The link between the art process and primary/secondary processes, merger/separation process and discrepancies between actual/ideal-ought-to-self

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This article binds together three main theories with the understanding of the art process: the primary and secondary processes (Noy), the process from merger to separation (Winnicott), and the theory of ideal/actual self (Rogers). These are bound with the understandings of the art process as described separately by Schaverien and Lusebrink. The author suggests to conceive the artistic process as a spiral process that includes merger and separation, and moves between them alternately. The article introduces the art process as a dialogue between primary and secondary processes that reveals discrepancies between the different perceptions of the self. It expresses the belief that the art process and therefore the art therapy process lead repeatedly to self-integration and self-unification. It shows how art components recall these processes and reflect their correlation. This article is part of an ongoing research, conducted by the author, called "The Emotional Meaning of the Art Process and The Role of An Inner Spectator".

Key words: artistic process, separation process, primary/secondary processes, actual/ideal self and art

This article is a part of an ongoing study, which aims to extend the understanding on the emotional content of the artistic process. The artistic process combines conscious and sub-conscious processes and contains a secret, the creation secret.

Some researchers (McNiff, 1992; Noy, 1969, 1999, 2013) describe the artistic process as a life process that transforms, develops and symbolizes man's creative power, in which the person creates their artwork as well as themselves.

Schaverien (1999:35) bound together Winnicott's ideas (1945, 1971, 1990) on the creative potential space as the place for separation processes, for the art process in art therapy. Schaverien formulated a very short idea where she described the direction of the art process as a process from fusion to differentiation. I follow

Schaverien and combine this Idea with the ideas of Noy (1999), regarding the processes that comprise art, and the approach of Rogers (1965, 1995, 2007, 2013), which relates to contents and emotional motives that help comprehend art therapy. It is hard to find actual writings that deal with these specific aspects. I find it crucial for Art therapy to learn more about what happens in the psyche in the transition from material to image, even before the image becomes meaningful.

The old story of mankind and art starts with the emergence of man, after birth, whereas the primary processes are followed by the secondary processes.

Primary and Secondary Processes

The art therapist's perception of the primary and secondary processes is important and may influence his/her interventions and attitudes towards the artistic actions. As noted by Noy (1999), there are no other processes unique to creativity beyond these two types of processes. The very definition of primary and secondary processes evokes the discourse that began in Freud's time, regarding these processes and their significance for development. Freud and his followers viewed the primary processes as 'primary' because they appear early in life. These processes were perceived by Freud and his followers as present at birth, raw, disorganized, related to chaos, and dealing with them is considered a form of regression (Holt, 1976; Noy,1969,1999).

According to this approach, the secondary processes are more organizing, refining, logical and developed, and their role is to supervise the primary processes lest they burst into the system

and express themselves. From this aspect, the secondary processes are related to consciousness while the primary processes are related to the sub-conscious. The primary processes were also defined as non-developing, remaining in the time of their creation, unlike secondary processes which continue to develop, and are supposed to increase their supervisory role throughout their development.

Noy (1999) advocates for a revision in the understanding of both processes. He presents the primary "undeveloped" processes as actually enabling subjective connections and subjective categorization. Secondary processes however, which develop simultaneously with the development of the reality principle, are presented as enabling objective categorization and connection with reality (Noy, 1969, 1999). Both processes jointly comprise the discourse between subjective and objective reality. The assignments of the self are to cope with the physical, realistic human world on the one hand, and to develop maintenance and protection of the wholeness of the self on the other. In order to carry out these assignments one needs to utilize both processes continuously. These two processes, directed at two different tasks or needs, open a new perception on their correlation in human life. Moreover, the existence of cooperation between these processes is fundamental for art. Secondary processes are easily accepted as such but the role of primary processes is essential for creativity and for the existence of artistic processes (Ehrenzweig, 1967; Noy, 1999). From the aspect of the requirements of the self and of the artistic process as a reflection of

