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***Abstract***

*The purpose of this paper is to introduce a Futures tool developed by Marcus Anthony called Harmonic Circles. There is a description of the tool itself, and its purposes. An example from the author's own research is used to demonstrate one potential way of implementing Harmonic Circles. Some appropriate and inappropriate applications of Harmonic Circles are then outlined, as well as possible problems.*

## **Harmonic Circles: A New Futures Tool**

Shaddap Benno ! The aussie cricket team satisfies some deep seated cultural cringe/insecurities in the Aussie male and that's why you don't want to hear any criticism of it. The Australian cricket team does have a wanker culture and Sunny (Gavaskar – former Indian cricketer) is right to point that out. Yes I'm Indian but plenty of my Aussie mates are sick of their cricket team as well. You need to get the dumb nationalistic chip off your shoulder and introspect on why the whole "oi oi oi" mentality doesn't go down well with the rest of the world. We're on the cusp of the end of Australian domination in world cricket... believe me it's a matter of months not years now, so you won't be able to use the "envy" excuse too much longer.

Posted by: avdresh at March 21, 2007, The Tonk (blog).

[http://blogs.smh.com.au/sport/archives/2007/03/leverocks\\_moment\\_to\\_savour.html](http://blogs.smh.com.au/sport/archives/2007/03/leverocks_moment_to_savour.html)

The tendency of western science, academia and education is to create confrontational binaries. Typically an individual takes a single side in an issue and then battles it out with an opponent or opposing idea. There have been numerous critics to point out the limitations of such an approach to knowledge and understanding (de Bono 1986; Kosko 1993; Nisbett 2003). This is such a habitual tendency in Western thought that westerners may not recognise that it is not necessarily the best way of coming to an understanding of an issue or problem.

A related factor is the typical belief in western cultures that intelligence is predominantly about mathematical/logical and verbal/linguistic acuity (Gardner, Kornhaber and Wake, 1996). The ancient Greeks helped shape this dominant modern view that intelligence is the capacity for abstract reasoning. The schools established by Plato, Aristotle and others valorised logic, geometry, and “disputation” (Gardner et al. 1996 p 33). The influence of this system extended over two millennia and was still powerful in the late 1900s when scientific psychology was being established (Gardner et al. 1996 p 33). Similarly de Bono (1986) finds that the Greeks initiated the western predilection towards rigid linear and sequential thinking processes. From such a way of thinking and seeing the world, the critical rational worldview became the dominant worldview of the west, and critical rationality the dominant way of knowing. [1]

Elsewhere I have argued that modernist science is aggressive and patriarchal in nature (Anthony 2005, 2006, 2007). The scientific method—and one of its founding values, communal verification (Huff 2003 p 24)—sets up a process whereby scientists ‘attack’ whatever findings are brought forward. Metaphors of battle and war are often used. Rupert Sheldrake, who often posits rather radical ideas himself, writes of his tenure at Cambridge in the following terms:

...it was oppressive. New ideas were treated as guilty until proven innocent, and as soon as I or anyone took off on a flight of speculation, the others opened fire. Shooting people down is a favorite sport of academics, and Cambridge is a free-fire zone (Sheldrake et al. 2001 p xix).

The idea of attack, defense and threat are central to the nature of logic and modern academia. de Bono (1986) describes the confrontational nature of Western “old style” thinking, where “two opposing ideas grow ever more rigid and fierce until they meet in a head-on clash” (de Bono 1986 p 36). In the dominant discourse within intelligence theory theoretical differences have led to the situation where some researchers “stake their ground and then battle it out in a perceived fight for truth” (Sternberg et al. 2003 p 11).

Examples of confrontational binary thinking are easy to find. As part of my own doctoral dissertation, I surveyed literature from the field of parapsychology. I noted that the debates were hopelessly polarised: sceptics versus the proponents – with neither party seeming to listen to the other.

