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An Integrated Approach to Acculturation: A Personal Journey

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**AN INTEGRATED APPROACH
TO ACCULTURATION:
A PERSONAL JOURNEY**

Douglas C. Stone
B.S. Lewis and Clark College 1983

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This project by Douglas Stone is accepted in its present form.

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ABSTRACT

The intention of this professional paper is to propose a new, integrated model for acculturation which brings psychological understanding to this process. The first section of this paper gives a brief introduction and several necessary definitions. The second section introduces several existing acculturation models which I found applied to aspects of my experience, but which were inadequate in important areas. In the third section I outline a number of psychological models which I used to cope with acculturation and understand my experience before having contact with the acculturation material from the second section. In the fourth section I give an overview of the elements of my acculturation setting which increased the intensity of my experience. The fifth section is an analysis of that experience, through the psychological and acculturation models. In the last section I present the new, integrated acculturation model.

ERIC descriptors:

Acculturation
Cultural Awareness
Cultural Differences
Culture Contact
Social Values

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I am a shaman and teacher of English living in Peru since 1989. I come from Colorado where I was studying in a graduate program in religious studies and apprenticing with a Mexican-American healer¹ before coming to Peru. It was my interest in healing which brought me to Peru and the small rural pueblo of Las Delicias. It also brought me together with the woman I eventually married, Patricia Calderon – the youngest daughter of the Peruvian healer, Eduardo Calderon with whom I worked until his death in 1996. As well, moving to Peru brought me to the profession of teaching. After we married I started teaching English to support my family. I work during the week at a bilingual school teaching English to both primary and secondary school children, while maintaining a modest healing practice at home in my spare time. While seemingly disparate, my healing practice and English teaching are related as both, at their core, involve learning processes, the focus of this Independent Professional Project (IPP) and my life's interest.

This thesis records my personal experience with the learning process of acculturation and focuses on how I came to understand it. It will present an integrated model for acculturation which brings together insights and understandings from a diverse array of theoretical models from culture studies and psychology set in the context of a basic model for change observed in the physical world. As such culture learning, and

¹Throughout this paper I will refer to shaman and healer interchangeably.

learning in general, are viewed as a natural process of reordering, much like other processes of reordering in the physical world, the intensity and path of expression of which is determined by both unpredictable internal and external, variable factors.

When I arrived in Peru, I had no personal experience with the process of acculturation. My ignorance, however, did not spare me from becoming enmeshed in this process with no formal frame of reference for understanding it. Having neither access to information about acculturation nor contact with other foreigners in Peru going through the same experience, I looked to my background and experiences to explain and cope with my situation. This changed dramatically in 1997 while completing my Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) course requirements at the School For International Training (SIT), in Brattleboro, Vermont, where I came into contact with materials written specifically about culture and the acculturation process.

Of particular interest to me were those materials which focused on or suggested the 'learning'² cycle of acculturation. This cycle appears to be both universal and inescapable, involving the involuntary participation of almost all levels of the individual's personal experience. The intensity of this cycle is governed by the presence or absence of certain intensity factors in the acculturating environment. A key factor in the cycle, and a significant aspect of my experience, is the phenomenon of culture shock which will be discussed later.

Contact with these particular models had a number of effects. One was great

² Although not directly focused on as a learning process in the acculturation materials, but I see it as a learning process which is why I've put it in quotations.

relief: What I had been experiencing were common acculturation phenomenon and not symptoms of insanity. Pursuit of the goals which brought me to live in Peru resulted in a high level of immersion in a cultural 'niche' quite dissimilar to my native culture. As a result the intensity of my acculturation process was exaggerated. Secondly, I recognized a parallel between the psychological growth models I had been drawing on and the 'learning' cycle of these acculturation models. This realization was a catalyst for a number of changes.

On one level recognition of parallels enabled me to recognize acculturation for what it is at its core; an intense, exaggerated manifestation of fundamental, psychological learning/growth processes, displaying a basic pattern inherent to most processes of change and learning, a pattern which can be facilitated and enhanced through the individual's willful participation in the process.

On another level, the recognition was frustrating. There was a general lack of depth within the materials concerning the psychological dynamics of acculturation. A deep understanding of the psychological dynamics is important both to understanding acculturation and for coping with the phenomenon of becoming 'stuck' in problems within this process, something which in my experience is common. This lack of depth of psychological understanding in the materials made, in my mind, insightful and useful ideas often inaccessible and border on trivial.

These recognitions had an organizational effect. They helped me to connect my acculturation experience, shamanistic knowledge, and the acculturation and psychological models and focus them into a single cohesive framework, one which I feel adds the

necessary psychological understanding to existing information available on the topic. It is a frame of reference which can be used by others to help cope with the overwhelming process of acculturation.

Acculturation is a complex process. I found it necessary to look at a wide number of seemingly unrelated models in order to understand it. In my approach to acculturation, I have pinpointed underlying patterns and established a more full understanding of the unpredictable, external and internal variables which influence the expression of those patterns. Variable internal psychological factors, combined with variable external cultural and physical factors, determine the intensity of the experience of the basic, constant, cycle of acculturation. As an example, a psychologically rigid individual in a culture very different from his or her own will experience the cycle to a greater degree than a more psychologically flexible individual in a culture which resembles his or her own. Regardless, the cycle is present.

This IPP is organized around my personal acculturation experience. Understanding of my model will be gained by seeing how it grew from and relates to this experience. The power of this model for understanding acculturation in both general and specific terms will be appreciated through the reader's relating of my experiences to his or her own. In ESL this understanding extends to the experience of the students, who are experiencing acculturation phenomenon. A teacher actively aware of the acculturation process will be better prepared to understand and provide true guidance or help, even if only as empathy, to students going through acculturation.

This thesis will begin with an overview of several key terms and concepts referent

to the acculturation process. Chapter Two contains descriptions from the discipline of culture studies of three models which I have found pertinent to aspects of my acculturation experience. Connections to these models will be made in my analysis of experience in Chapter Five. Chapter Two, will end with Michael Paige's (1993) intensity factors, which demonstrate the relationship between the intensity of the acculturation experience and the degree to which certain factors in that experience are present or absent.

Chapter Three will present four models from the field of psychology. Each of these models captures important aspects of my acculturation experience which the culture studies models do not address. This chapter will outline some basic concepts of Jungian psychology, work in the field of mood research and cognitive psychology by Dr. David Burns (1992), aspects of Dr. Stanislov Grof's (1976) work with psychoanalysis and LSD, and Dr. Elizabeth Kübler-Ross's (1969) model for the grieving process and terminally ill patients.

Chapter Four will give an overview of my acculturation experience, pointing out elements of that immersion which increased the intensity of that experience. Chapter Five will analyze that experience through an application of the psychology models from Chapter Three. Chapter Six will bring together the various elements into the integrated model I have developed with the purpose of deepening understanding of this significant process of acculturation.

DEFINITIONS

PSYCHIC GROWTH

To understand the term psychic growth as I will use it in this IPP, it is also necessary to understand the Jungian concepts of individuation, integration, psychic movement, and relativization. As well it is necessary to understand both Jungian and non-Jungian symbolic guides as well as basic tenets of cognitive psychology and LSD research.

Psychic growth at its core is similar to the concept of 'individuation' as defined within Jungian psychology. Individuation is "the process in which a person in actual life consciously attempts to understand and develop the innate individual potentialities of his or her psyche." (Hall 1983, 19) Individuation is not achievement oriented, but rather dependent on the person becoming aware of, and remaining true to, deeper potentialities as opposed to pursuing roles dictated by the culture, family, or a psychic imbalance within the individual. (Hall 1983)

Central to an understanding of both psychic growth and individuation is the idea of integration. Jungian psychology stresses the importance of the individual's conscious participation in the movement of psychic elements³ towards a person's psychic health. Jung (Hall 1983) used dreams, a universal language of the psyche, as guides to understanding inner psychic movement. Integration is considered the process of connecting those inner psychic movements to present, outer life occurrences.

Psychic growth also presupposes this necessity of paying attention to inner

³ See pages 25 through 31, chapter three, for a more complete examination of this term.

movements of psychic elements and connecting them with the individual's present day situation. This includes following any necessary indications for action in the outer, present day world of the individual which will help in the movement of the inner psychic elements.

Unlike individuation, psychic growth assumes that symbolic guides are found in other realms aside from dream images. One important realm is outer life events, which can carry the same symbolic function as dream symbols – that of pointing towards movement and necessary integration points within the psyche in order for the individual to continue in the process of unfolding psychic health and balance. In this way an acculturation situation, with its individual acculturation experiences and points of conflict, marks a starting point for looking into the nature of the individual's psychic makeup and for growth to begin. And if acculturation is to truly take place, whether consciously participated in (and thereby facilitated) or not, psychic growth must occur.

In this realm of outer life experience is the learning process laid out in this work as it pertains to acculturation which may follow this path or variations of it: An event happens. Learning moves from that Outer Collective experience (culture and/or society), or Outer personal experience (daily experience), to Inner Personal Experience (the reservoir of past personal experiences) to Inner Collective (the reservoir of Unconscious patterns and symbols shared by humanity). Integration takes place when the process is reversed and connections are made between tapped levels of the inner personal experience and/or inner collective experience, and the outer experiences (either collective or personal) which started the process.

Another important realm of guidance assumed in the definition of psychic growth

and one which marks a distinction from Jungian individuation is that of spiritual help. Throughout the psychic growth process, guidance from transpersonal sources is available to the individual, and is a necessary aspect of the process, especially for those who find themselves isolated as I was. As well, the presence and availability of spiritual sources and a deepening appreciation for, and understanding of these sources, are all a natural and inevitable consequence of psychic growth.

One last area of contrast between individuation and psychic growth lies in information which did not exist at the time that Jung developed his theories. This information comes out of the work of Dr. David Burns (1992) in cognitive psychology and the work of Dr. Stanislav Grof (1976) in LSD research.

Acculturation is both a personal and impersonal process, and if 'successful' according to acculturation models, is relativizing in its progression. In psychic growth a prominent and inevitable result is the realization of the limits of the ego – that part of ourselves which we refer to as 'I' – and the existence of other psychic elements which are of equal importance to the individual and within the individual's psychic landscape, but wholly independent from that which we identify as 'I.' This realization is what is meant by relativization in this context.

Psychic growth, like individuation, emphasizes the necessity of relativization of the various elements of the psyche, most importantly the ego, which for most of us appears at first to be the entire content of the psyche. As such, we could add that this points out another distinguishing characteristic of the process of psychic growth and that is the fact that in its progress it is humbling in a salutary way.

CULTURE, ACCULTURATION AND ADAPTATION

Culture

Stern (1992) identifies two stages in the development of a working definition of culture. Stage one came during the period between the two World Wars. During this period it was hypothesized that a country's culture was composed of its history, geography, institutions, artistic and scientific accomplishments—the 'achievements' of the country or people in question. An important link between culture and language was a part of this hypothesis. Language experts focused on these areas in order to gain an insiders understanding of the target country's language (Stern 1992).

The second stage came after WWII with the growth of social sciences. At this time language researchers began to realize that culture was more than just a group of achievements in select areas and history. Culture began to include such things as the typical daily behaviors in those communities and such ideas as personal relationships, family life, value and belief systems, and philosophies—what Stern (1992) calls "the shared social fabric that makes up a society." (Stern 1992, 207)

The first stage definition of culture as "great achievements, refinement and artistic endeavor" is often referred to as capital 'C' culture, while culture as "the fabric of life, daily living, beliefs, and world view," (Stern 1992, 207–208) the second stage definition, is often referred to as small 'c' culture.

The definition of culture which best fits my experience and best serves the development of my premise of acculturation as a learning process comes from H. Douglas

Brown (1994) out of the second stage school of thought. His definition develops the small 'c' definition one important step further, as "the glue which brings a group of people together—a collective identity, and a system of patterns which remain *mostly below the conscious level* [my italics], from which they govern the behavior of human beings."

(Brown 1994, 163–164)

Acculturation

Acculturation is simply the process of adaptation to a new collective and subconscious identity. Brown (1994) acknowledges the importance of understanding both the intensity of this experience and the demands it places on the acculturating individual in order to gain a meaningful understanding of this experience. He describes the process as one of reorientation of thinking, feeling and communication on the part of the acculturating individual.

Adaptation

Successful adaptation occurs when the acculturating individual attains a subconscious level of target culture comfortableness, acceptance and competence which allows him or her to remain and function within the target culture effectively. A large part of this functioning, because it comes from having gone through a deep level learning process, is subconscious.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND I: MODELS FOR ACCULTURATION

The following three acculturation models were selected from readings in a culture course which I took at SIT in 1997. These models provided me with the basic acculturation cycle, which I utilized after the fact to make sense of my experience in Peru. Brown's (1994) model speaks most directly to my acculturation experience. I have included models by Hanvey (Omaggio 1993) and Gaston (1992), not because of the totality of either model, but because each model contains individual aspects which compliment, and so make more whole, Brown's (1994) model. To end this chapter intensity factors will be looked at – an important aspect of acculturation which is not a model in itself, but which directly relates to the acculturation models. These are factors in the acculturation environment which either increase or decrease the intensity of the experience and are present in every model.

H. D. BROWN

H. D. Brown's (1994) model for acculturation focuses on what to me is the core 'cycle'¹ of the acculturation process and therefore groundwork for this IPP. The model consists of four stages common to the experience of individuals in acculturation. His first

¹ For an explanation/discussion of the term 'cycle' see page 94 in chapter six Synthesis.

stage of acculturation [euphoria/excitement]² is a time of excitement and euphoria due to the newness of the environment. The second stage [culture shock] he describes as a,

“phenomenon ranging from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis. Culture shock is associated with feelings in the learner of estrangement, anger, hostility, indecision, frustration, unhappiness, sadness, loneliness, homesickness and even physical illness. Persons undergoing culture shock view their new world out of resentment and alternate between being angry at others for not understanding them and being filled with self-pity.”(Brown 1994, 170)

During the second stage [culture shock] the individual experiences an increasing sense of intrusion on the part of cultural differences. It is at this point that the individual may seek the support of fellow countrymen. Brown's (1994) third stage [recovery] is, “one of gradual, and at first tentative and vacillating, recovery,” (Brown 1994, 171) in which the individual begins to overcome some of the problems of acculturation. This is a time of slow progress, and although not as overwhelming in anxiety as the second stage, stress is present. To this vacillation, he ties the concept of *anomie*, feelings of social uncertainty or dissatisfaction. This stage often comes when the individual is approaching mastery of the foreign language. It is accompanied by confusion over cultural identity and homesickness, both of which may result in intermittent reversion to escape mechanisms used during the second stage.

Brown's (1994) fourth stage [near full/full recovery], is characterized by

²Brown (1994) does not label his stages. From here on I will refer to his stages as
1) euphoria/excitement 2) culture shock 3) recovery 4) near full/full recovery

adaptation or assimilation, self confidence and acceptance of the new culture. The acculturating individual has become a 'new' person, developed in the adopted culture.

