

Dissociachotic:  
Seeing the non-  
psychosis that we  
share



*'The interconnectedness that occurs through the process of growth within a loving, non-goal orientated relationship, leads to a negation of the need for an altered state to exist, to defend the threat of nihilation'*

*The wounded...becomes the healer, providing a bridge for the helper...*

*'in a non-psychotic state to resist the attempt to change the legitimate reality the other person is experiencing'*

*(Ball and Picot, 2019)*

# Principles when working with Trauma and Psychosis

Spirituality and Culture

Being with not doing to  
(Mosher et al, 2004)

Being in the Human to  
human relationship  
(Travelbee, 1971)

Seeing the non  
psychosis we share –  
the co existing same  
experience (Ball &  
Picot, 2018)

Creativity and  
openness

Empathy and  
compassion

Tolerance of  
uncertainty / Dialogism  
(listening to the  
dialogue)

Right understanding is a state of accepting the reality of 'what is', understanding without intention to change, without a goal and with acceptance that the moment will, by the law of nature, change

(Arjahn Sumedho, 2012).

EXPLANATORY  
FRAMEWORK  
(NOT A LABEL)  
helping the healer  
to become a healer

Hello I am

what you  
label me

# Psychosis and Dissociation

*'I do not believe it is possible to separate psychosis and dissociation; to me this is like attempting to separate a headache and a fever when I have the flu. Where does the headache begin and the fever end? And should I focus on "treating" my headache, fever, or maybe the virus that infected me and is creating an interconnected process of events in my body? While psychosis and dissociation are not the same thing, I believe that one does not have psychosis without dissociation or dissociation without psychosis. Often the difference simply boils down to: who can frame things the way that the professional wants to hear or agrees with'.*

Dr Noel Hunter - Trauma, Psychosis, and Dissociation (2014)



### **Dissociachotic:**

The experience of animation and giving life to being at variance of companionship to self in order for the survival of self in relationship to interpersonal threat from other

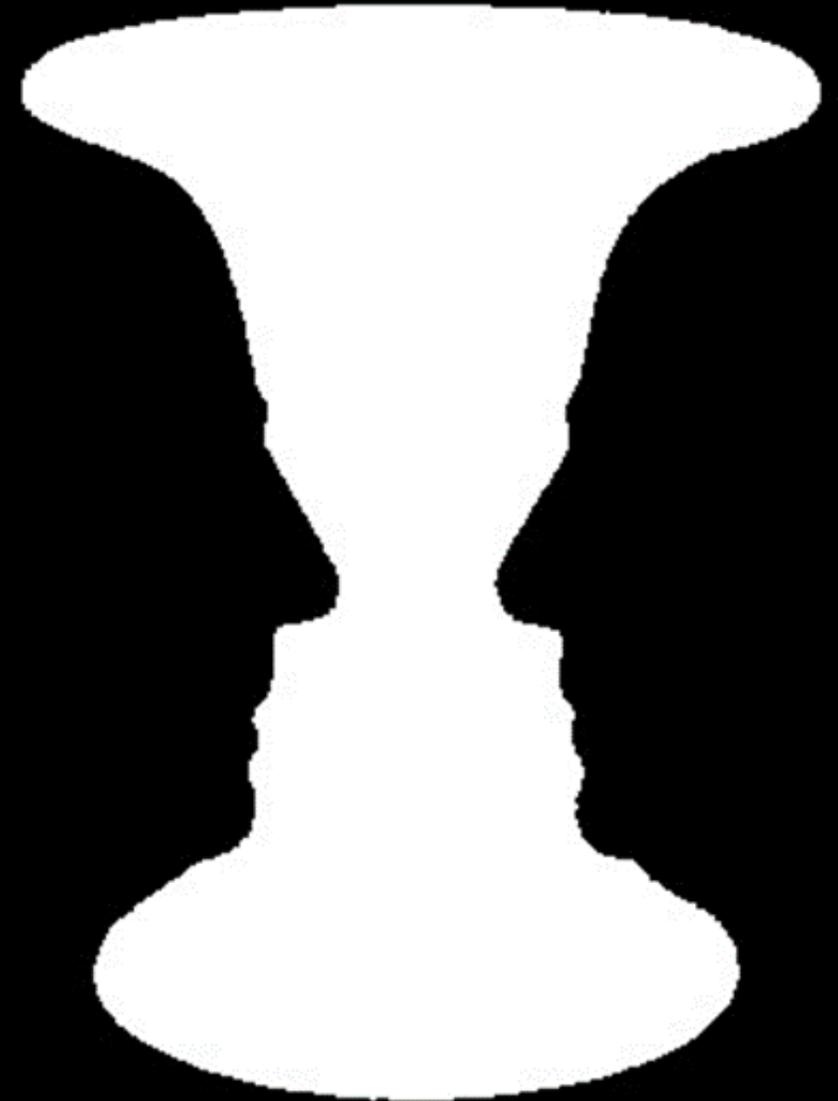
**Individual and Systemic**

# Perception: Psychosis as Dissociation (Dissociachotic)

- 'Busy, active dissociation' towards safety of relationship
- Can appear 'different' / less passive than the perceived 'shut down' state of dissociation