Clearly such polarised perspectives leave little room for a fluidity of knowledge acquisition. Confrontational binary thinking stultifies the capacity for deep knowing because it locks the parameters of legitimate knowledge into unnecessarily rigid boundaries and leads to a situation where the individual identifies, at the level of ego, with the knowledge claims he or she is making. Thus the religious fundamentalist loses a prime opportunity to learn the fantastic knowledge which science has gleaned from nature and cosmos in recent decades and centuries. Yet an advocate of scientism – effectively scientific fundamentalism – may likewise lose the opportunity to explore the spiritual realms of mind and universe that mystics have written and spoken about for thousands of years.

Far Eastern cultures have historically had less of an issue with permitting and integrating opposing concepts. The idea of “the harmonious society”, long a part of East Asian cultures (and the key phrase in modern China’s vision of development), incorporates the concept of the integration of opposites, of contradictions (Lau 2006). East Asians are less likely to see a contradiction in language and concepts which may appear oxymoronic to a modern westerner. Research has shown that it is the overall consistency and context of an argument or idea that is considered the key to understanding for many East Asians, not internal contradiction. Contradiction is seen as an inherent component of the cosmos (Nisbett 2003). The yin and yang motif of Taoist lore indicates that both sides of a binary incorporate an aspect of the other. Neither indicates the full picture. East Asians are therefore more likely to set aside logic in favour of typicality and plausibility of conclusions. Logic may also be set aside if the conclusion is seen as desirable (Nisbett 2003). Thus when Chinese Communist leaders talk about “The Democratic Dictatorship of the Peoples”, westerners are likely to scoff in scepticism. But such a concept is not so immediately implausible to Chinese people.[2]

There are parallels in the quirky world of quantum physics. Bohr’s concept of complementarity – taken from the fact that a subatomic “object” may exhibit both wave and particle nature simultaneously - mirrors the Taoist way of seeing the world, a fact that Bohr was well aware of (Capra 2000, 160). The implication is that a mature understanding of a concept, object or a system involves an appreciation of its opposite (Capra 2000, 313). Many physicists have acknowledged the validity - indeed the necessity - of the more receptive nature of eastern ways of knowing. How impoverished we are if we make rigid our thinking for the sake of obstinacy.

The quote at the beginning of this paper is from an Indian cricket supporter named Avdhesh, writing on “The Tonk” sports blog on the *Sydney Morning Herald* web site. You can see that Avdhesh represents a typical human tendency to blame the other, demand the other reflect on their own behaviour and motivations (rejecting the need for this himself), even while resorting to put downs, shaming, judgments and thinly disguised hatred. Such an approach to “communication” tends to generate fear, anger, hatred, and conflict, and creates a situation where prospects for any genuine learning, empathy or wisdom is effectively eliminated. This is because the ultimate purpose is not communication or “critique” in any genuine sense, but a seeking of power over the other. Avdhesh is not so different from many participants in scientific and academic debates: he merely uses a more emotive language, and does not attempt to hide his feelings.

In many instances where confrontational binaries occur there is an unconscious cause. The “other” becomes the site of the projections of “the shadow”, or the repressed, “darker” aspect of the human psyche. This projection process creates a highly distorted relationship which tends towards hypocrisy, because what one “hates” in the other is often what one rejects within oneself. Thus we see the Chinese admonishing the Japanese for not addressing their historical shadow, even as the Chinese deny much of their own history; we find Muslims burning and pillaging after the Pope has suggested their religion has a history of violence, and we see both Israelis and Palestinians accusing each other of hate crimes but seemingly blind to the hate within themselves. Clearly such an approach quickly degenerates into attack and counter attack, and the respective projections of the shadow mount higher and higher.

Jung (1989) understood that projections occur when aspects of the psyche are not fully integrated. In this sense the “fight” with the object of judgment is really a fight with one’s own unconscious.