ROBERT HANVEY

Robert Hanvey (Omaggio 1993) developed his model as a way for measuring cross-cultural awareness. While similar to Brown's (1994) in pointing out the tremendous involvement of the entire being in the process, it adds an important element I feel is not sufficiently emphasized in Brown's (1994) model: namely the role of intellect in the Recovery stage as a necessary step to full or near full recovery. Hanvey's (Omaggio 1993) model consists of four levels.

Level I: [superficial knowledge]³

"Information about the culture may consist of superficial or visible traits, such as isolated facts or stereotypes. The individual very likely sees the culture as odd, bizarre, and exotic. Ideas are often expressed in terms of what the culture lacks. Culture bearers may be considered rude, ignorant, or unrefined at this stage of understanding."(Omaggio 1993, 371)

Level II: [expanded knowledge]

"Learners at this stage focus on expanded knowledge about the culture in terms of both significant and subtle traits that contrast with those of their own culture. The learners might find the culture bearers' behavior irrational, frustrating, irritating, or nonsensical."(Omaggio 1993, 371)

³ Omaggio (1993) does not give names for Hanvey's (Omaggio 1993) levels. The names given in brackets are my own.

Level III: [intellectual acceptance]

“At this stage, the individual begins to accept the culture at an intellectual level, and thus the culture becomes believable because it can be explained. The individual can see things in terms of the target culture’s frame of reference.”(Omaggio 1993, 371)

Level IV: [empathy]

“This level, the level of empathy, is achieved through living in and through the culture. The individual begins to see the culture from the viewpoint of the insider, and thus is able to know how the culture bearer feels.” (Omaggio 1993, 371)

JAN GASTON

Jan Gaston’s (1992) model represents a departure from Brown (1994) and Hanvey’s (Omaggio 1993) models in that her model is prescriptive rather than descriptive. Instead of presenting the acculturation stages as phenomenon which basically happen to the individual, Gaston (1992) sees the individual as having a certain degree of control over the process. She presents her stages along with recommendations for skills which can be consciously developed in response to the common acculturation phenomenon and adds the dimension of acculturation as a learning/growth process which the individual can actively participate in and enhance. Instead of the process controlling the individual, the individual, to a degree, controls the process.

Unfortunately Gaston’s (1992) model fails because of a lack of depth of understanding of the psychological dynamics. Individuals who encounter an impasse in his/her acculturation experience without the necessary psychological understanding of the process will not find it in Gaston (1992), and the value in her model will be lost, as the

psychological understanding gives the individual the necessary tools to take control of the process.

The skills Gaston (1992) feels can be developed are related to learning/gaining cultural awareness and enhancing or fomenting that learning process in order to be able to function in a cross-cultural situation. Gaston's (1992) stages, therefore, serve as guides for increasing awareness in cross-cultural situations, a goal she feels is realistic in contrast to that of complete assimilation of the second culture. Ms. Gaston (1992) defines cultural awareness as, "the recognition that culture affects perception and that culture influences values, attitudes and behavior." (Gaston 1984, 2) As such, the four stages are seen as sequential steps which lead towards toleration and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Stage one. Recognition:

Individuals become aware that they are members of a culture group, and concepts such as 'foreigner' take on depth of meaning. One realizes that foreigners may do things differently, and with this realization comes a deeper awareness that these differences go beyond the obvious food, shelter, and clothing, and extend to values and attitudes. Gaston (1992) recommends cultivating the skill of 'non-judgmental observation.'

Stage two. Acceptance/Rejection:

This stage and the first can occur almost simultaneously as Acceptance/Rejection is simply a reaction to what we recognize. The tendency at this stage is to react negatively and rebel against either one's

own culture or the foreign culture. The recommended skill to be developed is that of coping with ambiguity, to realize that there is more than one way to approach life.

Stage three. Integration/Ethnocentrism.

This stage represents a point of decision: the individual either becomes more sophisticated and inherently bicultural, or more rigidly mono-cultural or ethnocentric. The skill to be developed here is empathy: the ability to put oneself in the place of individuals in the target culture along with a willingness to open up one's native cultural identity to include aspects of our newly acquired culture.

Stage four. Transcendence.

At this stage the acculturated individual is able to appreciate not only his/her own cultural roots, but that of all cultures as well. Culture in general has been transcended, and individuals see themselves as a product of culture and not as cultural prisoners. Gaston (1992) suggests the development of the ability to respect—one which allows for disagreement and criticism. Gaston (1992), cautions against taking this in an idealistic form and expecting it to follow the lines exactly as indicated, like the, “metamorphosis of caterpillar to butterfly,” (Gaston 1984, 5) a process which follows a specific, irreversible, non-variable path.

MICHAEL PAIGE

Although not specifically identified in all of the models, culture shock appears in each at or around stage II as something which must be endured if the acculturating individual is to successfully adapt.

Michael Paige (1993) describes culture shock as “emotional reactions to the disorientation that occurs when one is immersed in an unfamiliar culture and is deprived of familiar cues.” (Paige 1993, 2) Like Brown (1994), he sees potential for experiencing “intense psychological stress,” and sees the intensity of the experience as being related to the sojourner’s progression through what he refers to as “stages of personal development” which challenge self and cultural identity as well as world view.

According to Paige (1993), the stress which produces culture shock revolves around the fact that sojourners eventually must struggle with the certainty “that cultures possess their own internal logic and coherence for their members, hence their own validity,” (Paige 1993, 3) an element which challenges the sojourner’s ideas of meaning of truth and reality. This challenge to basic truths, the discovery of ambiguities around truth, knowledge and perception is disturbing, and the process of self-evaluation which logically follows is painful. As shifts occur in thinking and perspective, concepts of moral certainty about right and wrong become less absolute, and “it is a common phenomenon for learners to find themselves becoming temporarily immobilized in a state of extreme cultural relativism, hesitant or unable to make judgements.” (Paige 1993, 3)

Related to this process, Paige (1993) has identified ten *intensity factors*, “situational variables and personal attributes . . . which influence the psychological

intensity of the inter-cultural experience.”(Paige 1993, 2)

- 1) Cultural Differences. “The greater the degree of cultural difference between the sojourner’s own and the target culture, the greater the degree of psychological intensity.” (Paige 1993, 5) These include beliefs, behaviors, patterns of thinking, communication styles and value orientations. The more negatively the sojourner evaluates those differences, the greater the psychological stress. Conflict can arise for moral, religious, or philosophical reasons. An inability to suspend judgement and negative reactions to cultural differences increases intensity.
- 2) Ethnocentrism. Here two dynamics operate; one from the point of view of the sojourner, and the other from the point of view of the target culture. Paige (1993) bases his hypotheses on Milton Bennett’s definition and model for ethnocentrism where Bennett defines *ethnocentric* as “assuming that the world view of one’s own culture is central to all reality.”(Paige 1993, 5) The more ethnocentric the sojourner, the higher the psychological intensity of the experience. The more ethnocentric the target culture, the higher the psychological intensity of the experience for the sojourner.

What determines the level of intensity of both instances are factors such as resistance to outside influence, reluctance to accept strangers, extreme nationalism, suspicion of outsiders, defense against difference and prejudice in the form of sexism or racism. The greater the presence of these, the more difficult acceptance into the culture, and the greater the psychological intensity of the acculturation

process.

- 3) Language. The lower the sojourner's target culture language ability, the greater the psychological intensity, and the more essential language ability is to functioning in the target culture, the more pronounced the level of psychological intensity. A factor which influences this intensity is the fact that target language knowledge may not necessarily insure effective inter-cultural communication. Fatigue associated with using a second language daily when one is not yet proficient at that language, also creates stress.
- 4) Cultural Immersion. The more immersed the individual is in the culture, the greater the degree of psychological intensity, with 'full immersion,' being "extensive interaction with host-culture members." (Paige 1993, 8) It takes time to gain an insider's understanding of how a culture functions, and to learn appropriate behaviors. The onslaught of cultural differences in the immersion process challenges the appropriateness of behavior, the sense of clarity, and expectations of the individual. This increases psychological stress, although it also means ultimately a greater degree of learning.
- 5) Cultural Isolation. The less access the immersed individual has to his/her own culture group, the greater the psychological intensity. The acculturating individual has less opportunity to reconfirm his/her cultural identity and is "deprived the chance to relax, regain their cultural equilibrium, and experience the ease of communication they are used to in their own culture." (Paige 1993, 8) Culture, language and adaptation fatigue are results of this.

- 6) Prior Inter-cultural Experience. The less prior experience of real inter-cultural experience, the greater the stress in an immersion context. Individuals more experienced with immersion will have developed ways of dealing with the problems which come up and will be familiar with the adjustment process.
- 7) Expectations. The more unrealistic one's expectations of the culture, the greater the stress. Positive attitudes mixed with unrealistic expectations Paige (1993) calls, "disconfirmed expectancies" or psychological letdown. This factor will result in general disappointment with the culture, the experiences the individual is having, and his/her own performance.
- 8) Visibility and Invisibility. This factor relates to one's physical differences to the foreign culture. Great differences and high visibility add to stress. This is the 'fish bowl' phenomenon. The opposite occurs when the sojourner feels that he/she is invisible to the foreign culture because the culture does not know, or recognize important aspects of the immersed individual's identity. One form this takes is when some aspect of the sojourner, or sojourner's behavior is unacceptable to the foreign country and therefore the individual must hide it for fear of rejection.
- 9) Status. This stress increasing factor can take two forms; either an immersed individual does not receive the respect he/she feels is deserved, or respect is received which is felt not to be deserved.
- 10) Power and Control. The less power and control one has in their foreign situation, the greater the stress. Behaviors which worked in the original culture don't work in the host-culture, don't work to the same degree, or don't produce the same

results. The more controlling the person is, or the more power or influence one is used to exercising, the greater the stress experienced.

These models provided me with the understanding that a basic acculturation cycle exists. It is universal and the intensity of it depends on the existence, or non-existence, of intensity factors in the acculturation environment. As helpful as these models were in aiding me to understand my acculturation experience, I found them inadequate because they did not speak directly to important aspects of my experience in Peru and my interpretation of that experience. These aspects fell in the realm of psychological understanding, which will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND II: MODELS FOR PSYCHIC GROWTH

I had no formal frame of reference from acculturation studies with which to make sense of the intense emotions and psychological states arising from my acculturation experience at the time it was happening. I was unaware that acculturation was a universal cycle with defined stages and related phenomenon. As a result, I looked to models from my academic background in psychology and religious studies in order to cope.

JUNGIAN PSYCHOLOGY

INDIVIDUATION

A central concept in Jungian psychology is that of individuation. Unlike traditional psychotherapy in which the goal is often, "the development of a strong and independent ego . . . tempered with the need to achieve close, loving relationships," (Hall 1983, 105) individuation sees these goals as valued aims, but not ends. Jung (Hall 1983) felt that strengthening and moving towards independence of the ego was only a precursory step in the overall process in the movement of the psyche towards health and balance. This requires that the strengthened and independent ego recognizes at some point the fact that it is not the center of the psyche, and that its control and power over the individuation process and the other structures within the psyche is limited. (Hall 1983) Edward C.

Whitmont (1969), a leading Jungian analyst, describes the goal of individuation as being:

“a conscious striving for becoming what one is” or rather “is meant to be.” However, since the goal of this process, the Self¹, is like an “*a priori* existent,” “the God within us,” individuation is always a road, a way, a process, travel or travail, a dynamism; it is never, at least not while one lives in time and space, a static or accomplished state. It is “becoming,” not “being.” The Self as the “goal” of the individuation process may be likened to the pole star: one may plot one’s course by it, but one does not expect to reach it.” (Whitmont 1969, 221–222)

LEVELS OF THE PSYCHE

Jung (Hall 1983) describes the psyche in terms of levels and structures. The two basic levels of the human psyche are the conscious and unconscious levels. Each of these levels are further divided into two levels, the personal and collective². The resultant four levels may be summarized as follows:

- 1) *personal consciousness*, or ordinary awareness;
- 2) *personal unconscious*, that which is unique to an individual psyche but not conscious;
- 3) the *collective unconscious*, or *objective psyche*, which has an apparently universal structure in mankind; and
- 4) the outer world of the *collective consciousness*, the cultural world of shared values and forms. (Hall 1983, 9)

Personal Consciousness and Unconscious

An example of personal *consciousness* is the sensation of heat in my body as I sit typing these words. It is summer time and hot. I am consciously aware of the heat

¹The Self will be addressed below.

² Some prefer to call the collective unconscious the objective unconscious. This is not true for the collective conscious.

because it is uncomfortable. Personal *unconscious* would be my memory of cooking breakfast on Mother's Day and burning my hand testing the burners. I remembered this because a recent personal conscious event brought this unconscious memory forward to my conscious awareness: my wife and I had been talking about Mother's Day and differences in how we celebrated them. Until the memory was accessed through that association, it remained outside my conscious awareness. It is personal in nature. Although unconscious, it constitutes a part of my self, unconsciously guiding my behavior when I cook.

Collective Consciousness and Unconscious

The collective *consciousness* is the body of culturally shared values. An example of collective *consciousness* would be my daughter's standing up from the lunch table and saying thank you to our house guest for the meal. In the culture in which we live, such a gesture is valued as a polite and correct gesture even though our house guest had nothing to do with the buying or preparing of the food. It is collective in nature because it a value shared in a large community of people. It is conscious because it is shared in the outer world.

The collective *unconscious*, in simple terms, is the reservoir of deeply ingrained patterns which act as organizing and meaning-giving principles within the human psyche. Jung's ideas about the collective *unconscious* and its elements came from studying clients' dreams concurrently with mythology and symbolism from differing cultures. In the course of this study, Jung (Hall 1983) recognized patterns of common human experience

appearing in literature, myths and art work from cultures separated by time and distance. He also found that such images surfaced from within individual clients' psyches, even those who had never had contact with these images in their daily experience. Jung (Hall 1983) noticed that whether the images were from cultural mythology or from a clients' dreams, they both had unique, as well as universal aspects to their symbolism. Their content was neither wholly personal or culturally unique, nor purely archetypal. These images he called *archetypal images* which he felt were "fundamental and deep images formed by the action of archetypes upon the accumulating experience of the individual psyche." (Hall 1983, 11).

STRUCTURES OF THE PSYCHE

Archetypes and Archetypal Images

The most important elements of the collective unconscious are the archetypal images and archetypes. The archetypes are basic patterns of common human experience which have been etched upon the collective unconscious over thousands of years of collective human experience. "Any recurrent human experience has an [archetype at its] foundation: birth, death, sexual union, marriage, conflict of opposing forces, etc." (Hall 1983, 11) Because the language of the psyche is symbolic, there are images associated with the archetype. The archetypal image is accessible to conscious awareness. The archetype around which the image is gathered is not. Jung (Hall 1983) likened the relationship between archetype and archetypal image:

"to the crystal formation in a saturated solution: the lattice-

structure of a particular crystal follows certain principles (the archetype), while the actual form a particular crystal will take (archetypal image) cannot be predicted in advance.”(Hall 1983, 10)

On an individual level, archetypal images display both collective and personal elements. They are recognizable by the more universal and generalized meanings attached to them. They also are recognizable by the presence of a numinous quality. Because of the nature of the psyche, archetypal images will have personal qualities to them, an acquisition process which begins with the psyche's first contact with the outer world. The fact that the archetypal image is shaped by one's experience describes in part the existence of a variety of images which may be attributed to a single archetype. For example, while two different individuals may have a predisposition to the Mother archetype³, due to the differences in their subjective experiences, each individual's archetypal image may contain some elements which are quite distinct, yet both images will be recognizable as archetypal images due to both the collective nature of their associations and the numinous feel they evoke. The presence of personal qualities in the archetypal image points to an important aspect of Jung's model: the idea that the four previously mentioned levels of the psyche are integrally linked. The way in which they are linked is significant to a full understanding of Jung's model.