the self, the ability to release the order or data in the space that conforms to reality (primary processes) is an advantage. Art, as a dialogue between the subjective world and reality (art is created in reality), exists due to the engendered dialogue between the primary and secondary processes. Maslow (1962) enhances the importance of art as giving rise to primary processes - not for regression but for growth. He too diverges from the psychoanalytical concept. Furthermore, Maslow (1962) saw a difference between the repressed impulses and the primary processes, and maintains that the primary processes of the person are not as dangerous as the forbidden impulses. Thus, they are not repressed but rather forgotten in order to not disrupt the process of adjustment to reality. Therefore, in contrast to psychoanalysis, which believes in the need to get in contact with the repressed impulses in order 'to dispose' of them, Maslow describes a process of arousal and revival in the primary processes through creation and art, in order to bring about internal integration. Maslow thus enhances the importance of the action of primary processes for achieving integration, and internal integration, in turn, means well-being.

In the artistic process the self and reality have an ongoing dialogue. Materials and the developing work of art present reality by becoming an object in the external world and by the way the materials behave that might differ from what the artist expects and wants. The entire discourse, about and with the work that is being generated, is held from the artist's self and weaves his expression into the artistic reality of the materials. Thus, art provides the spectator with the experience of the merger of

both process systems, encountering the dialogue between them not as parallel systems but in the form of supportive systems that discuss, develop and grow the self and reality together.

This dialogue is emphasized by Ashbach (2005) as a dialogue between primary and secondary processes, also supporting removal of the hierarchy between them and emphasizing their mutual dependency as the essence of emotional existence. Ashbach (2005) calls the two participants in this dialogue which conduct the creative process *Being* and *Becoming*. Being is a state of existence, a fundamental essential nature, a fulfillment of possibilities or essential completions. The ego's experience of being is the subjective sense of the self's completion and fullness. Becoming is a coming into existence, a coming to be, a passing into a state. It is a concept that describes the change and transformation of the manifestation of being. The ego's experience of becoming is a gradual process associated with learning, change, and development.

Ashbach (2005) linked the two processes to the primary and secondary processes: Being- primary and unconscious, and Becoming- secondary and conscious. The primary processes are controlled by desires, wishes, using objects in a plastic and fantastic fashion. The experience of Being comprises emotional states, intuition, and convergent experiences. This experience links with narcissistic aspirations of importance and grandiosity. Becoming develops through a reality test, through mistakes and boundaries, through friction. It embraces the limited processes of consciousness and a sense of time, struggle and

limitation, encountered in reality, and therefore belongs to the secondary processes controlled by time, space, and the principle of reality.

One may view the primary and secondary processes as parallel to the two types of actions within the artistic process. Parnes (1988, 1992) described the creative process as composed of the action of generating large numbers of ideas and selecting alternatives. Guilford (1967) noted two forms of thinking that exist in the creative process: divergent thinking and convergent thinking. Convergent thinking is conceptualizing and organizing, linked with secondary processes, while divergent thinking opens the field of experience and communicates with the primary processes. According to Isaksen and Treffinger (1985), there is a conflict between these two forms of thinking that leads to the creative result. Sapp (1992, 1995) went further, stating that divergent thinking exists in action of every stage of the artistic process and convergent thinking exists in the transition from one stage to the next.

This view of the primary and secondary processes opens the way of thinking when comprehending artistic processes and perhaps the process of life as spiral, not linear, which maintain their existence in ever developing, integrating and renewing cycles that create new links and integrative cooperation.

The primary processes are evident in the components of art when referring to touching and moving the material. The secondary processes arise when a composition is formed, when an image arises and more so when a narrative is created. In my research I analyzed art processes and the emotions that arise when the creator works on material and when he acts on an image or idea. It is not easy to dissociate them, but it was found that basic emotions, and emotions that have to do with release or expending like feeling loose, feeling happy were 80% of the time when acting on material, and around 50% when acting on images. This strengthens the connection between acting on materials without image and primary processes. As described by Ashbach (2005), these feelings of being released, being happy are Being feelings. When an image arises, more self-conscious emotions appear, which demonstrates the secondary process in action. Then feelings like interest, curiosity, shame and disappointment emerge, all feelings of Becoming. In other words, the process of art contains an immersion in the action on the material in a state of Being, which connects with basic body emotions, and an understanding and conceptualization of what is created, a state of Becoming, which brings to self-conscious emotions.