The good news is that wherever confrontational binary thinking involves projection there is an inherent opportunity for integration of the shadow, and transcendence of the ‘dramas’ which emerge from this projection process. All that is required for this to happen is for the individual to embrace the “right relationship” with the psyche. [3]

Confrontational binary thinking does not always occur in such obvious and dramatic conflicts as I mentioned above. Then there are the more mundane expressions of “binary” thought which spring from circumstances in our everyday lives. These can occur when we walk past magazines at the newsagent that cover topics divergent from our own thinking and worldview; they happen when we avoid connecting with somebody with certain religious apparel because they wear an alien dress mode to us; they occur when we listen only to the radio station that plays our favourite music – and no other. These situations all contain a commonality. We divide reality into “us” and “other”, “for” and “against”.

Needless to say every academic or mundane conflict or judgment does not necessarily emerge from a projection of the shadow. Yet regardless of the causes or the precise expression of confrontational binary thinking, there are ways to circumvent the tendency. De Bono’s (1986) concepts of “po” and “lateral thinking”, Zen Buddhism’s koans (Watts 1989), Kosko’s (1993) “fuzzy logic”, and Pink’s (2005) “R-directed thinking” are all directly or indirect means of upsetting cognitive habits which underpin “either/or” thinking.

There is another tool that I have developed to help redress the habit of confrontational binary thinking. This I call Harmonic Circles. It has the advantage over those methods mentioned in the previous paragraph in that it involves a greater degree of introspection and connection with the psyche. But for it to work we have to have an *intention* to acknowledge the Avdresh in us all. And that may be a little confronting.

In this paper I shall introduce the Harmonic Circles method in brief. [4] Harmonic Circles can be used alone by an individual wishing to address internal conflicts, or it can be used by opposing groups. In this introductory paper, I will focus upon how we can use it as individuals. [5] The main purposes of this paper are thus threefold.

- To demonstrate how Harmonic Circles can be used to facilitate the expansion of spheres of knowledge which we as individuals unconsciously shut down.
- To show how the Harmonic Circles tool can bring into conscious awareness the often unconscious mental processes which prevent that understanding from coming about.
- To indicate how Harmonic Circles might be applied by futurists and to futures studies in general.

### **My background**

To understand how and why I developed the Harmonic Circles process, a little explanation about my own biography will be helpful. Before I wrote a PhD thesis in Futures Studies, I had spent a decade exploring the depths of the human psyche. I did this through deep introspection, cathartic emotional work, and meditative and reflective processes. At times I worked with healing groups, where participants were motivated by a desire to heal inner pain and suffering, especially related to psychological issues and childhood abuse. This incorporated a great deal of work with the human “shadow”. For Freud the shadow emerges from the suppression of sexual energy, but for Jung (1989) it was more expansive, and included the suppression of the life force itself. Thus for Jung the acknowledgement of the shadow and the mental problems it generated was a potential healing force, a force which could facilitate spiritual growth and individuation (Jung 1989). My experience with working with healing groups is that the shadow also incorporates a great deal of repressed trauma from childhood and other spiritual dimensions of mind. As with Jung, I came to see that the suppression of the shadow creates issues whereby people project their own pain, anger, fear and judgment onto others, at an unconscious level. One way to work around this problem is to bring the shadow into consciousness, and to do whatever healing work is necessary to shift the pain.

In this paper I am suggesting a somewhat uncomfortable but relatively light exploration of the shadow.

### **The process**

The futures method I call Harmonic Circles requires participants to have some degree of competence with both introverted and extraverted ways of knowing. There are four steps in the process of Harmonic Circles.

1. **Situate:** Situate the arguments, ideas and values of both sides of the issue into the harmonic circles diagram.
2. **Let the shadow speak:** The darker side of the mind is allowed to surface.
3. **Integration:** An intention to focus upon commonalities and acknowledging the contents of the shadow.
4. **Visualisation:** The imagining of possible and desirable futures involving a more distanced perspective on the issue.

The Harmonic Circles practice I am advocating in this paper is not as exhaustive or confrontational as the consciousness work I did in my own past. The shadow work involved is not so deep – just enough to acknowledge any unconscious judgment, blame and anger. Of course it is to some degree a matter of choice as to how far you want to take it. This will depend upon your own experience in doing shadow work, the experience of any others who are present, and whether or not there is an experienced facilitator there to help work the process.