³ A few other Archetypes would include Father, Hero, Trickster, etc. They represent patterns which are common to all human experience, having persisted throughout time. Everyone has a mother and so certain patterns associated to this, like nurturing (nursing) for example, are associated with this archetype. When the relationship with the actual mother is in some way extraordinary (negative, disrupted, etc), a predisposition to this Archetype and complex can arise. The same can occur for other Archetypes under other circumstances.

Complexes

Complexes are, "groupings of related images held together by a common emotional tone." (Hall 1983, 10) The complex is to the personal unconscious what the archetypal image/archetype is to the collective unconscious—it is the basic content of the personal unconscious. There is, however, an intimate and important link between complexes and archetypes.

Individual complexes consist of images and memories with a similar tone. One way to visualize this is to think of a spiral constellation, the core of which is a special magnet which attracts only stars of a certain, similar quality. Stars which lack this particular quality are pushed off and attracted to other magnetic cores which draw their particular qualities. In this case, the stars would be personal experience, gained through interaction with the environment starting at birth and continuing throughout life.

Jung (Hall 1983) discovered this tendency of constellating experiences through work with word association and psychoanalysis. The connection between complexes and archetypes begins with the idea of constellating experiences of similar tone. Jung (Hall 1983) recognized that the basic pattern for the tone of each complex was archetypal. In my example in the paragraph above, the special magnets would be these archetypes.

The contents of the personal unconscious, the complexes, are connected to the collective unconscious through their archetypal cores. There exists between the two levels a continuity and connection which makes one accessible to the other.

My unconscious memory of burning my hand is a content of my personal unconscious. It came to my conscious awareness through an association process put into

motion by talking about Mother's day celebrations. This association with my mother tells me that this memory has constellated to my personal mother complex.

According to Jungian psychology, if I were to pursue this in terms of individuation, the process would begin here. Through association I would bring up more memories and look into my dreams for related images. From there I would look in my daily life for information which would bring meaning to this memory and those images. If these found meanings were significant, this process would lead me eventually to emotionally laden images and/or memories. Most likely I would find a current, outer life correlation, in which tension or problems are present, and which relate with the emotions, memories and images. As I find connection between the memories and images in my inner life with my outer life, the images and the emotional content integrate and I move further into deeper images related to memories distanced more in time. As this process continues and deepens, the images which arise in my consciousness will begin to have a more collective nature to them, until eventually the content is mostly collective in nature, as opposed to personal, and having to do with the archetypal image in my example, the Mother Archetype. Theoretically, this particular complex will eventually be integrated to the point that it is no longer a negative unconscious influence on my behavior, requiring my conscious attention, although it will still exist and be an integral part of my psychic makeup and personality. At this point other complexes may come to the foreground.

No matter how close one gets to the actual archetype, one will never fully experience it. What will be experienced will be the archetypal image, and since it will be experienced through one's personal interpretation apparatus, one's senses, ego,

memories/experience and awareness, there will be elements of one's personal experience in the eventual confrontation with the archetypal image.

The Ego and The Shadow

The ego and the shadow are two intimately related structures important to individual identity. (Hall 1983) Both begin to form at birth and their formation involves a process of both personal and collective selection. The ego can be looked at as the reservoir for experience and behavior which is deemed acceptable. These behaviors are selected by the reinforcement which a child receives for behaviors which are deemed acceptable as defined by the family and the surrounding culture. The shadow is the reservoir or receptacle of those behaviors deemed inappropriate. The shadow and its repressed contents tend to be unconscious, while the ego tends to be conscious. The contents of both are primarily personal. Hall (1983) describes their relationship in this way,

“Since the contents or qualities of the shadow were potentially part of the developing ego, they continue to carry a sense of personal identity but of a rejected or unacceptable kind, and usually associated with feelings of guilt. Since the shadow was dynamically disassociated from the dominant ego-identity in the course of early development, its possible return to claim a share of conscious life arouses anxiety.” (Hall 1983, 15)

Jung (Hall 1983) felt that many of the natural qualities of the psyche which are rejected in childhood are necessary for healthy functioning in adulthood, and therefore the integration of these shadow back into the ego complex is important. An example of this would be sexual impulses which arise in childhood behaviors, but which are often seen as

inappropriate. These impulses are an important aspect of being an adult. The disassociation of such natural impulses into the shadow during childhood can result in adult sexual impulses which are deviant or significantly damaged unless steps are taken to integrate them back into the ego.

The contents of the shadow can surface in a number of ways. One is in interactions with others. The contents of the shadow are often unconsciously projected onto people holding qualities which the individual strongly dislikes or envies because he/she deems them as not sufficiently developed or desirable. (Hall 1983) Another way is the aforementioned interference in healthy adult functioning, in which shadow contents act from their unconscious state against the functioning of the psyche on the whole. Jung (Hall 1983) recognized this conflict as neurosis, a near universal human experience, as well as a desire or momentum on the part of the psyche to move towards wholeness and harmony.

The Self

Jung (Hall 1983) considered the Self an archetypal template of the ego, functioning as the regulating center of the psyche. While the ego is the center of the personal consciousness, the Self is the center of the entire psyche and possibly the entire objective unconscious. While the ego is conscious, the Self, being archetypal, is unconscious. Hall (1983) ascribes to the Self three basic meanings:

- ▶ the psyche as a whole, functioning as a unit;
- ▶ the central archetype of order, when viewed from the point of view of the ego; and

- the archetypal basis of the ego. (Hall 1983, 11)

Because of the psyche's inherent tendency to move towards wholeness, Jung (Hall 1983) recognized individuation as an inevitable process which occurs with or without the ego's conscious participation. The guiding force of this process appeared to be the Self. Jung (Hall 1983) recognized a need on the part of the unconscious to be known, and that in its guiding relationship, the Self exerts pressure on the ego to be a part of this process. Jung (Hall 1983) also recognized the ego as the Self's connection with the outer world. He felt that the Self urged the ego both to face reality, and to know the inner unconscious contents of the psyche and Itself. This is because Jung (Hall 1983) felt that the ego strengthens and becomes more independent as it faces fears and challenges, and this strengthening translates to a further freeing of the ego from the unconscious matrix from which it derives. This process of strengthening and becoming more conscious prepares the ego to confront and know the deepening levels of the unconscious. This all takes place in the interaction of the ego with the outer world, and its participation in the process of bringing to consciousness the contents of the personal and objective unconscious-individuation. (Hall 1983)

This is why individuation is considered a life-long process. The ego follows this basic pattern/process of identity formation throughout life. Jung (Hall 1983) related the process of individuation and the ego's maturation process to the life process in which in the first part of life the ego works out its identity in relation to family and its immediate environment, then into adulthood when it works on defending itself in the world and

survival. Once this has been done the ego then is required to confront the unconscious matrix from which it separated and begin to understand not only its own position within the psyche, but as well, to understand and know the unconscious as the source. (Hall 1983)

COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Cognitive therapy is based on the notion that a fundamental relationship exists between thinking and feeling. Cognitive psychologists have created a model to explain mood disorders (or any feelings for that matter) in terms of our thinking or cognition. According to Dr. David Burns (1992) emotions arise according to the way in which we think about events in our lives. The degree to which our thought process concerning the event is realistic determines the degree to which our emotions are valid and constructive. In this model, events in the world outside do not in and of themselves create feelings. It is our interpretation of these events which determines our feelings. This is based on the fact that any experience must be given a conscious meaning by the brain before an emotional response is felt.

For example, Burns (1992) noticed that all depressive episodes are accompanied by negative thinking and that much of this negative thinking is based on distorted interpretations of events surrounding the depressive episode. He recognized ten general categories into which the majority of the cognitive distortions fell.⁴ When patients could

⁴ 1) All or nothing thinking, 2) Overgeneralization, 3) Mental Filter, 4) Disqualifying the positive, 5) Jumping to conclusions, 6) Magnification, 7) Emotional Reasoning, 8) Should Statements, 9) Labeling and Mislabeling, 10) Personalization. (Burns 1980, 42-43)

be persuaded to analyze the validity of the thoughts surrounding their depressive episode and see the distorted nature of those thoughts, significant improvement in mood occurred. From this discovery, Burns (1992) has developed a number of concrete steps for dealing with depression and negative emotions or moods.

One of the most basic exercises is called the triple column technique. In its simplest form it consists of three columns on a piece of paper. The first column is labeled 'Automatic Thought': the subject writes down his/her thoughts at the time the negative emotions arose. The second column is labeled, 'Cognitive Distortions': the subject places one, or several, of the ten cognitive distortions which he or she recognizes in the thoughts written in the first column, pinpointing the distortion in the upsetting thought. The third step is 'Rational Response': to respond to the distorted thought in a way which better reflects reality. See Table 1 on the following page.

To become self-sufficient in overcoming obstacles in thinking which create self-defeating moods, the triple column technique is usually not enough. To significantly modify a mood or depression, one must get to the source of the depression or other mood disorder: unconscious, internalized values which act against the well-being of the individual.

Burns (1992) discovered that underneath depressive thinking or other self-defeating moods usually lie values which work against the individual. He called these values *silent assumptions*, "an equation with which you define your personal worth. It represents your value system, your personal philosophy, the stuff on which you base your self-esteem." (Burns 1980, 262) These *silent assumptions* can be self-defeating and

create the vulnerability that predisposes people to distorted moods. The important step is to isolate them and work to change them through a variety of rational techniques.

Table 1 An Example of the Triple Column Technique

Automatic Thought (Self-Criticism)	Cognitive Distortion	Rational Response
1. Everyone knows how disorganized and selfish I am.	Jumping to Conclusions (mind reading); over generalization	1. I'm disorganized at times and I'm organized at times. Everybody doesn't think the same way about me.
2. I'm completely self-centered and thoughtless. I'm just no good.	All-or-nothing thinking	2. I'm thoughtless at times, and at times I can be quite thoughtful. I probably do act overly self-centered at times. I can work on this. I may be imperfect but I'm not "no good."
3. My roommate probably hates me. I have no real friends.	Jumping to conclusions (mind reading); all-or-nothing thinking.	3. My friendships are just as real as anyone's. At times I take criticism as rejection of <i>me</i> , Gail, the person. But others are usually not rejecting <i>me</i> . They're just expressing dislike for what I <i>did</i> (or said)—and they still accept me afterward.

(Burns 1980, 68)

The triple column is one of the principle ways of combating the negative and usually distorted thoughts which accompany mood disorders or self-defeating moods. Stress is placed on reviewing the list of ten cognitive distortions, analyzing the situation from which the negative thoughts sprang, and stepping outside oneself and reflecting on the reality of human experience to decide whether or not the thought which is causing the mood is realistic or not, and then replacing it with something which better reflects reality. The idea is for the patient, Gail, to see that labels such as "self-centered" are judgmental and inaccurate, and beyond this to accept her own humanity and the fact that while she is capable of self-centered acts, they neither define who she is nor mean she is less worthwhile.

GROF

Dr. Stanislav Grof's (1976) work began as an investigation into the effects of LSD on the central nervous system. From this research, Grof (1976) realized that the content of the LSD sessions reflected individual personality characteristics of the subjects. He saw LSD not only as an amplifier of the individual's personal psychological makeup, but a catalyst for releasing previously unconscious contents.

Pursuing his findings in an intensive research project he arrived at a number of conclusions. One was that successive sessions were of inherent value. Content from one session to another with the same subject tended to take on a tone of continuity and progression, and reflected a "successive unfolding of deeper and deeper levels of the unconscious." (Grof 1976, 20) Another was that in several cases, successive sessions with a related tone of images culminated in the reliving of traumatic memories. Once these were fully integrated, the previously recurring phenomenon of the past sessions would not reappear. Repeat sessions seemed to be heading in a direction which he recognized as having psycho dynamic meaning and which could be understood in psychological terms:

"consecutive sessions might make it possible for patients gradually to confront various levels of their unconscious and resolve deep conflicts underlying their psychopathological symptoms." (Grof 1976, 20)

In other words, as the individual progressed from session to session, to ever deepening levels of the unconscious, and experienced confrontations and integration of unconscious contents, significant and positive changes in outer life behaviors and attitudes

began to occur. The most significant points of integration related to confrontation with themes of birth and death. He distinguished four levels of experience: abstract and aesthetic, psycho-dynamic, perinatal, and transpersonal.

The abstract and aesthetic level corresponds to a tendency in early sessions for subjects to experience strong visual responses to the drug, most often in the form of geometric forms on the inside of the eyelids. The psycho dynamic level dealt primarily with material from infancy, childhood and/or later life stages. These were usually incidents readily accessible to conscious memory, and involved at times highly emotional events or traumas.

In the perinatal level the themes, images and conflicts tend to be associated with the various stages of birth and the subsequent tones of those stages. Problems of biological birth, physical pain, agony, aging, disease and decrepitude, and dying and death dominate these sessions. Grof (1976) found that individuals at this level realize the inevitability of death and upon this "shocking emotional and physical encounter" begin a process of opening up areas of religious and spiritual experiences, which he describes as, "an intrinsic part of the human personality . . . independent of the individual's cultural and religious background and programming." (Grof 1976, 95)

Appearance of content associated with the transpersonal level is rare in early psycholytic⁵ sessions, but common later when materials from the psycho dynamic and perinatal levels have been integrated. Once the subject has passed the critical phase of ego

⁵ This is the word used by Grof (1976) to refer to his combining of LSD with therapeutic techniques in a structured, well controlled therapeutic environment (Grof 1976, 20)

death and rebirth, which marks the confrontation with one's mortality, these phenomenon tend to dominate all psycholytic sessions from then on. Grof (1976) defined these transpersonal experiences as "an expansion or extension of consciousness beyond the usual ego boundaries and beyond the limitations of time and/or space." (Grof 1976, 155)

Grof's (1976) model is consistent with Jung's in many ways. Within the phenomena of the transpersonal level were experiences he recognized as being related to Jung's collective unconscious. Both Grof (1976) and Jung (Hall 1983) noticed the tendency for images and memories to cluster according to emotional and symbolic tone. Both found that pursuing arising emotional contents released repressed memories. Both found that as these unconscious contents were released from their unconscious state within the psyche and integrated (by relating them to here-and-now problems in the personal and collective conscious or outer life of the patient), a corresponding change in behavior and a general move towards greater emotional health tended to occur in patients. As well, they both recognized a tendency on the part of the patient to become more concerned with issues on a deeper, more spiritual and collective level.