This spiral movement between material and primary processes, and the image and secondary processes, as between basic body emotions and self- conscious emotions, manifests itself in this example out of over 30 self- reports given by participants in the research:

> "I started to knead the clay and sensed the clay as one piece, in me was pleasure, I added water and smoothed the holes, smoothing out caused me serenity and I felt released, I squashed the clay on top of a Carton piece, felt confused because I did not know to

which direction it goes. I took a toothpick and scratched in the clay, felt confidence, interest and curiosity from the paths that have been created, I opened the paths and took part of the clay out from between the paths, I feared the sensation I felt inside me. I felt also surprised from revealing the paths and their beauty.

I filled the wide paths with red sand and sequins and felt love and happiness, I drew the clay over the Carton and made it thinner, felt then unsure because I could not understand what I want to create, but also curiosity have created snakes and put them on a hill and felt released that I chose snakes, then I smeared glue and was interested about how it reacts, I have wet the clay and colored around and felt a release from using the material without distinguishing or being accurate"

In this self- report one can follow the work on the material, which causes a sense of Being, primary process, and looking for direction or creating an image in the sense of Becoming, using secondary process. Both of which exist in correlation within the creation process.

Namely, the creative process here represents a dialogue and synthesis of the primary and secondary processes.

The issue of the primary and secondary processes raises the metaphor of the tree. Primary processes appear as a system that developed first like the roots of a seedling. After the roots emerge, the stem begins to develop. The stem develops into a trunk with branches, leaves, flowers and fruits – a large and wide chain of processes which follow a facilitating program like the secondary processes. However, at the same time, the roots continue to develop and the fact that they were the first to emerge does not leave them behind. They continue to take root and diversify, stabilizing, nourishing and continuously seeking additional sources of water. In this sense, the systems of the roots and the other parts of the tree operate independently but also nourish and balance each other in a way similar to primary and secondary processes.

Schaveren (1999) writes about a partial process versus a full process of creating in art therapy. The partial process is a process in which an image that she calls a diagram image forms, and the full process is a process in which the embodied image appears. The diagram image is a linear image that symbolizes a topic, a thought, or an emotion not experienced in the here and now of the creation process. The embodied image is an image into which the creator devotes emotional experiential investment while creating. The diagram image is an image that uses little material and little dialogue between the material and the shape, it engages in narrative, and belongs mostly to cognitive processes. Schaverien (1999) noted that in the diagram image there is participation of very few parts of the self and it is a characteristic of defensiveness.

Furthermore, according to Schaverien (1999), the embodied image is a result of a longer process

that includes engagement in material and a development of a dialogue between material and form until the formation of the work. The embodied work will then include the stay in the material, the stay in the form, and the development in a dialogue between material and form, and in the end will include composition and a system of relations which build a sense of narrative .

Here, a description of a creator starting with material and developing to form:

> "So I could feel the clay, so that all the hand touches so that the whole hand feels, all my hand senses it….and the feeling is very huge in the hand, I could have been for hours like this…and then it looked like a bird sitting, as if the lump was sitting and it reminded me of a bird that is sitting. so I started to try to form it to be a bird, I have put some more pieces here and there and suddenly it became a form of something watery, I hesitated a second: bird or the new form, but in the moment I touched the clay and saw the formed form I loved it and went on with it, it was still seated there in a certain form and then suddenly came out a seal or a dolphin"

Lusebrink's model (Kagin& Lusebrink, 1978; Hinz, 1989; Lusebrink, 1991, 2010, 2013) organizes the components of the art process: material, form, and concept- in a hierarchic model comprising three levels of creation: The primary level is sensorimotor and relates to primary processes; the conceptual-affective level involves primary sub-conscious processes with more secondary processes as conceptualization increases; and the symbolic-cognitive level, which may contain secondary processes relating to organizing the thought of the work. The levels represent hierarchic developmental order.

The emphasis required for integration of processes and their mutual existence returns the discussion from disposal of the primary processes to integration of both primary and secondary processes. In artistic processes, these functions are integrated. They are not viewed as divided into the clear levels that Lusebrink (1991, 2010) and Hinz (1989) attempt to describe. The undefeated power of art is probably the exposure of the perfect integration between primary and secondary processes without hierarchy of importance, development level or preference, but with mutual dependence and dialogue of growth, culminating in self-merging.