The exemplar I use to outline the steps in more detail is the heavily polarised ‘sceptics versus proponents’ debate centered within the field of parapsychology. This example involves my own strong belief that intuitive ways of knowing are vitally important to the futures of mind and intelligence. The focus in my doctoral thesis was on the classical representation of intuition, in the sense of Spinoza and De Chardin, where mind and cosmos are connected, and where the whole communicates with the parts. Because such a topic lends itself to spiritual and mystical concepts, academic discussions centering on this subject tend to bring to the fore strongly polarised arguments. As mentioned, this mirrors the sceptics/proponents divide in parapsychology (Grof 2000; Blackmore 2003), as well as the philosophical/empirical divide in consciousness theory (Ramachandran 2005; Churchland 2002).

For those who are unfamiliar with this subject, I will quickly summarise some of the most notable components of the discourse.

### **The sceptics versus proponents**

Parapsychology attempts empirical validation of many of the abilities that are constitutive of “the paranormal”, such as clairvoyance, telepathy, and precognition. Sceptics are numerous, regularly pour scorn upon any claims for the existence of the ‘paranormal’ (e.g., de Grasse Tyson 2001; Efremov 2002; Park 2000), and commonly accuse proponents of psi of being irrational (Hansen 2003; Park 2000).

The arguments against the validity of parapsychology and psi phenomena have some recurring themes. Firstly there is ‘file drawer’ effect, or the allegation that parapsychologists tend to report only data supporting the existence of psi and ignore the negative data (Radin 2006). Another common criticism is that experimental methods used by parapsychologists in gathering their data are inadequate (Blackmore 2001; Efremov 2002; de Grasse Tyson 2001). Allegation of deliberate fraud is also common (Blackmore 2003; Efremov 2002). For sceptics the ultimate pervasive dismissal is the argument that the naming of potential flaws in parapsychology experiments – as opposed to actual flaws - permits wholesale dismissal of the data (Radin 2006 p 119).

Several parapsychologists concede that the evidence for psi is weak and/or highly problematic, and point to its elusiveness. (e.g. Hansen, 2001; Kennedy 2003; Batchelder

(1994). There are also numerous proponents working within parapsychology—or employing its research findings—who conclude that there is little doubt that psi is real (e.g. Braud 2003; Broomfield 1997; Sheldrake 2003).

Having now given this brief summary, I will use my own perspective on the debate to clarify the steps involved in the Harmonic Circles process.

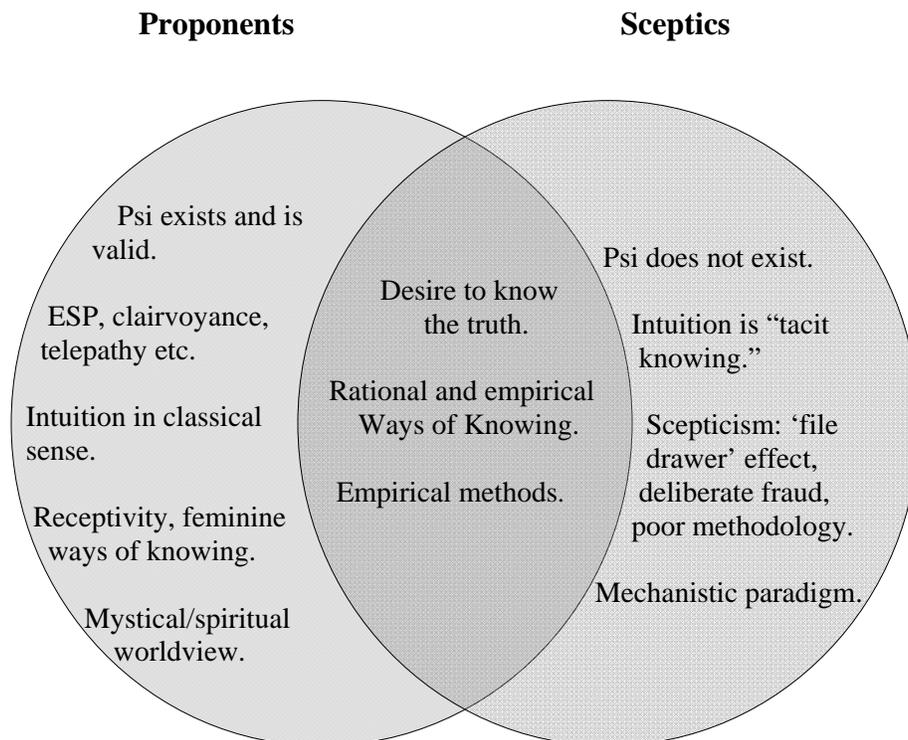
**1. Situate: Situate the arguments, ideas and values of both sides into the Harmonic Circles diagram**

