Lily? She's fine – hunting like crazy – she actually dug up the garden over the weekend trying to catch a mole – we don't have molehills we have cat hills

Faith: (laughs) I've never seen a mole – how big are they?

John: Smaller than I thought actually – about the size of a big hamster? Anyway – lets unravel your cat – erm – where was it?

Faith: Stuck in the mud

John: I think the whole thing is an interesting metaphor don't you.

Faith: I like – I suppose – the feel of it...

3.1iii

(From session 1.4)

John: I don't think that personal stress and lack of funding necessarily come hand in hand.

Faith: **But I've been given no extra budget. Nothing.**

3.1iv

(From session 2.8)

John: How was the Easter Break?

Faith: **When I'm at home after the first few days I'm completely bored. There's only so much red wine you can drink.**

3.1v

(From session 3.9)

John: That's so funny.

Faith: I know. **It happened again. I dunno what's happening John. It's like – for me – its – I'd describe it as happening out of the blue but not out of the blue if you see what I mean. It's like if you're a certain way – like – a certain way it happens – if you're not it doesn't.** What's going on?

John: I have no idea. It's good though.

Faith: You can say that again.

3.1vi

(From session 3.7)

John: Are you all right?

Faith: Yes. Yes.

John: Are you sure?

Faith: Well. I had a day off on Friday. It's only my second ever sick day – so

John: It's allowed.

Faith: Yes. But it then becomes everything that gets you down.

John: What in particular?

Faith: You know – it wouldn't normally affect me.

John: Sure.

Faith: It's the amount of change – it's everywhere.

John: Yes. It's the nature of education at the moment.

Faith: Yes. I know – but it's – it's – **yet another change. Yet another change. Why do I bother investing in anything when six months later it's different. Not just a bit different – entirely different. It's the kids I feel sorry for.**

3.1vii

(From session 3.10)

Faith: How you doing?

John: I'm fine. How are you?

Faith: Good. Good. Exhausted but good. The faculty is dragging itself through (laughs)

John: You are looking well actually – despite the exhaustion.

Faith: (laughs) I agree. I agree. I'm just so much – well – relaxed isn't the word – more feeling – I'm just – in the zone – in the groove of where I'm going. I see things – I – so, so, so, so, differently from before. It's like I've been set free. (laughs again)

3.2. Adela's coaching

(From session 1.9)

Adela: so end of play today it should be all right.

John: Is that good?

Adela: Good. Yeah. Good. I'd like things to go easily for a change.

John: But this seems to be relatively easy.

Adela: I guess I'm just a pessimist. I expect that by the end of the day things would have changed back again and he would have changed his mind.

John: What's the goal then? The real goal?

Adela: If I'm being honest it's hard to put into words.

John: So it's a feeling?

Adela: A type of feeling of moving.

John: Moving where?

Adela: I have no idea.

(pause)

Adela: Maybe away from something.

John: So running away – escaping?

Adela: You would think – but – moving towards something – wholesome – something just – I suppose – better.

John: The question is – what do you mean by better. I suppose what I'm getting at is, is 'better' a feeling too?

3.2i

(Later in session 1.9)

Adela: I think it – well – in psychological terms – it drops me straight into the ego state of the child. **It's so oppressive – it's such an oppressive environment for staff and kids – being forced to jump through hoops all the time – bad for the health – both of us.**

John: I don't think that anyone would disagree with you there.

Adela: I've got an inkling I know what you're going to say next.

John: (laughs) Go on.

Adela: I don't know. Something along the lines of 'you can control how you feel' and if you do you will have much better wellbeing.

John: (laughs) You know me so well. So – well I wouldn't say 'control' – erm – if we have a goal – to make ourselves a genuinely tension-free person in an environment that is stressful and is causing others to be stressful then we will have wellbeing. What do you think?

3.2ii

(From session 3.7)

Adela: Well I was trying to make things positive and -

John: Hold on. You were trying to make things positive? (laughs) What do you mean by that?

Adela: Focusing on being positive –

John: Okay – I think – go on.

Adela: And yesterday I woke up and I knew what it was I wanted.

John: When you say woke up – literally woke up?

Adela: Yes. **It was similar to the pressing of like a button. Knowing... knowing what I wanted – finally.**

John: Well it has been – erm (laughing) a while coming.

Adela: I know. All right (joking).

John: So what's the difference between a goal that you think you really want and a goal that you do really want?

Adela: I know it taken a while for me to get this – no comment please – it's entirely different – it's actually really nice.

John: And by 'nice' you mean?