Schaverien (1999) said that embodied work, which in Lusebrink's words would be a process going through all levels, can be a scapegoat upon which all the undesirable parts of the inner world are projected and invested in the work of art and therefore then can be disposed.

Heymann (2006) suggested defining this process as "refinement". A process of refinement seeks to see in the embodied work an object in which different materials of the self are refined (as opposed to disposed) and fused together.

From Merger to Separation

One may find a connection between the primary processes, which do not separate objects from background, accepting the entire field of

perception as a whole (Ehrenzweig, 1967), and the contents of merger-unity that appear as a primary development stage. Secondary processes lead to separation by classifying, separating, isolating and formulating ideas. Both processes exist in the artistic process, emerging from each other and merging again. In this view, the artistic process can be perceived as a process that moves from merger to separation in a spiral way, always moving back and forth on this axis, Merger as Being and Separation as Becoming.

Winnicott (1971, 1990) combines two developmental processes that may be linked with the artistic process. The first is the process from "unintegration" (Winnicott's concept differed from disintegration) to integration, and the second process describes the baby's initial experience as a passage from merger to building a membrane that separates Me from Not Me (1990: 56-63), similar to the transition from a field of colors and materials to the appearance of a contour between form and background. The two processes interact with each other.

This process proposed by Winnicott (1945, 1990) is a process that occurs at the onset of the baby's life. One may view it as a description of the development of a work of art. As such, it proposes the primary developmental process as a process that repeats itself in spiral fashion in all works of art. "Unintegration" contains merger, dispersal and melting of the self that has not begun to separate. Integration belongs to the organization process that leads to separation. From a state of integration, the parts begin to organize in an unconscious systemic order that later becomes conscious. In an art process, organization may occur by color and form being delineated and frozen in a defined space, or by the parts coming together into a form or color and being organized side by side (compared to a dynamic and never ending mix of colors- the colors are changed permanently). "Unintegration" contains a lack of separation, like merger, and therefore the integration process appears to stand for a process that comes from merger and moves in the direction of separation, and subsequently reorganized.

Winnicott (1971, 1990) describes how the child develops from a state of being merged, being in an all-encompassing One, into a state of being one of two- living in a two-body relationship with the mother, then one of three- in the three-body relationship with the mother and father. In the first phase of Holding, the phase of unintegration, which can be viewed as being an all-encompassing One, describes how the emotional and physical holding by the mother and environment leads the child to integration. later on the One will differentiate into a two-body relationship: from being merged with the mother to being gradually separated from her. This process from being merged to being separated is formulated within the potential space. In this space, according to Winnicott (1971), creativity occurs. Therefore, the process from merger to separation can be perceived as a creative process. The potential space, the dialogue space in which play and creativity occur, takes part between baby and mother and later on constitutes the internal self-space. According to Winnicott (1971), within the potential space, the dialectic power acts and enables the two opposites,

unification and separation, to exist side by side and emerge alternately. The object which exists in this space is being created to contain this discrepancy between being-one-with, and being-separated-from. This is the transitional object. Ogden (2004) describes the transitional object that exists within the potential space, as a symbol for unification being within separation, and separation being within unification. Here Ogden (2004) strengthens the core of the relation between unification and separation within the potential space as a combined movement. If we view the created work of art as a transitional object, then we can agree that the art process moves alternately between these two ends-separation and unification.

Hence, art therapy makes use of this space as one of the key tools for comprehending the therapeutic space. In this potential/playing space, one may experience being separated and unified at the same time. Merger provides intimacy while separation enables developing into a clearer conceptual separation. The potential space is indeed located from the developmental aspect between mother and child at the beginning of life, but also constitutes the inner space where the person experiences himself being alive and creative throughout his life. This may lead to the assumption that the same way the space develops and exists throughout life, not only at the time of birth, so do the processes within it perhaps tend to occur repeatedly in different levels of development throughout life, over and over again.