This is a very simple process. Draw two large circles on the lower two-thirds of a large piece of paper, with a large degree of overlap. Leave space on the top one third of the page, as you will need it for step two. Alternatively you can make a Word document, although this may be a little small for the purpose – so use smaller font size if necessary. You can see an example of this in Figure 1, below. Now, on the left-hand side list all arguments, values and ideas you hold about the argument, idea or concept under consideration. In the middle, list all the commonalities – all the things you share in common with “the other.” In the right-hand column list the arguments and conceptions held by the other, especially those you disagree with.

In a sense this process represents the litany – the surface level of the debate. This is the level that those engaged in the debate will be most familiar with, at a conscious level. In step two, we move into the less “conscious” domains of the issue at hand.

**2. Let the shadow speak: the darker side of the mind is allowed to surface.**

In the second step of this process, the participant allows aspects of the subconscious or unconscious parts of the mind to surface. This is where the Harmonic Circles process becomes more personal. The final step of the Harmonic Circles process – visualisation of desirable futures involving the issue at hand - is essentially unworkable without addressing the deeper emotive, subjective and unconscious aspects of the “debate.” Shadow work as I define it involves making explicit the judgments, accusations, anger, ridicule and shaming projections that we do not normally make public



### **Figure 1: The proponents vs sceptics debate, mapped via Harmonic Circles**

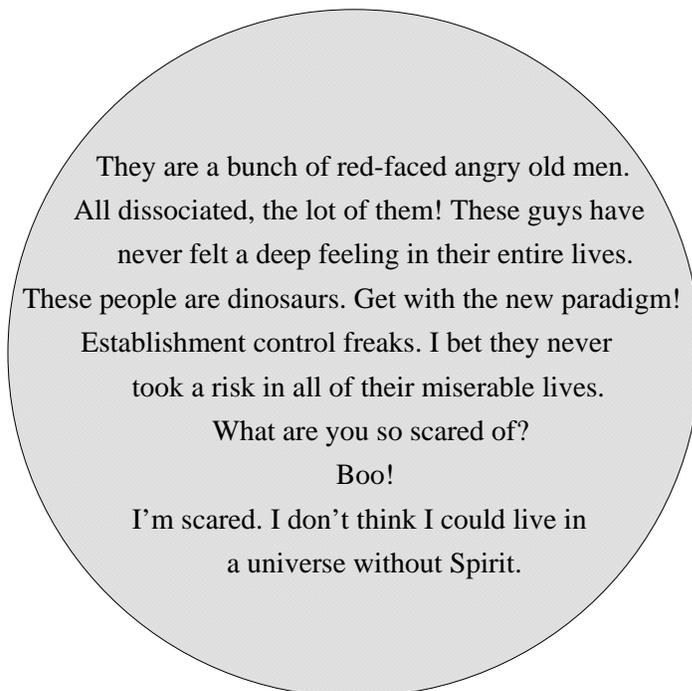
or explicit in a debate or intellectual argument. Step two will also likely bring up your own fears and anxieties. All these may be partially or completely unconscious.