Adela: Sort of – smiley and warm.

John: Smiley and warm – so – it's a feeling?

Adela: You've lost me a bit – sorry.

John: Knowing where you want to go is a feeling.

Adela: It's brought about a feeling – yes.

John: Let's look at that.

3.2iii

(From session 2.8)

Adela: I don't think it's a matter of confidence.

John: Neither do I – so what do you think it might be?

Adela: **Well I think it's linked with Maslow's hierarchy of needs.**

John: In what sense?

Adela: **Well because it's not high enough up the scale of importance – my importance – it's not something I am able to focus on quite yet.**

John: The question is – of course – what would make it more important to you?

Adela: Well it would need to be higher up the pyramid – so – I'm not sure

John: I'm not sure that 'higher up the pyramid' is quite right with Maslow – my impression is –

Adela: Oh yes, yes – I see what you mean – Yes.

John: So?

Adela: Right – we need to establish the bottom layers so that we can rise to the top.

John: Ah. There's an interesting discussion (laughs). How's that going to happen then?

3.2iv

(From session 2.10)

John: So -

Adela: Yes.

John: You're looking well.

Adela: Yes – I am actually.

John: So?

Adela: Well I had the meeting with Brian -

John: Yes. Of course – how did it go?

Adela: (laughs) I thought about what we discussed.

John: And did you managed to put it into action?

Adela: Actually (laughs) yes.

John: How was it?

Adela: **It was so much more enjoyable going into a meeting like that – in that way. Honestly, I just wanted to smile. Everything was easy. By the end I had the governors on my side – which was good (laughs). Basically I was seen as important – my role was seen as important.**

John: So. Let's unravel that a bit – actually – let's not – so what's next? Onwards and upwards?

Adela: (laughs) Onwards and upwards.

John: So -

3.2v

(From session 1.2)

Adela: **Doing nothing... at school? Really? How is that productive?**

John: The idea is that you spend time sitting quietly – just five minutes – maybe to regroup.

Adela: But that's slightly – it's a good idea – but impossible...

3.2vi

(From session 3.7)

Adela: I'm not complaining. It's exactly what I asked for just not in the way I expected it. I was calm and then I was I don't know – strong I think – but still really calm. I just sat there as nobody, someone invited to the meeting, but I knew it would happen I was certain and somehow it did. It swung it my way. I was so certain it would – well now I realize that I was certain.

John: (laughs) Yeah right.

Adela: Sounds weird but I was...

3.3 Alice's coaching

(From Coaching session 2.10)

Alice: It's almost as if going out there and being bashed around a bit reminds you of the importance of not being at the mercy of your environment. But it's nice being somewhat back in control. Nice to be reminded that I can do it. (laughs)

John: Last session you mentioned that for you it's all about being in the moment.

Alice: But how can you be in the moment and take a step back simultaneously? You can't.

John: Can't you?

Alice: I don't think you can.

(pause)

Alice: The way I see it is this...

John: Go on.

Alice: It's a bit like taking a step backwards but not backwards. What I mean is a type of step outwards – an expansion. A bit like I am an expanded person. Because I am expanded – therefore I am still able to be entirely myself. I just become the expanded version of it.

John: Go on.

Alice: I know that there is movement – progression within me. But what if this represents expansion rather than regular knowledge. We tend to see knowledge as linear, but expansion surely is an experience and is total at every stage – if there are even stages and it's not continuous – can only come from experiences of one kind or another. Maybe then the client can be inspired into this type of experiential expansion by experiencing – by being with the coach who is being the same way?

John: There seems to be a theme here.

Alice: Right.

John: What do you think it might be?

Alice: Right. (pause). No idea.

John: How about the idea that there are broader aspects to what we do as teachers and coaches.

Alice: Right.

John: And?

Alice: And (laughs) well we need to think about them.

John: What do you mean?

3.3i

(From session 3.2)

Alice As you know I've been working on being more connected and myself in the session despite the – situation (pause) not being a victim – sorry – not playing the victim of my situation.

John: So how's that going?

Alice: Better. Much better. Gone. Entirely gone. Dissipated into the air. Entirely. It's so nice to be myself again (laughs). You don't know... I must take ownership... Okay. Starting again. Okay. Right. I didn't know how much I wasn't being myself... and when I suddenly realized how far I had gone the other way... it creeps up on you... and was able to laugh about it... I was good again, great, despite what would have been stressful before dealing with... everything... everything was easy. When I'm in the groove of being myself... I just I think need... sorry want to know... how to rectify the situation... how not to start to go that way again...