Two aspects most important to Grof's (1976) work stand out. One, Grof felt that in LSD he had found what he called, "a powerful unspecific amplifier or catalyst of biochemical and physiological processes in the brain." (Grof 1976, 32 also see Grof 1976, 2) When this catalyst was combined with a therapeutic structure with therapeutic goals, psychological growth resulted which paralleled Jung. The second is the lasting change in the individual's behavior and thinking which occurs upon confrontation with birth and death content.

KÜBLER-ROSS

Dr. Kübler-Ross' (1969) work with terminally ill patients recognized a series of psychological/emotional stages which her dying patients manifested. Kübler-Ross (1969) saw patterns of behavior which seemed to come in five progressive stages: Stage 1: Denial and Isolation; Stage 2: Anger; Stage 3: Bargaining; Stage 4: Depression; Stage 5: Acceptance

Kübler-Ross (1969) felt that the stages were not necessarily linear. The way they were experienced could vary from one individual to another. Her work, she emphasizes, is not prescriptive, but rather descriptive and meant to give insight into a natural process. Due to personal differences, the death experience will be dealt with in differing ways and viewed from different perspectives. These differences can keep a person from moving from one stage to the next, or they can result in single steps, or a series of steps, being repeated. An example of this would be an individual who feels he/she must fight death to the end. In this case the individual may never leave stage 1, or repeatedly experience cycles of the first three or four stages.

Although Kübler-Ross's (1969) model refers to the actual death experience, it can also be looked at in terms of life experiences in which other losses are experienced, such as loss of loved ones through death, loss of material possessions, loss of relationships through separation, or loss of important goals or dreams or desires. This was my experience after the loss of my mother. I recognized in Kübler-Ross's (1969) model the stages of my grief. Her model helped me to understand not only what dying individuals go through, but my own experience of grief as well.

These models provided me with a framework for recognizing my thought processes, which ultimately lead me to see my values and the values of those around me, and to better understand the conflict which arose when those two sets of values were at odds with each other. I learned that reconciliation of this conflict meant going deep within myself to confront unconscious contents. Emotional often accompanied the integration of those unconscious experiences with happenings in my outer life. The models provided me the tools to reach this level of integration. What these models did not provide me with was a broader framework for understanding the acculturation process I was going through. Neither did they help me to see that what I was going through was a natural, normal, and universal process. This realization was necessary to bring my understanding and experience together into a cohesive, integrated framework.

CHAPTER FOUR

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE: OVERVIEW

The events and setting which were the catalyst for this IPP were my experiences as a foreigner living in Peru, first in Las Delicias and then in Lima. These experiences can be categorized as either 'milestone' events – extraordinary or 'one-time' events – or day-to-day events, which include elements of the ambient environment. The 'milestones' section includes events from living in both Lima and Las Delicias while the day-to-day events section is dedicated solely to Las Delicias. This is because the longest, and most difficult aspects of my acculturation experience, took place in Las Delicias. Lima represented a 'milestone' change as we entered into a new social strata in Peruvian society and therefore is represented in this section alone.

ACCULTURATION MILESTONES

My acculturation process effectively began when I proposed marriage to Patricia Calderon in April, 1989 in Las Delicias. In November of 1989 we took up permanent residence in Las Delicias and I began working with Patty's father, Eduardo, on plans to start a family fishing business.

1990 turned out to be a difficult year in a number of ways. It marked my introduction to the stark reality of the Peruvian medical system with the birth and death of our first born child, the economy took a turn for the worse with the result that the fishing

business fell through and I found myself jobless with dwindling resources. This latter occurrence was the most significant factor in my acculturation process. I lost the financial resources which allowed for the possibility of leaving the culture; I could no longer go back to the U.S. At this time I began teaching at the *Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano*, a binational English language teaching institute in the city of Trujillo, thirty minutes drive from Las Delicias. This marked another significant change in my acculturation process. To this point, I had spent the majority of my time in the *pueblo* of Las Delicias, learning the local customs and picking up the local dialect, having little contact with the more urban Trujillo.

During the next four years, I had little contact with my native culture. Even simple communication was limited. A phone call to the U.S. from Peru was prohibitively expensive, and not having ready access to a telephone made receiving calls difficult. I kept in contact with my family through the mail, which was also expensive, and talked seven or eight times a year on the phone with an aunt who, through a series of difficult arrangements, would call me. This time also marked a period of increased terrorist activity in Peru which at its height reduced tourist travel in our area to nearly zero. Foreign groups which maintained a presence in Peru, like the Mormon church, left. Except for two brief contacts, I had no direct contact with people from my native culture.

On another level, during this time I had the opportunity to work in a variety of different teaching settings. As with my Peruvian colleagues, low wages required the holding of two or three jobs, an added dimension of difficulty in my adjustment process. Then in 1991, I contracted typhoid, a disease endemic to the Trujillo area. The typhoid

became persistent due to the weakened state of my health from the stress of adjusting to the culture, ambient illnesses (diarrhea was a constant companion during those first years), working two full-time jobs and lack of proper medical attention. Not wanting to risk my health, I found a less demanding second job at the National University where I taught for a semester in the education department. After this semester, I supplemented my income by doing translations, which had the added benefit of helping me significantly increase my Spanish language ability, and subsequently my ability to act more effectively within the culture. Throughout this period I continued to work full time at the binational center. Here I gained an intimate understanding of relationships and attitudes toward work both on the part of the workers and the administrators.

In 1991 our oldest daughter, Alejandra, was born. This brought new challenges in my acculturation, involving me directly in local child-rearing customs and the challenges presented in raising a child in a bicultural, biracial marriage. This marked the beginning of my understanding of the close and important connection between child-rearing customs and culture learning.

In terms of my home life, there were several 'milestones' which contributed considerably to my level of immersion and therefore the intensity of my acculturation process. At this time in Eduardo's life he was traveling extensively. In his absences, I oversaw the construction of the fishing boats and with Patty's help, the legal process involved in licensing the boats and business. From this I learned a great deal about the local Peruvian legal system, and working relationships with carpenters.

I was also left to assume some of his responsibilities as head of the family.

Although the main responsibilities were shared with Eduardo's closest brother, Tomas, the most urgent decisions fell into my hands. As a result, I often found myself in the position of family problem solver, which brought with it numerous unforeseen challenges which significantly contributed to the course of my acculturation process in this cultural niche.

1994 was a year of significant change in our lives and in my cultural adjustment. In June, my family invited Patty, my daughter and me to spend three weeks in the U.S. This experience gave me my first glimpse into the effect that significant contact with my native culture could have on my acculturation process. The effect was retarding. During this trip I restarted my spiritual healing work after a visit with one of my first mentors in Denver.

Upon returning to Las Delicias, I was unexpectedly offered an administrative position in the binational center in Lima. The Lima job offer meant better pay and more opportunities for me and my family. Our second daughter, Emily, was born in November, and in December of 1994 we moved to Lima.

This move constituted large changes in all our lives. In Las Delicias we lived in a poor rural *pueblo*. In Lima we lived in a middle class neighborhood, although our new neighborhood had little in common with the middle class neighborhoods I grew up in. We suddenly found ourselves with a reliable flow of electricity, cold running water 24 hours a day, and with enough water pressure to actually take a shower. The streets in our new neighborhood were paved and the brick houses modern in comparison to Las Delicias.

Due to my increase in salary, we were also suddenly able to buy foods unaffordable in Las Delicias, as well as 'luxuries' like a washing machine.

As well there were negative changes. One major change was the loss of our family support system. In Lima we found ourselves alone, a condition exaggerated by the fact that important aspects of Peruvian culture are based on the existence of and close proximity to, extended family support systems, and on 'who you know.'

The move to Lima also represented a change in the landscape of my work life. In Trujillo I was the only North American. In Lima, four of the eight people in the office were North Americans. As such, more direct contact with my native culture occurred daily in the form of interacting with individuals with whom I share this important history of experience, knowledge and understanding.

We remained in Lima from 1995 to 1999. During this time there were two significant breaks in my acculturation process, both related to my course work for my Master's degree. These two experiences concretized my understanding of the retarding effect which significant contact with my native culture has had on my acculturation process.

ACCULTURATION SETTING: LAS DELICIAS

PHYSICAL/AMBIENT CHANGES¹

1

My designating Physical/Ambient elements as a category of intensity factors represents a departure of sorts from the acculturation material I had contact with, warranting some explanation. Most of the materials cited in this work focus mainly on the effect of differences in small 'c' culture values, beliefs and customs. Being radically different than the elements in the environment of my upbringing, these physical/ambient elements represented a significant and formidable hurdle in my acculturation process.

Las Delicias is a poor, semi-rural fishing/agricultural village with a population of 2500 families. It is located 15 miles from the city of Trujillo which has a population of 850,000 people. While Trujillo is close to Las Delicias geographically, in terms of transportation and communication it is removed. For most of the time I lived there, Las Delicias saw little traffic. It was serviced by the national bus line which was supposed to run hourly, but never did. Taxis, unless taken collectively, were prohibitively expensive for most and infrequent. Walking the one and half miles to the nearby town of Moche to take a *colectivo*² was an option. Adding to the isolation of the village was the lack of private telephones. There was a community telephone, but during my six years in Las Delicias it was functional only a handful of times.

The land between Las Delicias and Trujillo is planted with corn and potatoes throughout the year. Las Delicias also has a number of *granjas* or chicken farms and granaries. It is located on the ocean and as such, the ocean represents a source of income and sustenance for the village.

The houses in the northern section of Las Delicias where we lived were adobe houses with cane and mud roofing. Most houses had at least one cement floored room, but houses with all dirt floors were not uncommon. The streets were an unpaved mixture of beach sand and plant and animal remnants thrown into the street from water which had been used in preparing meals. Although most houses were connected to public electricity, it was poorly maintained and unreliable, disappearing unexpectedly from hours up to days.

² *Colectivos* are privately owned cars which are used to carry six to eight passengers along a designated route..

A water main ran through part of the northern section, but water was available only during the day. Subscription to this service was considered expensive and most houses used well water. A number of people pirated water from the main, significantly decreasing water pressure. The decreased pressure and unreliability of water flow necessitated the storing of water in 30–40 gallon containers. We avoided using the well water for cooking or drinking as its close proximity to the ocean made the water somewhat saline and gave it a bad taste. We used well water for clothes washing (done by hand), watering and as backup water supply.

The water and electricity situation deteriorated during drought times and terrorist activities between 1992 and 1994. Shortages of water translated to shortages of electricity, creating a vicious circle in which uncoordinated electricity rationing conflicted with schedules for electricity driven water pumping. It was not uncommon for the electricity to be turned off during the water pumping schedule for blocks of two or three days. It was then that we would use well water for cooking and drinking. During rationing, electricity was available for sixteen hours a day, but commonly at least eight of those hours fell during times when most were asleep or outside of periods when it was most needed, like the hours just after sunset.

There was no public sewage system. People either had makeshift outhouses, covered drainage pits called *silos* (as we did), or found secluded spots within the *pueblo* to go to the bathroom. Although the dunes off the beach were the most common 'secluded spot,' abandoned houses and hidden spaces in town were often used. This added the presence of human waste to the general ambience.

Our physical location within the pueblo was two doors from Eduardo's house. Patty comes from a family of fourteen children, all but one of whom live within a three block radius of Eduardo. Within the pueblo were numerous members of Patty's extended family, mostly on her mother's side, as her family has lived in the pueblo for many generations.

Our proximity to my wife's family influenced the way I was treated within the family, and the degree to which I was allowed into the culture. Because of my obvious physical differences³ I am quickly labeled as a foreigner within the pueblo. This effects the way people act towards me, and in turn determines the extent and way in which I am allowed into that individual's life and any accompanying cultural event. Although my status in Patty's family is somewhat different than my other brothers-in-law, I am treated as a family member and not as a 'foreigner.'⁴ Had we lived far from Patty's family, this process would have taken more time, and would not have reached the level it has. In fact, at times my level of education (only a few in Patty's family have completed high school) means that I am asked to participate in ways in which other brothers-in-law are not.

Another element of physical change was diet. There were the wholly new foods I had never eaten before, and at times had never imagined edible, and there were foods I

³ I am tall, fair skinned, with brown hair and blue eyes. People in the pueblo are generally short in stature with black hair and black or dark brown eyes.

⁴ I gauge the level in which I am viewed as a foreigner by the quantity of reference, either questions or comments, during normal social interaction to my 'own country' or to my skin color, accent, background and/or any other areas which might be perceived as 'different' from a typical Peruvian. In the beginning much of my interaction with Patty's family members revolved around 'foreigner' topics. Quickly, however, such talk became almost non-existent, and I found myself being treated like a family member and involved in family matters.

was familiar with but which differed, at times dramatically, in flavor, consistency, texture and use from what I had been accustomed too.

Dishes like cow's-head soup (*caldo de cabeza*), sheep's-hoof soup (*pataska*), and pig's head soup (*shambar*), made frequent appearances in our diet. Less frequent were things like pelican, sand-piper, and seagull. We ate cat on several occasions. There were also a number of common festive dishes including *sangresita* (goat's blood, pancreas, liver and tripe), and *relleno* (pig blood sausage), and *cabrito* (goat meat). From the ocean came *caldo de herizo* (sea-urchin soup), *chalaco sudado* (steamed, hallucinogenic fish), and *raya sancochada* (boiled manta ray). Most of these unusual dishes were agreeable in taste. It was the idea which took adjusting to.

Surprisingly, adjustment to day-to-day staples was more problematic. Although the basic staples were not unfamiliar, the way in which they were cooked, the variations in flavors and textures, and the amounts of spicing and oil were. Success at adjusting to these differences varied and depended on my being able to control them. Quantities of spices and cooking oil were the most controllable. Other areas, like food quality, weren't. Being dependent on the local economy, our diet was restricted to local foods and the difference in taste and texture presented both a psychological as well as a physical hurdle. The commercially raised chicken we could afford often had a disagreeable, fishy taste, having been fed a diet overly rich in cheap fish meal. The grade of beef we could afford was invariably tough and gamey and sometimes replaced with donkey meat which I found disagreeably sweet. Even such simple staples as rice and noodles constituted a change. Rice, which had to be sifted for gravel, is cooked with garlic giving it a musty flavor. The

noodles we were able to afford were made without eggs, giving the food an odd, doughy taste.

Even the water tasted different. For the first year and a half, I had trouble drinking it unless it had been boiled with apples or flavored by some herb like chamomile. This thankfully went away with time. As all of these were staples and therefore could not be cut out of our diet, I was left with only one choice – learn to like them – something I honestly was only partially successful at.

Raw vegetables and salads, which once composed a staple of my diet, were rare because it was not customary to eat raw vegetables and their consumption constituted a health risk. Vegetables were vehicles of contagion for such serious diseases as cholera, typhoid and hepatitis from being washed before sale with, or actually being grown in, sewage water. Not knowing how to safely clean the vegetables, I cut them out of my diet, something which had an effect on my health.