In this second step a third circle is placed above the other two, on the top third of the page. However this time the cognitive process will be quite different. Here the participant “channels” the contents of the psyche, writing them into the circle as they “come” to him or her. I use the word “channel” because the conscious mind has to temporarily permit the unconscious to have voice in this process, which involves a “letting go.” To do this effectively, the participant can imagine standing before “the others” and really letting them know how he/she feels and thinks. It is important to let emotions into this process – anger, fear, blame, hate, judgment, sadness and so on. Emotions are an essential part of this process, and a true unveiling of the shadow cannot occur without at least some emotional expression. If the participant wishes, he or she can literally “act out” the shadow by moving about physically, talking, accusing, even yelling and screaming. But after this emotional expression, the essence of the feelings and thoughts should be committed to the circle in writing. The process should be short. It is unnecessary to dwell too long on this step. The participant should touch upon the essence of the shadow, then return to the normal state of mind.

This is a method that does take some practice, especially for those of us used to working with the “dry” intellect – as is the norm in academic work. Academia is typically highly resistant to the emotional and cathartic, in part to uphold the ideal of intellectual detachment. Regardless of whether the participant in the process I am outlining here is an academic or not, there is normally some resistance from the conscious mind or ego when the contents of the psyche become too “ugly”, too emotional, or too loose. However it is important to note that this is a personal procedure, and that the information you glean from your psyche does not have to be publicly shared. [6]

Here I shall go out on a limb, and following on from the Harmonic Circles I completed in step one, I shall “channel” my own shadow thoughts and feelings towards “the other” – in this instance the sceptics (see Figure 2, below). By now you should have realised that my own sympathies in this “debate” lie firmly on the side of the proponents.

Notice that I had a bit of fun with the process. The idea is to allow the shadow to speak, but not be too scared of it. Sometimes the thoughts and feelings that emerge out of the shadow have strong emotional or even sexual themes – shaming of groups, gender, sexual preferences and so on. While this may come as a bit of shock, I would like to emphasise that this is perfectly normal. Foul language is also perfectly standard! If these kinds of things do come through and the participant commits them to paper in a public setting, there is an obvious need to be careful that the information is not accidentally seen by others. I suggest destroying the paper as soon as the process is completed, at the end of step four.



**Figure 2: Anthony's projections towards "the other" in the proponents vs sceptics debate**

3. **Integration:** An intention to focus upon commonalities and acknowledging the contents of the shadow.

"Channeling" the shadow is one thing. "Integrating" it is altogether another. In order for integration to occur you have to "own" the contents of the shadow, and declare an intention to assume responsibility for them.

The simplest way to do this is for the participant to return to what she has written in step two. The person should sit quietly with the paper in front of her. A kind of reflective or meditative state is ideal here. The participant then reads back through what she has written, and then declares an intention to acknowledge it. Ideally, there should be an expression of a simple affirmation such as, "I am now willing to fully acknowledge the contents of my mind/shadow", or whatever words the person feels comfortable with.

Ideally, this involves a non-judgment process. The way NOT to do this is to pretend that what has been gleaned from the psyche in step two is not really real; or alternatively for the participant to beat herself up for it and declare herself to be "bad." The very fact that the individual is willing to work with the shadow and acknowledge the less pleasant side of her nature already shows that she is a step beyond where many of the human race are at, psychologically speaking. The very worst human beings in terms of behaviour are rarely terribly self-reflective!

Still, judgments and denials are inevitable. The key is to simply 'witness' them as they rise from the mind. This is essentially a meditative process. Just as in meditation,

where the workings of the mind are allowed to surface without attachment, in step three of this shadow work the participant allows the judgments and denials to surface. There is no need to try to change them. The participant has just to be aware of them, and to let them be.

Finally the participant returns to the two circles at the bottom of her page. She should focus upon the overlapping segment, where the commonalities with the other are written down. She must then allow herself to feel an empathic or intuitive connection with the other. Again, an affirmation will help. A good one is, “I am now willing to acknowledge the commonalities with (the sceptics), and accept them with openness.” The key here is to *feel* a sense of connection. If she likes, the participant can imagine feeling or seeing warmth or love being projected at “the other”.