John: You look much happier.

Alice: There is no comparison. None.

John: What do you mean by being in the groove?

Alice: Well – good question – let me think. (pause). Right – for me it's about –

well – the best way to describe it is things flowing – as they should -

3.3ii

(From session 2.1)

John: So how would you describe the situation – the feeling of it?

Alice: I've hit a wall. There's nothing I can do.

3.3iii

(From session 3.2)

Alice: It sounded lovely. To escape the problems and worries of work for a whole weekend. Oh goodness: She learnt to find that quiet place in her that after a busy day she could go to and recover to release any stress and worries. Loads of stuff about how to use protective bubbles. Protective energies. Could do with them here. Then she had to come back to school.

John: To me it sounds as if she is using meditation to hide in – to escape somehow...

3.4 Hilda's coaching

(From session 3.3)

John: So did you erm... we said we would discuss your reading. Did you do the first chapter?

Hilda: Since you... I read about a third through the new book.

John: Oh. Okay.

Hilda: I've earmarked the rest for Easter reading.

John: How was what you read?

Hilda: Well as we discussed I am not particularly confident in coaching people above my station.

John: (laughs) above your station...?

Hilda (laughs) above my lot in life....

John: (laughs) above your lot in life?

Hilda: (laughs) But re-reading this bit... unlocked something.

John: What was that?

Hilda: Not sure really – but I know I liked it – it was like I realized something that affected how I was.

John: Well. Let's start with this. What is the feeling of 'unlocked'?

Hilda: Like a door opening from one room to another.

John: And where are you in this erm metaphor of compartments (laughs)?

Hilda: I'm not sure what you mean.

John: Well... I... there is a door opening from one room to another – where are you standing...? In your imagination where are you standing in relation to these two rooms and the door having been opened?

Hilda: I'm watching the whole event – it feels normal.

John: If you had to place yourself in the situation with the new door having been unlocked where are you watching from?

Hilda: But I'm not. I'm above it. I'm describing it.... But I'm in it – sort of everywhere.

John: So you were sort of – I'm not sure.

Hilda: Neither am I (laughs).

John: I think the question is 'how do you feel?' instead of trying to work it out.

What do you think?

Hilda: I agree.

3.4i

(From session 2.1)

John: So – how was half term?

Hilda: Went home. Did nothing. Recovered.

3.4ii

(From session 1.2)

Hilda: I know you talk about sitting doing nothing and allowing ideas to come but I tried it and just felt embarrassed. It's just not really who I am.

John: I don't think it's about who you are – it's more about what you want to be at school. If you want to be calmer in this – well – environment where there is tension and a third of the staff are being made redundant – if you want to be taken seriously – it's up to you to find a way. I don't think it's just going to happen by itself.

(pause)

I guess the question is how much do you really want this?

3.4iii

(From session 3.6)

Hilda: John. It was crap – really crap – what a waste of time.

John: (laughs) So it wasn't your thing?

Hilda: No. It bloody wasn't. **It was awful John. Honestly. There was no – no – well – feel to it. I didn't want to be there – and I love coaching.**

John: Care to elaborate?

Hilda: It felt so bloody artificial. Talk about hoop jumping. We had to show our coaching for two minutes and when I was natural they hated it. It was tick box technique.

John: So you're upset?

Hilda: Too right – it's the time wasting – God.

Appendix 4

Publications

Article: 'Tune in and Turn Them On' under the title 'Class Acts' published in Stage Write Magazine – Royal National Theatre. Autumn 1997.

Article – 'tune in and turn them on'

Why is an ordinary school in Cambridgeshire achieving such outstanding results in drama? John Rowe challenges teachers to think again about how they communicate with their students.

It's difficult to understand why teaching is so difficult these days when it's actually one of the oldest forms of communication. What could be the most natural almost instinctive skill has become contrived and complex. It is as if complexity holds a power of its own so forcing us to be distant from the job, from our managers, and from our students.

If complexity distances us, then surely simplicity must be the magnet that draws us closer if for no other reason than it makes everything clearer. However there seems to be a problem once 'skills' or 'styles' or even 'advanced skills and styles' are introduced. They almost inevitably involve a greater degree of complication and complexity so pushing people further away from achieving a depth of quality in what they do.

'The students have a wonderful approach to drama, which transforms exercises into high-quality performance. The level of concentration and commitment creates an intensity which elevates work to exceptional standards' – 1996 OFSTED report.

But is there an alternative interpretation of 'advanced'? What if it actually meant looking at the simpler skills in more depth? So, for example, an advanced teaching technique might take a profound look at one of the simplest communication skills – eye contact.

