

WORKING WITH THE COMMUNICUBE without buttons

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At the end of Damian's first therapy session, we had talked about the possibility of mapping out, using objects, his complex situation. I thought the Communicube might be useful for this and introduced him to it early in the second session. In accordance with Dr Casson's recommendations, I asked him first simply to look at, touch, notice the structure and voice any observations, comments, thoughts, feelings that came to him. He quickly said he felt drawn to the middle layer and that it was a red playing field. I invited him to close his eyes and become the playing field, asking him to describe it. We explored the image in some depth and it quickly became clear that this was a very unpleasant place to be. Damian described the sense of two layers above him (as on the Communicube), of duty and of expectations. He felt death to be a layer beneath the field. He said sadly that he could not imagine how he could possibly change the nature of the playing field. I accepted this, but said "If you *could* imagine changing it, what would it be like". Almost immediately the whole nature of the image changed. The field became "a vast blueness", a feeling as well as an image of sea and sky, infinite in every direction, stretching away to the horizon, on which he felt himself to be carried, lifted and lowered gently by the waves. Again we explored, and it became clear that this was a place of connection with soul, spiritual life and the timelessness of the universe, where it was possible just to be, held safely in "the blue", not having to make anything happen, just being. I helped him develop this into an image for meditation, focusing on his breathing, noticing his thoughts, allowing them to drift by and returning again to his breathing, floating body. There were occasional tears coming from his closed eyes and his body began to relax. When I brought him back into the present towards the end of the session, he acknowledged a powerful memory of sailing many years ago in just such a wonderful gently-undulating "blueness". Somehow the Communicube stimulated his imagination and memory to take him to a place of great healing and rest, which was just what he needed.

This reminded me of an early experience of my own in relation to the Communicube. At one of John Casson's earliest workshops, on being asked to explore my feelings in relation to the structure, I had felt myself to be both somewhere inside it and, simultaneously, a powerful being outside, observing some magical miniature universe which somehow belonged to me. The structure was standing in a shaft of sunlight at the time and the colour spectrum could be seen on some of the layer edges, reflecting back inside and bouncing off some of the surfaces and throughout the structure. My focus kept changing. Sometimes my perspective, my sense of my own location, was outside, as an all-seeing, all-powerful, godlike creature noticing and delighting in my creation. Sometimes I was the opposite, an infinitesimal speck in the vastness of the universe, when I focused on myself as being, somehow, located within the structure. John asked me to role reverse and speak as the Communicube. I said I was filled with light, with many colours, that I contained the universe and I felt a sense of wonder: it was almost a mystical experience. I found the experience exhilarating, joyful, expansive of my awareness.

Both these experiences show how the Communicube may be useful even without using any buttons or symbolic objects. In Dr. Adam Blatner's words it is:

"a tool for cultivating contemplation, sensitizing the mind to symbolization, as well as insight."