## **Value to attunement**

Observing the threat in relationship ... and the potential to re create safety



# Social engagement as a primary mechanism to maintain safety



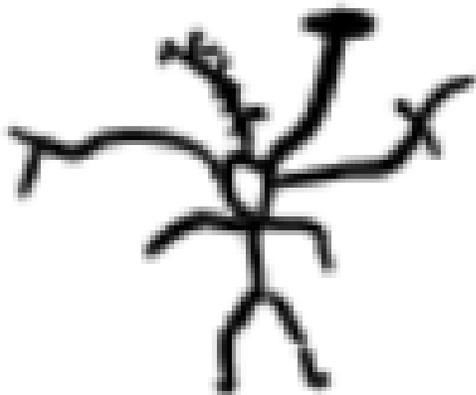
Overwhelm in the social engagement –  
Dissociative experience emerges

We go direct – social engagement has become  
the dilemma.

Dissociation it's a freeze response right?



We have had to adapted to the new threat



# What happens between 'us' and responding to the moment Dissociachotic?



Attune, be available to your own sense of being in the moment - how that might 'feed' the other persons narrative. Are we impeding the space for a person to embrace and be connected to self/s



Notice what the threat was - (Going towards the fearful, liminal person pushes them towards nihilation) - allow the person to come back to connection with other



Being with the person in the co existing same experience – with different realities - allows evaporation of the so called psychotic state



Facilitate the person in staying or coming towards the other when ready - not going towards them



Connection, narrative, human understanding towards authoring and re-authoring a narrative - not labels, confinement and medication to eradicate the experience

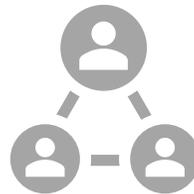


Sharing the different and the same realities as a co existing same experience facilitating a moment when the threat might not exist in itself meaning a new story can and may have emerged.

# If we respond to 'psychosis' as dissociation



Allow the person to come towards us not going towards them.



Notice what the threat was - Going towards the fearful liminal person pushes them towards nihilation so allow the person to come back to connection



Being with the person in the co existing same experience – with different realities - allows evaporation of the so called psychotic state.

# Dissociachotic example

A 30 year old male, Jack, has been hearing a number of voices, experiencing thought blocking and thought insertion for around 7 years. Also experiences paranoia.

The voice has been pervasive and often aggressive in content and nature.

Jack has invited engaging with his voices dialogue. In 15<sup>th</sup> talking with voices experience, the session had been ongoing for about 20 minutes. Jack had been engaged in the dialogue and was 'functioning' well.

When the facilitator invited Jack to ask the voice a challenging question – a question that represented a deep emotional / social dilemma - Jack found it very difficult to speak. He paused, cease communicating verbally and appeared to have an increase in voices intensity.

The facilitator responded to this moment by inviting Jack not to ask the voice the question, recognising that in this moment Jack had not been able to remain safely in the human to human interconnectedness. The facilitator and Jack discussed the moment and recognised that this moment had occurred between them both.

At this point Jack was back in connection and was able to talk, had no difficulty in forming his thinking, his voices were not intense and he was skilful in continuing to be in the human to human relationship.

**Psychosis perspective:** An increase in psychotic phenomena – voices and thought blocking - cognitive impairment - acutely psychotic (on chronic schizophrenia)

**Dissociachotic framework:** The request by the facilitator inviting Jack to take an action that was overtly challenging led to a difficulty in processing the dilemma that represents previous and current emotional (voice content and character) conflict. The facilitator had, through his action of invoking an emotional conflict, created a threat within the human to human encounter. This resulted in the increase in 'psychotic' phenomena.

# Read micks story

- 'the process as an extreme
- state is often defined as psychotic, with significant potential for harm and negation of
- the potential for growth of the meaningful reality for both individuals'
- The non-psychotic experience became a river through which the transition might flow towards deeper interconnectedness

# Dissociachotic in the moment of addiction - Dissociaddiction

- The Urge – the access of change - Andrew Tatarsky...only if we understand what might be happening.
- The moment when a person feels / experiences overwhelm (of human interconnectedness) and engages in the process of getting prepared for altering their state.
- Occurs in the loss of safety in connection to others, the ‘environment’
- What does a person need?  
Connection and compassion – (CFT ) to sooth  
e.g Overt ‘mirror’ in Heroin use (Opiates)

## **The disconnection**

‘The ‘psychotic’ person may be in a state of feeling unsafe due to the actions or ‘being’ in relation to another person. As the individual cannot change the fact of another person existing, they change their own state (unconsciously), the energy of this state serves to stave off complete nihilation of their existence and soul, but does leave them in a liminal space in the world. At this point the psychosis can become exacerbated as the individual navigates the liminal space of existence and non – existence’

## **The connection**

Accepting : ‘The non-psychotic experience became a river through which the transition might flow towards deeper interconnectedness’