Winnicott (1990) binds the first phase of unintegration with primary processes, which transform into secondary processes when symbols emerge. Winnicott (1945) directs the process from merger to separation as moving from unintegration to personalization, then to realization. Winnicott ties unintegration with body experiences like warmth, holding, rocking. This is reflected in the tactile actions on and with materials within the art process. Winnicott states that a person might always come back to the state of unintegration. In this phase it is possible to exist in unintegrated parts. This process is clearly observed in the art process in the material phases where there is no coherence, either aesthetic or symbolic, between all the materialistic happenings. The creator will or should come back to this phase during the art process in order to repeatedly personalize it. In the art process, personalization will be manifested when the colors and forms are formed and realization can be seen in the symbols that start to emerge as images, or as an emerging organization with symbolic meaning. This process recalls the process from symbol equations to symbols as defined by Segal (1957). Symbol equation stands for states in which there is no differentiation between symbol and that which is symbolized. This is a description of a merger, but in one aspect of being merged. The primary and secondary processes that repeatedly occur in that potential-creative space perhaps together actually drive the movement between merger and separation. This motion is vital for the self and is not linear in the way that a past stage remains in the past, nor is it linear from the aspect that two types of processes appear simultaneously. Perhaps this combination of processes creates internal integration. In the art process, moving from the material to a conceptual

narrative is moving between the two ends of merger and separation throughout the potential space, and this movement happens back and forth through the creative process. Stern (1985:162) described language as a double-edged sword, it enables things to be known and build their narrative but it makes experiences less shareable for the self and for others. If we point to language as the main tool of differentiation then the edge of experiencing is rooted in being merged. A movement that lets both edges exist alternately, creates a wholeness, an integration.

The research shows that concepts and secondary processes give on the one hand confidence by feelings of knowing and familiarity, and on the other hand, challenge self- esteem with the question 'how good am I?', therefore challenging self- confidence. Acting on material enables being merged in feelings of enjoyment, freedom, and letting go - so as happiness but also being bored. Yet it challenges the confidence by not having any direction, or not knowing where to go. The movement between these two edges is the movement between being in an overlapping zone- intimacy- and becoming the self- a movement that is particularly significant for parity relationship. In art it manifests itself in the parity relationship between the creator and his materials and images while they are streaming into their composition.

These two themes recall Rank's (1978: 119-134) and Yalom's ideas (Yalom, 1980: 141-146) about moving between the fear of disappearing, which they call death anxiety, and the fear to be individual, called Life Fear. Anxiety of death relates to states of merger and unification which

threatens disappearance of the self. Anxiety of life arises in the process of separation into the individual self, the uniqueness of the self. The price of individuation is existential isolation, lack of belonging, lack of an ultimate savior. When one experiences the life anxiety by feeling separated and isolated, one might look for security in merger. But when merging, one can get a sense of disappearing and death anxiety. Then one looks again for separation and so on and so forth. In this context one can include the idea raised by Ashbach (2005), mentioned above, by which Being may perhaps be viewed as a holistic experience that begins with merger and gradually changes into Becoming, the individual process of action into the uniqueness of the self. This action from merger and unification to separation is parallel to the movement from divergent thought/attention to convergent thought/attention, from dispersal to focus, from primary to secondary processes. The movement of life seems to exist as this constant pendulum, sometimes from moment to moment and sometimes from a block of moments to another block of moments.

This pendulum of life enables diving into infinity and emerging into the self above the water, choosing a direction and diving again, to rise and direct again. That is the artistic process. From this aspect, the artistic process may comprise the ultimate picture of this process of life. The process breaks off if the person fears to immerse himself or is afraid of becoming a separate self, both are expressed in art. Great works of art present the entire process and provide the viewer's awareness

with knowledge about their own conduct and the option of fully existing.

The transition from the concept of one process (secondary) supervising the other more primitive one (primary), to a concept of cooperation is supported by Rogers (1965, 1995, 2013) and Maslow (1962), which emphasize the human healing and building powers. These healing powers are the person's power to grow and develop. These healing powers are contained in the cooperation between the processes. To return to the tree metaphor, it is the way both roots and trunk develop and must work together to enable the tree to grow and exist. When combining all these understandings of primary/secondary processes, merger/separation processes, life and death anxiety and humanistic processes towards self-integration, one can view the artistic process as a perpetual dialogue between all these elements and a fully rounded spiral eternal movement of life, practiced, aroused and reflected in the work of art. This process from merger to separation is the core of the art process. Thus, the artist experiences this process when creating it, which will reflect itself back to the observer. Perhaps that is what fascinates us so much when immersing in watching a work of art. The best presentation of this idea is found in the 'Water Lilies' of Claude Monet. When coming closer and closer all forms disappear and one is immersed in colored material and movement, so abstract that one becomes united with the atmosphere with no subject, then when stepping away the colors and stains slowly come together and the lilies will be created before the eyes of the observer as if the molecules organize