I liken my physical adjustment to that of a child growing up. I contracted many of the ailments which local children, who are likewise new to this environment, typically suffer, including both hepatitis A, typhoid, frequent diarrhea as well as colds and flu viruses which, like children, I seemed to get with more frequency and in greater severity than my adult peers in the pueblo.

The health changes I experienced were also attributable to changes in my normal daily, exercise routines, something which had been an integral part of both my physical and psychological well being. I participated in individual sports such as bicycling, mountain climbing and skiing, all of which I had to leave behind when I came to Peru.

Although I brought a bicycle, for a number of reasons having to do with both the environment and culture, I found it difficult to keep up my bicycling habits, and economically and physically impossible to participate in the other sports which I enjoyed. After a while, it became difficult to maintain any physical routine.

The difficulty was both physical and cultural. The physical aspect was because of illness during the first years. I found it difficult to keep any routine with frequent diarrhea. The cultural aspect was related to definitions of age and gender appropriate exercise activities. Men of my age, if they worked out, did so 'normally' by playing soccer, running, or swimming in the ocean. Bicycles were seen as a form of transportation, or a young and/or rich persons activity. My bicycling looked odd to my fellow pueblo mates and family. This was one area of many in which I felt out of place. Desiring to reduce the amount of my 'difference' I gave it up and adopted activities not viewed as out of place.

Lying in the grey area between physical and psychological (values, beliefs, customs) is the force with which life is lived and experienced in the *pueblo*. This is a phenomenon which is probably the combined effect of many of the other elements so far mentioned, and the absence of the 'buffers' which I had enjoyed in the U.S.. These 'buffers' included social assistance; availability and access to competent and affordable medical assistance; access to health and life insurance; access to education and information; reliable water and electricity; and a competent justice and police system. But even beyond this, it is the behaviors of the people which arise in response to, and which in many cases feed and reinforce, this forcefulness of life.

This life force created a Darwinian 'survival of the fittest' environment, resulting in

a will to survive, and a high level of self-sufficiency and toughness which people begin to learn from the time they are born and which is continually reinforced. There are several ways in which I can illustrate this force. On one level there are those 'extra-ordinary' crisis incidents such as accidents or illnesses. During my time in the *pueblo* I splinted compound fractures with sticks and rags; cleaned and bandaged wounds from near-severed toes to basic cuts and scrapes; watched wounds sewn shut with an upholstery needle and thread, all without the aid of antibiotics. I assisted with a birth on a straw mat in Eduardo's house. I watched relatives and friends die with little or no medical attention.

I learned about psychological/cultural disorders like *ojo*⁵, *chukake*⁶, and *susto*⁷ which children usually suffer, the last two first hand by suffering them myself, something which helped me recognize them as a direct result of this forcefulness of life and the introverting effect it has on the personality.

Out of all of it I began to recognize a process of psychological toughening, a

⁵*Ojo* is a cultural affliction which usually appears in new-born babies or infants. The symptoms usually include diarrhea, vomiting, and fever. It is thought to occur when a person who has very strong personality holds or looks at the baby. It can also be inflicted when a woman who is having her period or is pregnant carries a newborn baby.

⁶*Chukake* is another cultural affliction which befalls both adults and children. The source of this malady is usually thought to be a embarrassing experience, usually one which occurs in public or in a group of peers, but not necessarily. The most common symptoms are a strong headache, loss of appetite, diarrhea and nausea. It is thought that if left untreated, *chukake* can result in death. Treatment includes a number of chiropractic-like bone 'poppings' in the back of the inflicted person, or pulling on a small hank of hair on the top of the head until the skin separates from the skull bone with a cracking sound.

⁷*Susto* is a cultural affliction which is usually suffered by young children although it does manifest in adults as well. The word *susto* means literally 'fright' or 'scare' and is believed to result from a frightening experience. The symptoms include such things as insomnia, decreased appetite, weight loss, jumpiness and/or nervousness, and disturbing dreams.

toughening which came to the children from these experiences and from their interactions with each other and the adults in their world – and to recognize in it a process of preparation for the difficulties they would face as adults in this world without a safety net. I watched in awe as the people around me carried on their lives with an equal force and level of happiness which at times fooled me into thinking they were oblivious to their level of elemental exposure. I felt like a fish out of water.

Life force also manifested itself in day-to-day living and became something I viewed as an exercise in toughening for those events one cannot control. One of the most encapsulating and symbolic examples was my experience with eating lunch at Eduardo's house shortly after Patty and I were engaged. As many as eight adults sat elbow-to-elbow at the table sharing conversation at a low shout in staccato Spanish, the radio blaring, and up to ten children playing and shouting around us. This was an extremely difficult situation to confront daily, mainly because in addition to the setting, I was adjusting to new smells and tastes as well as small details like sharing the same dishrag napkin and glasses for drinking. This was a normal, everyday routine for my wife's family. This sort of scenario of forcefulness played itself out in every aspect of daily life, pounding away at the door.

CUSTOM DIFFERENCES: SOCIAL AND GENDER/AGE ROLES

To me 'customs' are human behaviors determined by underlying culturally shared beliefs and values ingrained as part of unconscious day-to-day living. As a result, much of my learning has been through observation, trial and error, and *faux pas*. In the beginning,

due to my language ability, I was aware only of surface customs, the majority of which had to do with social situations. As my ability with the language and culture increased, so too did my ability to detect more subtle, embedded customs.

Social Differences

Social life in the pueblo was complex and many activities were carried out in which I did not engage. My socializing was limited to two basic and general categories: informal family gatherings for story telling and food sharing, or parties in which drinking, dancing, socializing and fighting were the main activities. In the beginning socializing was easy and fun. I participated as an un-understanding foreigner. I was only able to pick up on the most superficial, observable customs and was oblivious to the deeper, embedded customs which required not only language fluency, but understanding of the values behind them. An example of a surface level social gathering custom is when drinking beer with others, the bottle and one cup is passed around. The cup is shared, the bottle never drunk from directly.

The more deeply embedded customs however took more time, the learning of which was intimately tied to my increased language ability and the social *faux pas* process, all part of necessary experience gathering. *Faux pas* often came to my awareness only as a vague sense that something wasn't right: in the moment sensing a gap between the cultural event I was a part of and my own cultural understanding. An example of this occurred early in my time in Las Delicias. I had gone with my brother-in-law, Nen, to a nearby restaurant (in reality a few wooden tables in a woman's front room) to have some

beers. I ended up sitting between two men introduced to me as brothers, something I found remarkable as they didn't resemble each other. Thinking I was having my leg pulled, I remarked to one that if I had not been told they were brothers, I wouldn't have guessed it. He made no response. Thinking he hadn't heard, I repeated it. At this point he turned to me with a challenging look and said something which at the time I didn't understand for what it was, an *indirecto*. This is an insult masked as a more innocent comment. What I did understand, viscerally, was that something had gone wrong. Nen cautioned the man under his breath and things calmed a bit, but after one beer, excuses were made and we departed quickly.

I realized then that my remark about their appearance wasn't well thought out, that it could be insulting if there were some embarrassing circumstances behind the non-resemblance. I had not made my comment with malice, and I assumed this alone would convey the fact that I meant no insult. In the U.S. it probably would have been no more than an embarrassing moment. The only explanation that Nen offered was that the guy had been drunk and 'crossed.' It took me several years to fully understand the subtleties of what had taken place in that minute and a half interaction.

What I did not know was that illegitimacy was common in the *pueblo*. Further, to be the offspring of an illegitimate relationship was looked down on. This, however, did not fully explain the subtle complexity of the interaction. Over the next several years I began to piece together the social drama which regularly played itself out in the bars and parties around the pueblo. When men get together to drink, they would at times end up fighting between strangers, friends, even best friends. It was always explained as the drink

'crossing their wires.' What precipitated this fighting involved a parlance in which one man, who has been overcome with mischievousness and has taken a disliking to someone around him, begins to throw out *indirectos*. Although I have witnessed a variety of ways of dealing with this situation, there are three general paths it seems to take. The insulted person may ignore the comments and leave, engage in the activity, or try to top the insulter by pointing out directly his behavior. The latter two often result in fighting. A person who can do *indirectos* well and get away with it is held in high esteem, especially if the recipient of the *indirectos* is of higher social standing.⁸

The conclusion I came to was that the brother took my comment as an *indirecto*. He had no way of understanding that I meant no malice, that I come from a subculture in which neither this parlance of *indirectos* was used nor illegitimacy a prominent factor. He interpreted it in the only way possible: as an indirect insult and a challenge. I am quite certain that had we stayed, he would have started up with *indirectos* again. Examples such as these complex, deeply imbedded customs around socializing abounded in my experience.

Gender and Age Role Differences

I discovered early that many customs are associated with roles. The two which

⁸It was explained to me that this was a way of acting which became instilled during the severe oppression by the Spaniards, in which any direct form of resistance was dealt with quickly and often cruelly. The Indian and lower class populations learned to exact their revenge, or at least the sense of having 'won' by successfully insulting the individual without his/her knowing it. (This may have existed in Pre-Columbian times as the Incas were often cruel in their treatment of the lower class population.)

most directly effected me in Las Delicias were gender and age differences. In terms of being a husband and an adult male member of the local community, there were many behaviors, mostly in the form of roles, which I had to learn about and come to terms with. One area concerned my role in my own household.

Before coming to Peru I lived alone. I did my own cooking and cleaning. I took pride in my independence. In Las Delicias, these jobs are usually done by women. I continued to do them while living in Peru. I was aware that my cooking and cleaning was not culturally acceptable, but as with other stubbornnesses, I was determined to maintain these roles and attitudes. I was 'setting an example.'

At first Patty took pride in this twist. Because the pueblo was small, our living situation and relationship were by nature not private and it was not long before word got out. It began when we were living in the hostel, waiting for our house to be fixed. At that time, I thought the situation, and not my behavior was the problem. The windows and doors from our kitchen and bedroom faced onto a main street, and because only our side of the street had sidewalks, most traffic passed outside the hostel. As the days grew hotter, we opened the windows and door to allow air in. This gave a plain view into our house, a prospect complemented by the lack of inhibition within the *pueblo* about staring in open doors and windows. People just hung around outside watching us. Being the only gringo in town, I figured it was just the way things would be until we moved into our own house.

Other things began happening as well. We both noticed that some of Patty's friends would make excuses to visit during meal times and then marvel that I was cooking.

When I would go out, others would ask, "Is it true you cook?" or "How did your soup turn out?" Comments were made to Patty about having the ideal man. Questions and comments alike were usually made tongue-in-cheek. We both found this annoying, but again blamed it on the hostel expecting it to die once we moved.

Once we did move into our own house, while the snooping dropped off considerably, rather than subside, the comments increased. Soon, Patty began to steer me away from these jobs. The comments had begun to bother her and I became aware that rather than setting an example, I was an oddity, a fact which only increased a growing sense of how different I was. Rather than adapting and becoming a part of the local culture, I was segregating myself and making myself stick out more.

Through my mother-in-law, I began to understand how others were interpreting my behavior. While family members who had had experience with foreigners recognized it as a gringo peculiarity, others interpreted it in more local ways. Men who did housework were *saco largos* or brow-beaten. It was a sign of weakness. I would either have to quit, use a level of language and innuendo skill I did not possess, or resort to physical aggression to restore the respect we both deserved. Patty and I changed our roles.

Many of the experiences I had challenged my masculine identity and my role as a male in the culture. One of my initial reactions to my exercise crisis was to engage in more locally acceptable ways of getting exercise. These included playing soccer, swimming in the ocean and doing small construction jobs around the house. The trouble I had with these illustrates the struggle I went through: they all failed for similar reasons. The level and style of soccer was such that I was not able to compete and I ended up not enjoying it.

Swimming in the ocean turned out to be both unenjoyable and dangerous. I felt I had to keep up with my brothers-in-law who would climb out on the rocks in the cove, jump into the water and swim against the current to the beach just for fun. Watching them do this filled me both with a sense of awe and a growing sense of defeat. I was accustomed to keeping up in sports. It was like starting all over again. In the end, I just wasn't interested enough to do that.

Household construction jobs presented the most dramatic example. Specifically I remember the time I wanted to put a new window in our kitchen. Because the walls were made of *adobe* (mud bricks), adding windows or doors was a simple matter; punch a hole in the wall with a hammer. I had watched my brothers-in-law do this and was confident I could do the work myself.

I had already had experiences of working on projects in my house in which, one or several, of my brothers-in-law would show up and try to take over. This invariably ended in a struggle over who would do the job. I found it difficult to make it understood that getting the job done was not as important to me as the satisfaction and sense of accomplishment I experienced in doing it myself.

The part of this job I most wanted to do myself was the punching of the hole in the wall. I had borrowed a five pound hammer and was banging away at the wall when my brother-in-law Beto arrived. I was torn whenever he would come to help out because I knew he liked to help, and it wasn't necessarily because he thought I needed it.

Physically, my arms would only let me bang away for about a minute at a time, and as I worked this time shortened. I had made some progress, but not a lot when Beto took

over. He proceeded to pound for almost five minutes straight without taking break. Not only was his stamina inspiring, but after only a few of these five minute sessions he had the opening made and ready for the window frame. He finished the job in about a tenth the time it would have taken me. As the number of these experiences grew, however, I found my respect being replaced with a growing sense of confusion about who I was, what I was about and what it meant to be a man.

VALUES

The area of values can be looked at in two basic ways: values behind behaviors, customs, and roles which were readily perceptible, and those requiring cultural integration and solid language ability.

One of the first values I encountered in the surrounding culture was the value placed on human relationships over material objects. I was immediately struck by the way people treated one another and their material goods. Despite their lack of material wealth, people seemed happy and healthy and enjoying life, behaviors which suggested they valued human relationships over material objects. I saw people share food and objects with others even though those might have been the only things they had. This generosity included sharing time and work as well.

Eduardo seemed to embody this value. Time and again, I saw him hand out money, food, or objects to people in need. Although Eduardo did well compared to most of his neighbors, he was not a wealthy man by Peruvian standards.

A value which represents the line between obvious and obfuscated was that of

indirectness over directness. An experience which encapsulates this occurred when our first child died. We buried him in the cemetery in Moche. Because there is very little ground space left in the cemetery, people build tombs on top of relatives' ground level graves. It happened that Patty's sister, Chepa, had lost one of her children shortly after birth and had buried him in the cemetery. She let us make a tomb on top of her child's grave. Patty's brothers and I brought bricks, cement and sand. At the cemetery we realized that we were short sand and needed something to make the top for the tomb. We began to search for the other materials we needed. In one tomb someone found a large piece of unused marble and someone else found a bit of sand in a bag in what looked like an abandoned tomb.

About a week later rumors surfaced that a woman in Moche was accusing me of having stolen fifty dollars worth of her sand. I was furious. Not only was she lying about the amount of sand, but I disliked the fact that she had spread rumors rather than talking to me directly. I wanted to talk to the woman. Patty, however, disagreed. She felt that the lady was only trying to get money out of me because she knew I was a gringo. "You don't know how those *Mocheras* (people from the *pueblo* of Moche) are," she kept saying. This only increased my anger, stirring up resentments which had been building within me around being seen as a rich gringo and having people raise prices or treat me in ways which reflected this.