Take the case of a drama lesson. The teacher may be thrilled by the very genuine tension created by the gaze between the students. But this is only the starting point. There are many layers to this simple exercise to be sensed and explored.

This is not to say that complexity should not be used. It is essential to learning. Technique and style of course are also absolutely vital but equally they are only the icing on the cake. Looking at the methodology of teaching drama it could be said that cake alone is fine but a cake with icing has both visual appeal and depth of taste.

It is often assumed that drama is similar to real life. It is not. It is something entirely different – something very much on its own. However it can have a radical effect on real life for everyone around and within it. Drama is a specific force and to tune in and then to tune in again more deeply than before is the most vital thing.

Finally students know what they see and react accordingly. It makes sense that they only learn in depth from those teachers communicating simply, in depth and with clarity. Thank goodness they are discerning.

Publications

'100 Exercises to get you into drama school' (Penname: Jona Howl)
Methuen (2008) ISBN 978-1-4081-0132-2

'The YOUSITT Momentum – The Coach Prepares' Balboa Press (2015) ISBN
978-1-5043-3449-5

Appendix 5

Participant information and consent document

Dear

This Participant Information And Consent Document is for those participants who have agreed to participate in the DProf research of John Rowe. The document gives you all the required information followed by a request for your signed permission for the recordings of your coaching sessions with John (together with their transcripts) to be used in his research. This document may also be requested by the IWBL Ethical Committee as evidence that sufficient ethical procedure has been followed.

You have been chosen as one of ten coachees who fit the time/date criteria for the project. Consent begins retrospectively for the period 2014-2015 when we first began coaching and recording through from this period to any current or future recordings we may make.

Please consider the following and if in agreement sign where indicated on page 2. If you have any questions at all please don't hesitate to contact me in person or at jorowe@hotmail.co.uk. You may also contact the organization facilitating the doctorate in the form of my tutor Professor David Lane. Professor Lane can be contacted at: david.lane@pdf.net

Essential information

- I, John Rowe, along with yourselves will be the owner of your data. The data is in the form of the recordings of our coaching sessions and their subsequent transcripts.
- As before I will always make it clear when we are recording a session and you may of course stop the recording or ask for any recording not to commence or to be used at any stage.
- Your data in the form of the recordings and their transcripts will be treated confidentially and stored securely.
- The data in the form of the recordings and their transcripts will only ever be used on an anonymous basis. Every precaution will be taken to protect your privacy. You will have the opportunity to read the final thesis to check that your anonymity has been maintained with the authority to insist on changes should you believe your anonymity to have been compromised.
- All original files will be encrypted and held electronically under a secure password for the device and a secure password for the file. Original transcripts will not be printed out and I will only work on them alone electronically in a secure location where I cannot be overlooked.

- Should you wish to withdraw your consent at any time and for any reason this will be accepted without question. This can be done in writing to prevent any possible future misunderstanding.

Thank you

John Rowe

.....
.....

Date.....

Signed..... (participant)

Signed..... (Researcher)

Appendix 6

Examples of journals

6.1 Example of research journal

I think the example of the onion is an interesting one with potential – but not in the way that it's usually perceived – this time it is about the layers being released, evaporated – the superficial and unnecessary being got rid of in order to reveal the quality of self at the core of the onion. This would mean that each layer is only valuable as a kind of 'barrier that has been overcome'. According to Lao Tzu these barriers would represent acquired learning and our potential to release it. However, how does this work with a teacher in an environment that sees almost all 'valuable' learning as 'acquired'. Well the answer is pretty straightforward and elements of this I should include in the final project. In order to be able to teach a teacher must know that most of what they do will be acquired – and in order to still be a teacher they must do the things they have to do. So surely the trick is – if you can call it a trick – is to choose where you place yourself and your energy. For example, if I have a number of more or less pointless evaluations to do, that I and the students, know are of no value whatsoever to anyone really, then I still do these but put no emotional energy into them – I feel good about myself for doing them because they keep me in work and I also feel good about doing them because I didn't invest emotionally – it just looks as if I did. So in a way I am removing acquired learning by choosing not to emotionally invest in the things that don't matter even though I am still doing the action of those things.

6.2 Example of creative journal

'So, on to you... what are your thoughts on coaching... right now?'

'Well I thought they were clear but I should have known better. (pause). They are on the move. At this moment I can't seem to pin anything down. I... I can appreciate your points about the importance of momentum and forward motion but at the moment it would be nice if that movement actually felt like growth to me. Right now it feels like total ignorance. I feel like I don't know anything at all because things keep moving all time!'