themselves to form an image. Step closer again - and all forms split back to colors. One can assume that Monet worked exactly so. Observing the work of Monet, one can experience the correlation between material and image, primary and secondary processes and the movement from merger to separation.

Artists might exist in a special zone when creating. In this zone a meta-emotion arises. Meta-emotion is a set of emotions which comes with the sense of integration, transformation and meta-experience (Noy, 2013). In this special zone both processes are combined so that one feels simultaneously immersed and separated.

Here is a description from an artist who was one of the subjects in the research:

> "The experience is imaginary, I do see it, in the beginning with the finger-paints -every movement I did with the hands created for me another part of this world that I (see)… from that place. It is all together that brings me this one picture. Because every movement with the hands brought out forms and colors as different pictures, and each picture is as if I stand facing that lake and I look to the side or in the water or upwards, and each time I see and that builds, all build actually the painting itself, that is what made me see the whole atmosphere. This is what is called muse."

In art therapy we will not always see this full process- the 'embodied process' in Schaverien's

language. One of the goals of art therapy might be to lead the client to a full process.

Despite the fact that the essence of natural life is cooperation and not separated systems, there are obstacles in the way of cooperation. The creative process reflects that cooperation but also the barriers and failure to flow.

The question arises, from where do these obstacles derive, and how does one put the system back into balance. The above described view suggests creating flexibility on moving back and forth, "from- to- from" primary-secondary processes, as if moving on a wide keyboard or note-range to create a full rounded self-experience. Art suggests a movement back and forth from material to concept and back to material, the material being "lost" in the feeling of wholeness, and the concept being found in the understanding and knowing.

Actual Self, Ideal/Ought-to Self and the Connection with the Artistic Process

As mentioned above, the artistic process takes place in the real world in the sense that it acts on materials, leaving its mark as a material work in the real world. The work of art becomes a testimony to the creative process. In this sense, the artistic process leads the direction towards separation in this dialogue with reality. As the work of art becomes more and more individual, it serves as a testimony of discrepancies: discrepancies between the imagined picture and the picture reflected on the canvas, between the artist's expectations and the result, between the artist's will and the "will" of the material, and between the artist's omnipotent imagination and his actual

capability. The created object is an existing external object compared with other artists and with imaginary pictures and expectations. Art reveals these discrepancies mercilessly: the discrepancy between the becoming work and the imagination, between the materials and their ability and what the artist wished to produce out of them, and even more so the discrepancy between what the artist believed he was doing and could do and the reflected image in the completed work. Putting it to the test, the result turns into a court, where the artist encounters their own work.

These discrepancies may be connected to the discrepancy between the actual self and ideal self or ought-to self (Rogers, 1965, 1995; Higgins, 1987; Strauman, 1996). Higgins (1987) gave definitions for these kinds of self: the *actual self* are the elemental values owned by the self that he/she or others perceive of him/her; the *ideal self* is how one hopes and wishes to be, or the hopes and wishes that others have for him/her; and the *ought-to self* are the obligations, responsibilities and undertakings that one believes he/she ought to have or others expect from him/her.

An ideal self is created by care-givers' expectations from the child to conform to their own ideals, the ought-to self is created by the care-givers' concept about what the child ought to be. Higgins & Moretti (1990) claim that discrepancy between ideal self and actual-self damages one's self esteem and creates feeling of worthlessness and depression. A discrepancy between the ought-to self and the actual-self creates fear and disquiet. Furthermore, these discrepancies may invite constant flexibility and transformation on the one

hand, but also self-criticism, frustration, disappointment and despair, as shown by the reports of the subjects in the current research, on the other. When an artist develops flexibility and transformation he actually manages an ongoing adaptation process with the real world and constructs his communication between the self and the real world, and that is self-development. But when the artist handles these discrepancies with reality with a sense of frustration, disappointment and guilt he is trapped in the gap between the ideal/ought-to versus actual self and has trouble accepting himself, and in the context of artistic work finds it difficult to accept his work of art.