I was determined to talk to her, resulting in a quick family meeting and the decision that Patty's brother Chino would go with me. Chino had obviously been briefed before we left as he tried to counsel me on what to say and how to act when we got there.

"Don't say anything about money. Deny everything. Tell her we brought our own sand."

I didn't like the idea of being counseled or being dishonest. By the time we got to Moche I was boiling. At the woman's stand in the market, I blurted something out about her not coming to me directly, that I hadn't known the sand belonged to anyone and that we had taken the equivalent of a few *intis* (the Peruvian money at that time: about one American dollar) worth of sand and that I would be happy to give the money to her. As I talked, my volume increased with my frustration and I became aware that a crowd was gathering and they were enjoying the show. At that point in my acculturation I knew that losing one's temper publically was not acceptable and viewed as childish and overly direct. I also was aware of how gossip flew and how such scenes were like a fancy desert at a gossip buffet, so as I lost my temper more and realized more people were watching, my frustration grew. I finally ended by giving her some money and leaving, feeling humiliated and frustrated.

This example of indirectness also points to a more deeply buried value: a very different value placed on truth. It was the realization of the extensiveness of this value which marked the point at which my shallow cultural understanding began to unravel, a realization which came shortly after the Moche incident with another occurrence.

Late one evening, one of Patty's aunts, Santos, knocked on our door. She was close to tears and refused to come fully into the house, standing by the door wringing her hands, holding a doctor's prescription. Between sobs, she explained that her youngest son was very sick and that she didn't have enough money for the medicine. She held out the prescription for me to see. Although it was a large sum of money, I didn't hesitate.

Santos left and we went to bed worrying about her son.

The next day Patty came home from the market and half laughing, proceeded to tell me that she had learned at the market that Santos had taken our money and bought rum for her and her husband. I was dumbfounded. I couldn't understand how she and her husband could be so irresponsible with the health of their son. But what Patty told me next outraged me. Apparently her son wasn't sick. The doctor's prescription, which I hadn't inspected closely, was from almost a year ago. Patty didn't like it, but she was able to laugh it off. I was angry. Santos lied to us and took advantage of our good will. I could not understand how she could do this, especially to family. I couldn't understand Patty's reaction either. To her it wasn't a big deal. She was a little upset because of the amount of money, but not like I was.

I saw this value on truth played out in ways ranging from outright lying to more joking, fooling behavior. Accompanying it was often a different reaction on the part of those being lied to or fooled. It appeared that a person who could successfully fool another person and do it with skill, was viewed with respect. Unlike where I grew up, the fooled person was not looked down upon. In fact it didn't really seem to mean a lot if one was fooled. It just meant that the other person was skilled at fooling or lying. There did seem to be a limit. Someone engaging in this activity too frequently, or in a way which was hurtful, was viewed negatively.

When I heard what Santos had done, I wanted to let her know how angry I was. Patty was adamant that I not, for the same reason she hadn't wanted me to talk to the old gossip woman regarding the sand. She would deal with it.

As I reached deeper levels of cultural understanding, I began to see 'quirks' in the values I had once thought obvious. 'Quirks' are peripheral or related values which, from *my* perspective, conflicted with each other. Two such conflicting 'quirks' were the idea that material goods somehow made one a better person, and a lack of prioritization in terms of acquiring those material goods.

An example of both these values in a single action happened when Patty and I bought a television. A store offered credit on a small television with monthly payments we could afford, so we bought one. To my surprise, this caused great commotion among our neighbors and resulted in one of them buying a television *and* a Nintendo. At the same time, their house was dirt floored and their children often went shoeless and wore tattered clothing. From this incident I learned that this 'keeping up with the Jones' was quite common in the *pueblo*. I saw this 'keeping up with the Jones' phenomenon as a superficial value even before I came to Las Delicias, but in this case even more so, because I felt that if a 'keeping up' had to be done, at least there could have been more attention to priorities. Clearly there was a need for clothes for the children and a cement floor before the acquisition of a television and an electronic game.

Another example of this 'quirk' regarding the lack of prioritization of material goods came through my interactions with, and observations of, the men in the *pueblo* in their construction work. Each worker had access to a personal set of tools which included a hammer, and a trowel / mortar board set for working with cement and stucco, and to a 'communal pool' of tools which included wheelbarrows, shovels, plumb-bobs and leveling tools. Whereas in the beginning I saw this 'communal pool' sharing as a sign of

community, I soon saw it as inconvenient, inefficient, and suffocating in its lack of value in prioritization.

Most of the people I knew who worked in construction lived in poverty. There were few new or electric tools. Things basic to their work which would have helped them to excel were either absent, broken or loaned indiscriminately. It was my feeling that a combination of skill and owning the proper tools offered the possibility of rising above the poverty. It seemed to me a reason to acquire these tools and then take care of them.

Initially I thought the lack of electric tools was a result of the poverty. Time and experience taught me differently. First came the realization of the practice within the *pueblo* of the men, on Fridays, taking the money they earned during the week and going on drinking binges. These would last until Sunday and often spill over into the next week. Although the more conscientious men would go home first and leave enough money with their wives for food for the week, many did not. There appeared to be a complete lack of desire, or understanding, of how to better one's self.

This observed behavior in others, was not just a distant phenomenon. It spilled over into our lives. When we moved to Peru, we brought with us many items we knew would be difficult to buy in Las Delicias. Among these were an electric iron and basic tools like wrenches, screwdrivers, and pliers. As well, we purchased items which I considered basic to living, including plates, a set of pots, a refrigerator, a blender, a kerosene stove with oven and a couch set. In the *pueblo*, many of these were considered luxury items. Much like with our television purchase, we were objects of envy. People began to ask to borrow things.

From the beginning, when someone asked to borrow something, I said no. Patty did not, and it caused her considerable discomfort when I said no or insisted that she say no. She would make up excuses, to avoid telling them directly that I didn't want to loan the items out. I found myself in an increasingly uncomfortable internal conflict. Things borrowed within the *pueblo* were often mistreated, lost or broken and I did not want to 'lose ground' by having to replace them with money we needed for other things. On the occasions when I did relent my expectations were born out. Our iron was broken and several tools disappeared. I got this image of us on a treadmill, continually spending hard earned money to replace things we had lost, or giving up and taking on the values and poverty of our neighbors, a scenario I found unpalatable.

ACCULTURATION SETTING: PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE

The first year I lived in Las Delicias was dominated by an experience of euphoria. This experience was not constant. There were times when difficult feelings arose from events that took place in my life as I began the adjustment process, but in most cases the negative feelings did not last long and I found myself back in the pleasant euphoric feeling.

As my Spanish ability increased and my cultural experience base increased, I began to become aware of the values represented in the behaviors around me. It was at this point that the tendency in my process was to be dominated by negative feelings. As I discovered, these values often were in direct opposition to my values. There were times in which I experienced feelings of intense anger, frustration, sadness, sensitiveness, confusion and loneliness. I began to feel a loss of the sense of who I was, a process which was

dominated by issues of masculinity. This tendency in my process was punctuated by the eventual totality of the realization of what the loss of ability to leave the country and have contact with my native culture (due to the folding of the boat business) had on me.

There were times when the emotions would overwhelm me, my dreams would become disturbing and I would resort to allowing myself to either release them in the form of crying or anger. They were sometimes impetus to do deeper 'soul' searching. Relief came when I would take time to look at the way in which I was thinking and how that was effecting my deeper emotional state. With time, domination of my experience by negative emotional states gave way to a more conscious unraveling on my part of the value system around me, an intellectual coming to terms with the cultural differences surrounding me. But it was always just that, an intellectual understanding.

But this rational understanding was not the integration required. Although I could often rationalize upsetting events, it was usually more like keeping emotions at bay. By the time I had moved to Lima, my emotional state had 'crystalized' into a state of persistent depression which, rather than be relieved through a rational process and change of location, deepened. As well a shift had occurred. While before much of my emotional reaction to events in the culture around me I interpreted as being wholly outside myself, I realized that a slow shift had been occurring in which the contents of my 'soul' searching, sparked by events in the culture around me, moved me beyond merely examining my value system, to actual deeper issues having to do with my personal masculine identity and upbringing. This time was paralleled by my becoming re-connected with my original intention for coming to Peru, spiritual healing, techniques of which I began applying to

myself and my work. It was also at this stage that I came into contact with the culture studies materials which helped to organize this inner work I was doing.

Combining the psychological models and this new culture studies information with shamanistic techniques, several things took place. The process took on a harmony and direction which before had been lacking; I began to notice a pattern to the process of the arising issues within myself, and I was able to connect those with outer life events. As this psychic material became more personal and my search more inner directed, a culmination point was reached at which a large part of the psychological issues I had been dealing with integrated. It was an epiphanal experience, which changed deeply the way in which I felt about myself, and the culture around me.

The combination of this psychological path and the totality of the day-to-day events, ambient elements, and special 'one time' events cumulatively made up my acculturation experience. Having access to the acculturation information, while in the familially isolated environment of Lima gave me the necessary framework to be able to analyze the process I was going through and pull it together.

CHAPTER FIVE:

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE: ANALYSIS

Working in Lima offered me the opportunity to travel and study the U.S.. It was during this time away from Peru that I was able to more clearly see the effect such absences had on my acculturation process. After my second 'break' from the culture, which corresponded with my first semester at SIT, I realized my 1994 experience was not an isolated, or personal, event.

Lima also presented the setting in which I was able to bring together the various models I had been working with and successfully apply them. This includes both the psychological models from my university studies and the culture studies models from SIT. The relative isolation of Lima provided me with the perfect environment for doing the deeper psychic growth work which was required at the time. What follows next is an analysis of my acculturation experience as documented in Chapter four, set in the framework of Brown's (1994) acculturation model. His model best approximates my experience, and therefore is a good organizing principle. The analysis will include my interpretation of my experience through the Psychological models

GENERAL OVERVIEW

My psychological process approximated many aspects of the basic paths outlined in the culture studies models in the second chapter. There were, however, several major differences between the models and my experience. These models were linear and my

transitions from one stage to another, were not. One stage did not clearly end and give way to the next. The general tendency appeared linear, but there were significant exceptions. My experience was a complicated, multi-level, spiraling process.

Elements of other stages, as well as entire successions of stages, appeared when the general tendency of my experience was to be in one particular stage. My experience with the forcefulness of life in terms of eating lunch at Eduardo's house is a good example. In that experience, I went through a full acculturation cycle, even though the tendency of my experience at that point was concentrated in Brown's (1994) first stage (euphoria/excitement). Once the crisis of adjusting to that unique experience was over, my general experience returned to being dominated by phenomenon associated with the first stage (euphoria/excitement).

This phenomenon continues to this time. My experience now is predominantly Brown's (1994) fourth stage (near full/full recovery), but other stages are present. Just recently I was running some errands and suddenly found myself being filled with the wonderment and excitement, that 'special' feeling that characterizes Brown's (1994) first stage (euphoria/excitement).

STAGES

EUPHORIA/EXCITEMENT

In general it was a pleasurable time for me, marked by a basic idealism and simplistic understanding of the people and culture around me, all reflected in letters I wrote during these times. My impressions during this time were almost entirely

superficial. They did not reflect knowledge or understandings of the lives, beliefs and values of the people I was working and living with. It was during this time that I tried to consciously adopt values which I perceived and saw as desirable. Most everything was new and unusual.

The period of stage one (euphoria/excitement) dominance had elements of Kübler-Ross's (1969) denial and bargaining. Pushing forward in my own cultural behavior, even when I was fully aware that it was not acceptable behavior, was denial. During the time that I was idealizing aspects of the culture around me, I was aware of indications which pointed to the contrary, but I ignored them. And although short lived, my fantasies of trips home or one day leaving Peru were ways of bargaining out of the on coming change. Because the emotional intensity during the stage one(euphoria/excitement) dominance was mostly positive, I did not feel the need to look to my background for help.

CULTURE SHOCK

At some point stage one (euphoria/excitement) began to be replaced by a tendency towards experiences of intense self doubt, fear, anger, confusion and the other negative emotions which characterize stage two (culture shock). Although these feelings were present in the euphoric/excitement stage, they never lasted long. The point at which negative emotions no longer quickly gave way to a return to euphoria marked the beginning of stage two (culture shock) dominance for me.

The largest single move from stage one (euphoria/excitement) into stage two (culture shock) took place through the change in perspective forced upon me by the

failure of the fishing business. The fishing business had carried with it the hope for sufficient means to be able to travel between the United States and Peru, and as such maintain more contact with my native culture. The death of this business and my subsequent employment in Trujillo, earning a local wage, made me fully aware of what being dependent on the local economy would mean to me. No longer able to realistically entertain thoughts of returning to the U.S., I found myself face-to-face with those elements of the culture I had previously been able to avoid.

My immediate interpretation was that these strong emotions were symptoms of a large scale grieving process. Once I made this connection between Kübler-Ross's (1969) grieving process and my experience, I made the decision to treat my symptoms as if they came from a physical loss. Rather than a physical death however, I was grieving for the loss of my world view, my identity, and of the possibility of going back to what was familiar, my own culture. I allowed these emotions to come up and be released.

Fifteen years earlier, in allowing myself to grieve the loss of my mother, I had experienced a rapid and permanent decrease in the intensity of lingering pain and memories. Once released I had been able to see that these un-grieved memories and emotions had negatively effected my behavior. Applying this same process to my experience in Peru had mixed results.

Unlike grieving for my mother, which was done after the fact, I was grieving and experiencing the situation in Peru simultaneously. As well, my grief was of a much more complicated and multi-leveled nature than my grief for my mother's death. Grieving had a beneficial effect in only certain areas.

The area of most dramatic benefit was in homesickness, a frequent experience in the first year in Las Delicias. After finding no relief in ignoring it, I decided to treat it like grieving, a long process which terminated in a critical point in which I relived and released experiences, and accompanying intense emotions of grieving, from the present back to early childhood. The result of this experience was a dramatic decrease in the frequency and intensity of homesickness in my daily life in Las Delicias.

While my homesickness was dealt with, the anger, frustration and depression in other areas did not diminish. It became apparent to me that something more was required. I turned to cognitive psychology for explanation and help. It was this material which brought me to the core conflict responsible for my culture shock symptoms: the clash of values between me and the new culture around me.

My confrontation with the values within the *pueblo* was a multi level process. The value of esteeming human relationships over material wealth, which I perceived early in my acculturation process, in the communal sharing customs, was in the end, an unseasoned interpretation. This behavior embodied a small 'c' value I thought I had identified and wanted to adopt. I did not understand that the behaviors were connected to a larger web of values integral to understanding the behaviors which expressed them. I was interpreting these behaviors from my own understanding of what it meant to be non-materialistic, and as such, my understanding of the values and behaviors of those around me was overly simplified and inaccurate. The process of deepening awareness of values around me was paralleled by a growing awareness of the values and beliefs behind my own behaviors. When the two were at odds with each other, conflict arose. This was the

source of the intense emotional reaction I now recognize as culture shock.