'Okay. Okay. What do you think about this: that this feeling you are describing, this movement, is actually growth in motion - what growth feels like as it is actually happening – as you are actually growing moment to moment?'

'I think... I'm really confused.'

'Okay. Look at it this way. Is it possible that your previous ideas about growth revolve around comparing yourself to fixed points - for example looking backwards to see how far you've come? Is this that you understand to be growth?'

'Yes. Entirely.'

'What about the idea that this is only describing growth after it has happened – a bit like an athlete explaining how the race went for them after they have finished?'

'Getting clearer.'

'What if we wanted to describe the race in action as we were actually running it – moment to moment – in the present tense: *this* and *this* is happening *now* and *now* and *now*? We would be describing the feeling of movement as it is happening rather than reflecting on what it was and how far we have come. If we relate this to growth we find we are describing the *experience* of growth in the moment. It's different to comparing ourselves to fixed points that have already occurred.'

'Could be. Could be...'

*

'Hang on. Isn't setting a *goal* like setting a fixed point to compare ourselves to? We do that all the time with our clients.'

'For the level of understanding we are aiming for now - no. The goal is simply a station the train passes through. Something designed as a type of future aim to kick-start the momentum in the present. No stopping at stations here.'

'So we don't stop at the goal. Seems a shame not to stop.'

'Well you can get out of the train and look around the place - enjoy it - have some fun. But remember...'

'...movement is life.'

'Less cliché than that – it is natural – it's human nature. Once we have achieved something we almost always want something else.'

'And this is a good thing?'

'It absolutely is. One hundred percent. Some people label it as greedy. I think it is essential. The interesting truth about our coaching is that it represents healthy living because it has genuine momentum, and so everything wants to be free to move - on every level – on and on - and our clients are inspired because of it. Why inspire our clients towards something designed to bring their momentum to a halt once it has been achieved? Why hold on when new, improved, better ideas will arrive at any moment? Why not move onwards with new dreams and ambitions once the old ones have been established?'

'It sounds exciting.'

'It is. Once you get used to movement there is an amazing sense of security in accepting that movement is everywhere all the time. Why waste time, energy and natural wellbeing fighting it? In fact the only *unnatural* behaviour is trying to stand still.'

'I see your point.'

'It's exciting – genuinely exciting to feel that way. Isn't it?'

'Yes. But it feels more like a roller coaster with the safety belts off rather than on.'

'How come?'

'Because there's nothing to hold on to.'

'But isn't that the beauty of safety belts on roller coasters – that you don't have to hold on – that they will keep you safe even if you don't?'

'Okay. I think what I'm saying is that I don't think mine is at all secure in the first place.'

'What would make it feel secure?'

'I have no idea.'

'How about knowing whether you are excited or fearful about continuous movement?'

'I don't really get your gist.'

'We covered this last year but here's a slightly more technical approach. If we are fearful, then we are more likely to get tense. If we get tense then brain function dictates that we can only react to things in a narrow, fearful, defensive way even though we may think we are not.'

'That makes sense.'

'When we are fearful we are certainly not in a position to create better things for ourselves. All we are focused upon is escaping the situation. Conversely, if we see continuous movement as excitement, and manage to stay tension free so that we can really enjoy the feeling, then the entire concept of this type of movement becomes one joyous creative ride. What do you think?'

'So it boils down to how we feel about it?'

'It does.'

'How we *genuinely* feel about it.'

'Indeed.'

'Because if the coach feels this way about their journey then it encourages the client to feel the same way about theirs?'

'It does.'

'I know I should know the answer to this by now, but it seems to have escaped me. How do we control how we feel again?'

'You'd be surprised at how often this 'forgetfulness' happens. In my experience this is a really good sign. It often means that the client is moving on and is re-positioning their understanding from a different viewpoint.'

'Right.'

'As we have said it's not about control and it's certainly not a battle. Initially what *pervades* everything...'

'There's that word again.'

'...is remaining physically tension free. So in this case we accept that our understanding as a coach is constantly on the move because it is. Nothing ever

stays the same because time moves on. Even if we *think* things do stay the same this is simply not the case. It is the mind playing tricks on us.'

'Right.'

'So basically the answer is to simply remain tension free about all of this. Allow ourselves to enjoy the concept – see the funny side.'

'There's a lot here Joe.'

'If we let go of the tension and enjoy the process it really is nothing at all except lightness and enjoyment.'

'And plenty of movement.'

'Well said.'

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