Rogers' (1947) explanation of this distress on the mental level also provides comprehension of the creative soul. The tension called 'psychological maladjustment' exists when the organized conscious self-concept is not compatible with actually experienced perceptions (Rogers, 2013). In this case, when a person meets a discrepancy between his self-concept and actual concepts he tends to object to the assimilation of any perception that is incompatible with the current structure.

Adaptation, according to Rogers (1947), means undergoing processes of acceptance of all of one's self-perceptions. Rogers (1947, 2007) added the term congruence to this matter. He dealt with how to find congruence between the different subjective parts of the self and the expression of the actual parts in the real world. This process leads to reorganization of all parts of the self into one containing system, and to internal self-integration, to a unified self. Art also offers the same

integration of all conscious and sub-conscious parts of the creator in new and surprising reorganization, containing all parts in a single unifying system documented and reflected in a single work of art.

In this view, the artistic process reflects division or unity. Division is the result of an impeded process of the artist and raises objections and negative feelings. Flowing development of the artistic process leads to unity and self- integration. Rogers' (1947) description of therapy, or more precisely - the healing process, provides a precise description: the change that the therapy strives for is achieved when all perceptions of a person's qualities, capabilities, impulses, approaches and perceptions of himself or others are accepted by the conscious and organized self-concept. In this process, a person experiences feelings of comfort and release from tension in the form of psychological adaptation and integration. Adaptation becomes an internal matter independent of external reality, expressed in acceptance and integration of self-perception into a conscious unified system. This process of melting all parts and organizing anew describes the art process, and the organized self-concept on the way to be conscious can describe the finished work of art.

I will close the discussion with two examples from the interviews with the research participants. The first example shows a process which failed to be integrated because of critique and fear, resulting in the discrepancy between actual self and ideal self, but tried to find its way again:

"With the material, with no image, I had fun and it was simple because I did

not have any expectations from myself except working with the hands and that was fun. And then I saw suddenly all these colors, on the colorful paper I simply saw many flowers, that where part of the paper, and that is what I tried to do but it did not work out. It did not come out as I imagined it. Then I tried to understand how to make it more pleasant for me, so I thought using clay to create something different out of it, but the materials did not come together, then I felt disconnected, I felt that I am not an artist, far away from being one. It made me a little sad, and tried to cheer myself with clay again, that gave me a good feeling. I do not know, I only guess, but somewhere there under some layers, I did feel satisfied with myself"

The second example shows a process towards self-integration:

"I was in the material, completely not in the head, the strings passed through my fingers and I stretched them. The only thought I had was to look for new corners to which I have not yet bounded the string. As I started to roll over the red string and the edge (of the sculpture) became narrower, and then it was still transparent, I imagined that a puppy of Rapunzel is inside, in this tent. So I said to myself ok, I will look for a Rapunzel puppy or will cut it out of paper and stick it on the top. So I

searched in the box in the small puppies and saw it, that was a lot more interesting for me, it looked to fit a lot better, so I took it, that bird. It was all in feeling. It tells me a story, but not a logic one. That sphinx, the bird that now stands in the center of that work of art, on its top, this is a bird that its meaning is a very big one in my eyes"

Summary

In conclusion, the perception of the artistic process emerges from this article as a spiral rounded movement between primary/secondary processes, between merger to separation and between death and life anxiety. All these processes are overlapping. Primary processes stand parallel to merger qualities and shatter upon death anxiety, and secondary processes stand for separation and shatter upon life anxiety. Both work together in constant development and in constant dialogue, especially expressed in the artistic process. The artistic process can be seen as a separation process but it derives its curative power by moving back and forth on the merger-separation axis, as separation seems to be in continuous cooperation with merger. In addition, a link is drawn between the obstacles to achieve flow and self-integration and the discrepancies between the actual self and the ideal/ought-to self, and integrates this dialogue within the artistic process as a perpetual separation process that leads to self-unity.

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