I discovered, as I ran up against problems in my adoption of this idealized value, the conflict and tension I experienced was in reality not just one isolated value within me, but likewise a web of values, beliefs and behaviors which would have to be confronted. This was the true beginning of my psychic growth. It was at this point that I began to dive into the cognitive psychology material which helped me to not only see the connection between my emotions and thinking, but to recognize the value system which lay behind it.

This example shows this process of unraveling the web of values behind behaviors. I found values which represented to me the shadow side of the culture. It was a necessary and inevitable move into more realistic waters. By not loaning things, I was going against the current of the culture and running up against another value which I neither realized I had nor was willing to give up, and which was in direct conflict with the values around me: the common sense adage "Take care of your things and they will take care of you." In the culture of Las Delicias, however, it came out more as: "Material objects have more value than human relationships." This caused conflict both personally and communally. Worse, due to my inexperience, I could see no middle ground. I knew that people who did not loan or share were seen as selfish and ambitious, both negative qualities in the local culture. This isolated me further, the opposite of what I wanted.

Although I saw and admired the positive side of this loaning – that it was an important part of an uncontrived community – at the same time I could see the shadow side. The poverty around me was a vicious circle kept in motion by self-defeating values and customs which kept people from rising above their poverty. I had found the limit to

which I would value relationships over material goods.

With these realizations, more differences and more values unraveled. I searched for ways to reconcile these differences and so began a process of searching my own identity. I realized that there was something much more at issue below this conflict with material things. It forced me to face my own value on self improvement and getting ahead, something which ultimately brought me to question my definitions of masculinity, self esteem and self worth.

RECOVERY

Using cognitive psychology to search for answers to the strong feelings from culture shock experience marked the beginning of stage three (recovery). It was an intellectual search for answers and reconciliation of emotions raging within me, a search often erroneously guided by my native cultural orientation, exemplified in my decision to confront the old woman about the grave site incident. My native culture driven, intellectual solution was to teach the old woman a lesson in the virtues of being direct. Directness, however, was not considered a virtue by the people I was trying to teach it to. I found myself at times stubbornly holding onto my own behaviors, even when these behaviors were clearly not useful. As I gained a deeper understanding, my interactions and cultural interpretations became less native culture driven, and better informed. Although the results were more positive, they were still conscious efforts and not adaptation or acculturation. Brown (1994) describes my time well as one of 'slow progress.' I did not begin to make progress towards Brown's (1994) fourth stage (near full/full recovery) until

I began applying the models for psychic growth and doing deeper integration work.

In my experience, depth of immersion and energy spent on reconciling differences influences the outcome. I have found that to truly understand and begin the process of adapting to or acquiring local customs, I had to see the values and beliefs behind the behaviors I was observing and participating in and to reconcile them with my own. It is at this point that overlap occurs between the area of customs and those of values.

In the example of my experience with *indirectos*, as with the old woman in Moche, I ran up against a value directly opposite my cultural value of being direct and honest in interactions, and the relative acceptance/tolerance of showing one's true feelings, especially that of anger. In the U.S. I had learned to value showing one's true feelings. It turned out to be a value deeply attached to my definitions of masculinity, self worth and self esteem. Experiences like these, along with my role definition process, stirred me to face these issues within myself. Realizations that my values of directness and honesty with feelings were not viewed as behaviors that show character and valor, but rather as immature, rude and signs of lack of social skills and self control, humbled me to the realization that many of my most esteemed values were not universally held, and that they have little to do with human worth, self esteem or definitions of masculinity.

The transition from stage two (culture shock) dominance to stage three (recovery) dominance was significant and followed this pattern. A combination of applying the principles of cognitive psychology and the release of emotions reduced the symptoms of culture shock. I began this process using only surface techniques which deal with thoughts which arise in the moment. This resulted in only immediate relief. Because the

problem was rooted in my personal value system, I eventually had to look beyond my immediate cognitive reaction to the values and beliefs which gave rise to that immediate cognition.

My prominent issues with masculinity which seemed to be at the base of most problems gives a good example of this cognitive process, especially because it began with the cultural definition of masculinity outside of me. Cognitive psychology work in this area gave me the first awareness of the connection between the microcosm of my own personal beliefs about exercise and physical conditioning, and both the outer cultural and my own inner macrocosm of culturally defined masculinity.

On a personal level, when I began to use the cognitive materials to deal with my emotions, I found that much of my thinking revolved around this issue of physical conditioning and my separation from the activities which had typically kept me in shape: bicycling, skiing, and mountain climbing. Applying surface cognitive techniques I found I was unconsciously correlating my level of conditioning with my sense of self esteem and worth; the more out of shape I felt, the more my self esteem plummeted.

My solution – join in on more local ways of keeping in shape (playing soccer, swimming in the ocean and small, household construction projects) – was based on this surface work. When these failed, I found myself in considerable confusion and pain. The arising of this confusion often resulted in reminiscing over past physical accomplishments. I would also find myself defensive and comparing achievements, looking for areas of accomplishment from my background in which the local men and culture could not compete. These remedies were always short lived. The surface techniques didn't help

either.

As I began to use the cognitive techniques which get at values behind one's thinking, I realized that I was coming face-to-face with not only my own personal preconceptions of what it means to be in good condition, but what it meant to me to be a man in the broader culture around me. Through looking at experiences like that given earlier of house projects I was able to understand that my brothers-in-law's help was aimed at maintaining status quo. Male 'professionals' like myself did not do construction jobs. 'Workers' like my construction working brothers-in-law did. It was something which I should have felt proud about, had I shared this value. At the cultural level of my value system, construction work meant independence and manliness. This resulted in a sense of self sufficiency and pride. These were all part of my masculine identity. The result of holding these values in a culture in which they were not shared was growing confusion and inner conflict. There was no validation around me for my masculine defining activities as there had been in the U.S..

When I could no longer maintain my position, the process of evaluating and beginning to understand more deeply my values and their effect on my feelings began in earnest. I was able to intellectually understand that there is no logical connection between activities like sports or other 'character/masculinity defining' actions, and the inherent worth of an individual. I was also able to see through this process that not all values are universally held.

What I now recognize as another significant steps in Brown's (1994) third stage (recovery), came when I was able to see that the shadow side of the culture which had

been throwing me into turmoil had at its base a value on time which was completely different than my own. I realized that the basis for the attitudes and values surrounding material objects, sharing, progressing, even lying and fooling, all evolved from a different concept of the passage of, and value on, time. I was surrounded by a world view in which time was not viewed as linear travel between a beginning and an ending. Time was not 'money' in Las Delicias. Life was lived as a series of cycles.

The largest cycle began with birth and ended with death. Cycles were marked in terms of the tides, the seasons for harvesting, and yearly religious and personal celebrations. It was a value which created a world view in which material goods have importance and are desirable, but are not of paramount importance for improving life because 'improving life' had a wholly different meaning. In the eyes of a Las Delician, progress could be temporary; it ebbed and flowed and it may not even have been completely under the individual's control. It was ultimately controlled by God and 'magical,' non causal influences. One's personal value was as much determined by actions towards other human beings, especially family members, as by one's achievements and things.

As such, while honesty was valued, one could 'fool' others, as with my story about Aunt Santos and the prescription money, without it being defined rigidly as 'right or wrong' because money doesn't have the same long term value; sustenance can be gotten from the ocean or the fields. The inevitable cycling of time and God's intervention will eventually bring prosperity around again. When I realized this, my intellectual understanding, the main component of stage three (recovery), came full circle.

Unraveling these ideas over time with the aid of the cognitive techniques was revelatory and in some ways freeing, as it was an important precursor to truly adapting to my surroundings. But as I was to discover, it was not enough on its own. While I felt I was making progress, in reality I was doing just enough cognitive work to feel better, but never enough to change what had slowly become the most prominent culture shock remnant – depression – in a lasting way. With each progression, I found new and deeper connections in this web of my psychological makeup with which I could relate to events occurring in my outer world, an important aspect of integration.

In the beginning however, these issues seemed unrelated. I would find myself first looking at issues of masculinity, then guilt, then shame, then fear of death, at which point the issues would repeat, but in a seemingly random and unconnected order. My depression did not abate. As I found new connections in this web, I often found other cultural factors and inner personal factors which contributed to the problem.

After a time I realized that this intellectual piecing together of large pieces of my cognitive landscape was not helping me change my emotional state. I was frustrated. I was trying to pin down a bead of mercury with my finger tip. Each time I put my finger on the problem, I found that it was no longer the problem, and rather it was some other issue, with some other base assumption behind it.

Three significant factors occurred at this time. One was a reconnecting with my healing work, integrating aspects of shamanistic healing into my acculturation/learning process. Another was my move to Lima which crystalized my depression rather than alleviating it. The third factor was my revisiting Grof (1976) and Jung.

Grof's (1976) model offered an explanation for my stuckness, through identifying a relationship between unconscious, unintegrated memories within the individual, and outer life behaviors, beliefs and values. His work demonstrated that these behaviors, beliefs and values which changed upon the release and integration of the unconscious contents, resulted in considerable psychic movement and growth.

Grof's (1976) model also offered a way out of my stuckness. A central point to Grof's (1976) model is the existence and use of a catalyst: LSD. My catalyst was using the healing techniques I had learned to use for others, on myself.

I dove into the materials and brought them together more systematically. I used the cognitive material for implementing lasting change in moods and to serve as a rational 'guide line' for the deeper, often irrational, levels of my unconscious. I used Jung's and Grof's (1976) models for working on deeper unconscious levels, and Kübler-Ross's (1969) grieving process to cope with the overwhelming emotional content which arose with the unconscious contents. I used shamanistic knowledge and ability as a 'catalyst' for bringing up the deeper contents, and as an organizing principle.

NEAR FULL/FULL RECOVERY

Once my work became more systematic and inclusive, it began to move in a more harmonious way, setting the stage for a shift into Brown's (1994) fourth stage (near full/full recovery). While seemingly random at first, with time, issues appeared to come up cyclically. As I dealt with each appearance and my understanding of that issue increased, the cycles between appearances shortened. I got to the point at which I was able to find

connections to other underlying assumptions which had come up at different times. I seemed to be reaching a level of understanding in which I could see connections between them all. In fact, with a moderate outlay of energy and time, I soon could lay them all out before me – seeing very clearly their web-like aspect: intimately and complexly connected. I began applying Jung (Hall 1983) and Grof (1976), delving into the depths of my psyche, interpreting my dreams, relating them to outer life occurrences and to early childhood memories which surfaced. It was a time of intense introspection which paid off as it culminated in an epiphanous experience in which a large weight was lifted from my shoulders. As a result of this I found myself at a level of comfortableness in the culture and within myself I had not experienced before.

Psychic growth and acculturation are inherently related. The interface between the two processes is the clash of values and beliefs which is at the core of the acculturation process. As demands were placed upon my person to adapt to my new surroundings, which meant in the end to reconcile the value differences coming into my awareness, a task began which required that I look within myself for the answers. The degree to which I have looked within depends on me and my level of comfort in my life within this new culture. While some areas have been clear and easily reconciled, others have not. Surface values on masculinity, especially those equating masculinity with conditioning, have been reconciled. At some point I began to see that not everyone in this new culture defined their masculinity via sports and that niches existed in which I could fit and maintain my sense of self worth. Although areas of values remain unresolved within me, I have attained a level of comfort in this area. It is here I feel I have achieved what Gaston

(1992) calls transcendence.

I also recognize that in order to reach this comfort level, and to be able to see that there actually were other options for me in this culture, required my becoming aware of, and integrating those unconscious aspects of my own personal psychic makeup. As my situation changes and new challenges are presented to me in my life and in this culture, I may be faced with having to confront other value areas.

The process of acculturation and psychic growth, therefore, has been effective not because of any one model, but rather due to all of them working together. Emotional release was an important part of the process. As well, a rational and logical understanding of underlying values played an important role. Without that, I would not have had a realistic framework for the more irrational emotional work. The ideas from cognitive psychology have been my guide markers, like a spelunker marking his path with paint marks on rocks.

As well, the seemingly irrational process of the deeper work of exploring my unconscious and releasing contents which had been previously repressed was of great importance. Without it, I would have remained stuck in some areas in which transcendence was necessary for my adaptation. Important to all of this was the step of connecting the underlying thoughts and values to the events which evoked them, and from there connecting those thoughts, values and events to the unconscious and repressed contents which eventually came up from deeper levels of my unconscious. This included the important aspect of meeting the related challenges, and taking any required action, in my outer life. I attribute the synchronicity of the unfolding of this entire process and the

catalytic effect of releasing repressed contents to my application of shamanistic techniques. Once I brought this aspect into the process, I found that a certain logic and coherence came into the process. What in the beginning it had appeared to be a random, somewhat haphazard process, became a guided process.

CONCLUSION

In chapter two I introduced three acculturation models: Brown's (1994), Hanvey's (Omaggio 1993) and Gaston's (1992). I chose Brown's (1994) model as a framework with which to organize the analysis of my experience not because it completely encompasses my experience, but because it *most* completely encompasses my experience. There were important aspects of my acculturation process which Brown's (1994) model failed to include.

- ▶ His stages are linear in progression and suggest a clearly defined end and start. My experience was that while the process from a distance displays linearity, on close inspection it cyclical in a spiral form.
- ▶ Brown (1994) is descriptive rather than prescriptive, suggesting the individual has no control over the process. Gaston (1992) was prescriptive, and truer to my experience in which I felt I had control over important elements of the process.
- ▶ He does not emphasize the intellectual component to the acculturation process. Hanvey (Omaggio 1993) recognizes the importance of intellectual understanding as a step in acculturation, as do I.
- ▶ Brown (1994) did not include the psychological process which is imperative to a

fuller understanding of acculturation.

- Brown (1994) does not address the transpersonal/spiritual aspect to the process.

These additional aspects motivated me to look beyond Brown's (1994) acculturation model and create my own, one which incorporated pertinent elements of my experience reflected in some of the other acculturation models, as well as elements of my experience reflected in psychology and spirituality, information which none of the models included.

CHAPTER SIX

SYNTHESIS: THE ACCULTURATION SPIRAL, A PROPOSED, INTEGRATED MODEL

THE INTEGRATED MODEL FOR ACCULTURATION

My model consists of four acculturation stages viewed through two independent, yet related aspects. One is acculturation as a natural reordering process. The second is the acculturation process movement. This is because the acculturation process is both linear and cyclical in its progression.

THE STAGES

- 1) Superficial understanding
- 2) Value/identity shock
- 3) Intellectual recovery
- 4) Acquisition/adaptation

Each stage will be viewed from three different perspectives: Descriptive Emotional, in which emotional experience is paramount; Descriptive Psychological, in which psychological phenomenon is laid out; and Prescriptive, in which guidance is given for an active role in the acculturation process.

An important phenomenon which is a constant throughout the acculturation process is the phenomenon of one stage, or of the entire sequence of all four stages, appearing while the general tendency of the individual's experience is to be dominated by

one stage.

Superficial

Descriptive Emotional

The continuum of emotional reaction in this stage ranges from feelings of euphoria and excitement to strong dislike and repulsion. Where on the continuum one's reaction lies, and the intensity of that reaction, depends on elements in the acculturation environment which intensify the acculturation experience¹, and psychological factors, including the individual's psychological rigidity.

Descriptive Psychological

The superficial understanding stage is driven by surface value associations due to the individual's newness to the culture. Most understanding is superficial. Value judgements of observable behaviors, customs and roles in the surrounding culture are made along a continuum which extends from desirable to undesirable. Not possessing background knowledge of the target culture as criteria, the individual uses native culture experience and knowledge for interpretation, criteria which may be quite erroneous. The individual lacks the necessary breadth and depth of experience in the target culture to reach an understanding which is truer to the actual cultural events which evoke the judgement. Values being interrelated, truer understanding of behaviors, customs and roles requires seeing a large part of the whole, something which requires extensive

¹These elements are such things as language ability, differences between native culture environment and target culture environment, previous cultural experience, degree of native culture isolation and value differences.

experience in the culture and language skill.

Psychologically this stage is marked by denial. Because cultures are complex and represent a wide range of behaviors, an individual experiencing a strong emotional response, whether positive or negative, is selecting out of the surrounding culture only elements which support the original judgements. The denial is a natural and necessary defense mechanism against the tremendous influx of information and re-ordering which comes as one gains cultural and language experience, and therefore begins to find deeper level of understanding about the culture.

Prescriptive

This level requires experience with both the culture and language. The individual needs to develop meta-cognitive abilities, learning to recognize his/her own thinking behind the emotions.

Value/Identity Shock

Descriptive Emotional

This stage is marked by feelings of anger, confusion, sadness, frustration and depression. The individual may feel 'raw' or overwhelmed by these emotions. The degree to which these feelings are experienced range from mild to intense. The degree depends on the presence or absence of elements in the acculturation situation which intensify it, as well as psychological factors like rigidity.

Descriptive Psychological

The value/identity shock stage represents a critical point reached in the

acculturation process in which the individual's integration into the culture becomes full enough that value discrepancies between the acculturating person and the adopted culture become prominent. Denial no longer works and important aspects of the new culture 'flood' the individual. A deep level re-ordering process begins in earnest.

Although 'value/identity shock' critical points can be reached at any time during the acculturation experience, there is a point at which the value/identity shock stage dominates the acculturation experience, supplanting the superficial understanding stage and its accompanying emotional tone.

Often the individual experiences confusion about his/her identity and roles previously well defined in his/her native culture. This stage represents the beginning of the intensive learning/reorganization process which is involved in acculturation.

Movement into the next stage, intellectual recovery, depends on several things. Because the value/identity shock stage contains elements of a grieving process, the strong emotions which arise must be released in an appropriate way. This is necessary for the clarity required to gain the intellectual understanding which marks the next stage. Reconciliation of the intense emotional content depends on the individual's ability to deal with value discrepancies and find solutions to adaptation problems. The individual must keep in mind that because cultures are complex, there will always be a continuum of reconcilableness of behaviors, customs, roles and their underlying values extending from those more easily reconciled to those which are most difficult. Factors such as proximity to values already held by the individual and desirability of adoption of target culture values influence the ease of reconciliation. As those values at the easier end of this continuum

become reconciled, the emotional experience becomes less predominant and the individual's experience will tend to be dominated by the next stage.

Prescriptive

The sojourner needs to be aware of what is happening to him/herself. This includes awareness of emotional states and allowing, in an appropriate manner, their release. As the intellectual recovery stage requires intellectual understanding of eliciting factors behind those emotional responses, using cognitive techniques at this point is recommendable.

Intellectual Recovery

Descriptive Emotional

Experience in this stage is marked by a recession of the strong, negative emotions of the previous stage. These emotions are being replaced by an intellectual understanding of the values underlying the target culture's behaviors, customs, and roles. This does not mean, however, that the emotional symptoms associated with stage two disappear. These emotional symptoms may continue to appear throughout stage three, although perhaps with decreased duration and intensity. When an individual is 'stuck' in an important area of their acculturation process, unresolved symptoms related to that 'stuckness', for example anger or depression, will increase in intensity.

Descriptive Psychological

The individual may become aware of certain target culture behaviors/customs which are now a part of his/her unconscious store of behaviors. This is due to

unconscious integration of more easily reconcilable target culture elements which has taken place in earlier acculturation stages. Deeper questions about identity and roles become better formed and intellectual solutions may be hypothesized and tested during this time, a necessary step in the integration process. Although the emotional intensity of the Identity/Value Shock period has decreased, conflict still exists, especially with those values which are at greater odds with the value system of the individual. This, along with repressed psychological material, account for the phenomenon of 'stuckness.'

In the case of an individual who is not experiencing 'stuckness', the necessary integration of areas of conflict may come unconsciously. Like the process of acquisition of easily reconcilable target culture behaviors, moving to the fourth stage, acquisition/adaptation, may come without willful participation. The individual may recognize the integration process occurring when dream content becomes either disturbing or vivid, which could be accompanied by emotional release.

When the phenomenon of 'stuckness' is present, deeper, intentional psychic growth work is necessary. The presence of this 'stuckness' can indicate unresolved or repressed areas of the individual's psychic makeup and therefore will require willful participation in the psychic growth process in order to reach the necessary level of integration.

Prescriptive

An intellectual understanding of the values, both within the target culture and the acculturating individual is achieved by the acculturating individual's analysis of his/her own inner cognitions and values, as well as the values behind behaviors in the target

culture. This may be achieved by the application of cognitive techniques which look not only at immediate cognitions and their sources, but as well shed light on the individual's personal value system. Reflective journaling is another way to achieve the necessary meta-cognitive ability.

For the deep level integration which marks movement into the next stage, acquisition/adaptation, conflicting values have to be reconciled. When target culture and sojourner values are at considerable odds, or the individual is experiencing 'stuckness,' techniques for deeper psychic growth are necessary. Reflective journaling including recording both dreams and events in daily life which hold symbolic meaning to the individual's inner process are recommended. A solid understanding of the psychic growth process, and maintaining a firm spiritual connection are necessary.

Acquisition/Adaptation

Descriptive Emotional

In reaching the fourth stage, the sojourner's emotional state will have expanded to incorporate areas which approximate that of the target culture members. The tendency to experience strong emotions under circumstances in which they are acceptably experienced in the target culture at large will now take place. The tendency to experience them at culturally inappropriate times, due to resurgence of disparate native culture values, will diminish. This does not mean that experiences which previously evoked native culture appropriate emotional responses disappear. Rather, the individual's 'emotional landscape' has expanded to include new, target culture acceptable emotional responses.

Descriptive Psychological

The predominance of this stage in one's experience represents a considerable reorganization of the individual's value system, and repertoire of behaviors, customs and roles. It is marked by general comfortableness in the cultural context as a whole, or within a particular, niche within the culture. Comfortableness includes a facility of movement and interaction within the culture equal or near to the level previously known in the native culture. Culturally acceptable behaviors which once had to be consciously thought about are now mostly unconscious.

While the tendency for the individual's experience is to be one of having found a level of comfortableness within the target culture, it is important to remember that cultures are complex. Culture learning is a process which begins at birth. Sojourners, have not had been born and raised within the target culture, and so will often find themselves faced with new elements of the culture not previously experienced.

Prescriptive

The sojourner who has reached this stage has acquired the skills necessary to cope with new cultural elements when they present themselves. Continuing to be aware of his/her own learning process and new elements of the culture are important.

ACCULTURATION AS A NATURAL REORDERING PROCESS

A basic assumption of this new integrated model for acculturation is that basic patterns for change can be recognized and abstracted from natural, chemical and physical processes. It is also an assumption that these same basic patterns of change, which are

observable in the most simple processes, may also be experienced and abstracted out at all levels of interaction in which change is involved, even complex and seemingly unrelated systems such as collective, or common, shared human experiences like acculturation. In other words, this model is created on the assumption that we live in a world in which there exists a continuity of basic patterns from the least complex levels to those of higher order complexity. This idea is related to the religious-spiritual paradigm of the macrocosm being reflected in the microcosm and vice versa. It is also the assumption of this model that the description of such a pattern is useful in understanding the overall process of acculturation as both acculturation and psychic growth reflect the same basic pattern.

This acculturation model is also integral as it assumes that although abstracting out basic patterns is important to understanding complex systems such as acculturation, at the same time it recognizes the need for other tools with which to understand the more variable aspects of the process like intensity factors in the acculturating environment and differences in individual psychological makeups.

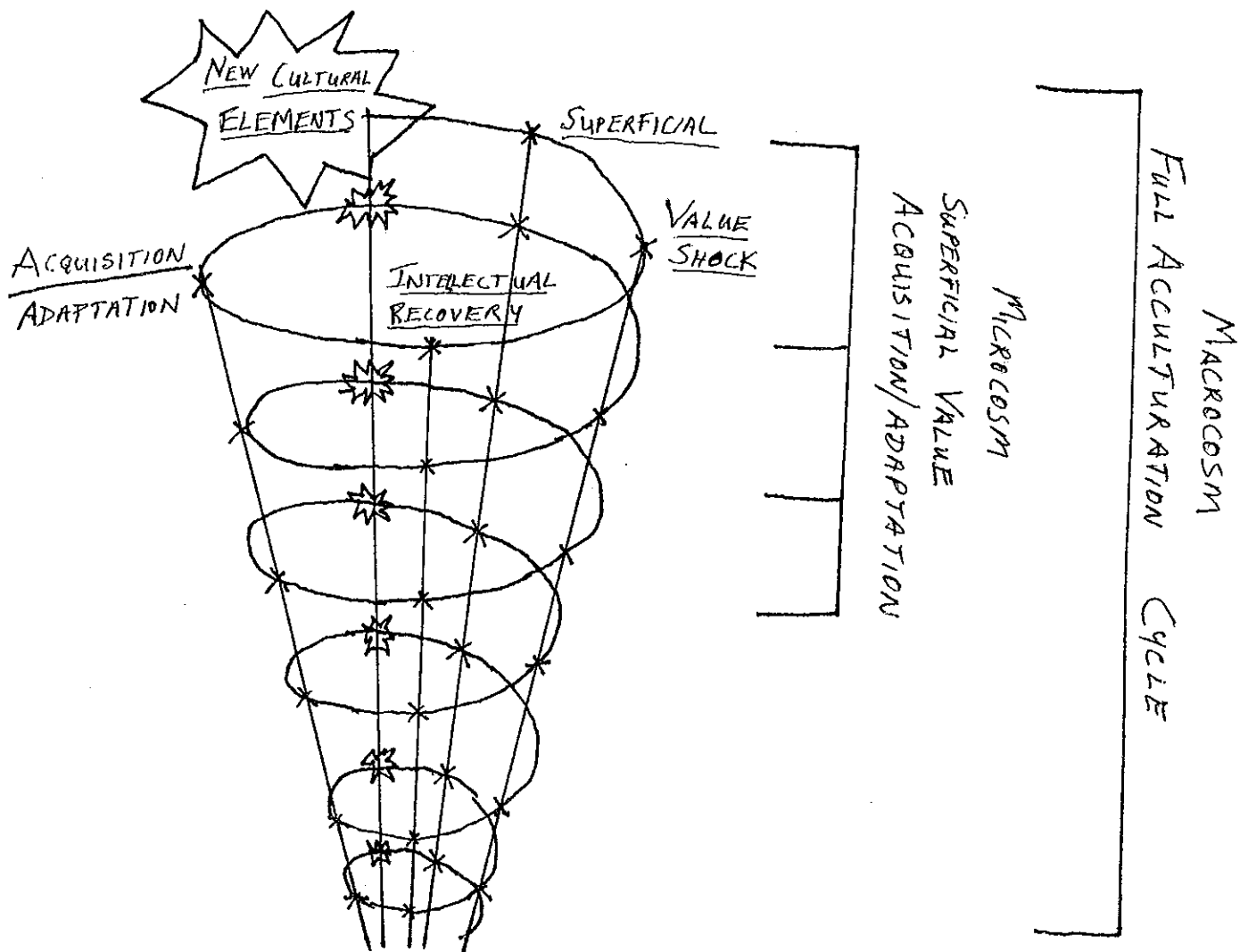
ACCULTURATION PROCESS MOVEMENT

The pattern the acculturation process takes is both linear and spiral. It is linear because as one observes the process from a distance, there is a definite progression through identifiable stages. On closer inspection however, it can be seen that there are cycles present within the individual stages and the process as a whole. The process moves in a spiral. A spiral is a cycle which moves forward as change occurs. The process cycles back to the same point on the radius of the spiral, but on ever deepening levels in which

repeating aspects of the cycle come more closely together, but do not actually repeat.

Change occurs, progress is visible.² Themes recur, but on ever deepening levels, and as the sojourner progresses, issues become more closely related through associations of experiences. Figure 1 diagrams the Acculturation Spiral.

Figure 1 The Acculturation Spiral.



²The exception to this would be individuals whose psychic makeup is sufficiently rigid as to require deeper psychic growth work in order to find integration, but who have the facility, and choose to leave the target culture.

This process of narrowing the spiral's diameter is the process of integration and the end result is acquisition. This is the same whether it is learning about the culture, doing deeper psychic growth work, learning a new skill, or studying a language. This is the process that takes place during the period of intense change, marked by confusion.

The spiral movement of acculturation provides at least one reason why some people never adapt and leave the culture early on. Their experience resembles the extreme end of the adaptation continuum in which their acculturation movement resembles closed, repeated cycles of rejecting the new culture. It also helps to explain such phenomenon as getting stuck. A rigid value system will increase the emotional intensity of the acculturation process when the value/identity shock stage begins. This emotional content, being due to the existence of unresolved issues within the individual, upon reflection will be related in psychological tone to experiences and values in the target culture which are eliciting them. Emotional release goes hand in hand with psychic growth. Presence of strong emotional content indicates the stirring of unconscious contents and repressed shadow elements. In order to reach the new 'plateau' of organization, the emotional and psychological content must be integrated. 'Stuckness' and failure to adapt (i.e. leaving the adopted culture) when accompanied by intense emotional content, can then be explained in terms of a need (or failure) to dive into the psychic growth process. As neurosis is a normal psychological condition, this will probably be the case for most individuals who find themselves in a difficult acculturation situation.

Those who choose to look deeper into their psychic process will eventually be challenged at both the personal and archetypal levels. No matter to what depth one goes,

it is clear that this multifaceted process moves in this spiral manner for as long as integration is in progress. As one digs more deeply into their psychic landscape, understanding of the dynamics between personal values, target culture values and personal experience will grow. Connections between what at first seem to be unrelated events and values appear. As more connections are found, the breadth of the spiral's cycles become narrower. The relationship between values and experiences come closer together. This process continues until the spiral reaches a small enough radius that the totality can be seen. When combined with emotional release, deep work with symbols (dreams and outer life), and spirituality – catalyzing release and harmonizing the process – the spiral reaches a critical point, deep level integration and transcendence occur.

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