Such a process will not eliminate the workings of the shadow, but it will bring a person into a greater degree of awareness of it. It will make the participant more ‘conscious’. This entails an ‘ego fall’. The shadow, and the ego that often attempts to repress it, has been exposed.

#### **4. Visualisation: The imagining of possible and desirable futures involving a more distanced perspective**

The fourth step in the Harmonic Circles process is where the participant decides where he wants to go with the whole process. This is an expression of a preferred future. Most likely the preferred future will be related to the essential purpose of Harmonic Circles: to initiate a more distanced perspective towards a particular area of enquiry, a debate, or a confrontational relationship with an opposing idea or group of people.

To do this the participant should sit quietly in a relaxed or meditative state. He should “see” himself situated with the opposing idea or group. The participant then imagines himself being able to “witness” any information, arguments or individuals on the “opposing side” with a greater degree of detachment. More than likely judgments and projections will arise during this process: still, the participant should simply repeat his intention to work with the shadow, and assume responsibility for those feelings. This can be done for a minute or two, or even longer if the person wishes.

And that is the final step in the process of Harmonic Circles. However this does not mean that the participant now has no opinion on the subject matter at hand. For example, I am still a “proponent” in the debate on the existence “psi” phenomena. What *has* changed as a result of using introspective processes like Harmonic Circles is that I am more conscious of where my strong feelings come from, and am more able to listen to “sceptics” with an open and less judgmental attitude. The judgments and projections still arise, but I have an intention to assume responsibility for them.

And this is something important to remember. Working with the shadow is a lifelong task for those committed to it. The shadow never disappears. But in a sense it is your friend. For as Jung knew all too well, its “voice” is a potential catalyst towards personal, psychological and spiritual development.

#### **The potential uses for futurists**

The Harmonic Circles method as outlined in this paper is for personal use. Futurists can use it to reflect upon their own biases and their tendencies towards

establishing confrontational binaries. It can therefore be used to discern deeper motives for the strong confrontational binaries that often arise in our own work, writing and study.

The introspective nature of Harmonic Circles situates it more within critical, postconventional and integral futures studies than other domains of futures. [7] One possible specific application is within Inayatullah's (2002) Causal Layered Analysis. This Futures method has four levels of analysis: the litany, social/system, discourse/worldview and mythical/metaphorical. It is at this final level that "the unconscious, often emotive" dimensions of an issue under consideration can be brought to the surface. Harmonic Circles could easily be used here, as participants engage in introspection. Notably, Inayatullah (2002) finds that "distancing" is a key aspect of critical futures studies, and that positing alternative pasts and futures is a possible key outcome of critical futures. It can be seen that the Harmonic Circles process grants a distancing perspective from our own biases, and therefore also opens the way to more receptively consider alternative pasts and futures.

### **When, and when not to use Harmonic Circles, and potential problems**

I have now outlined the purpose and the process of Harmonic Circles. But when is the right time to use it? The wrong time? What are the potential problems with the process? Here I outline the answers to these questions in brief.

#### **When to use Harmonic Circles**

- When there is a strong emotional reaction to an issue, a group of people, or an argument.
- When an individual wants to see something from another's respective.
- When a person wants to witness the shadow side of her part in a debate, argument or conflict.
- Where healing is required between groups – such as where prejudice, racism, and intolerance have consumed the debate.
- When an individual wants to begin to learn more about the totality of a subject or issue, and realises he is being held back by a strongly polarised perspective.
- Where there are differing worldviews, cultures or civilisations trying to come to an understanding of an issue or conflict.
- In the process of mapping possible, preferred and alternative futures.

#### **Where not to use it**

- Where there are clear moral and ethical issues. There is not much point harmonising with the Nazis. There are times where a strong stance for one side of an issue has to be made.
- In groups, where parties are in state of heightened anger or hostility (lesser degrees of emotional projection are OK).
- Where participants have no strong motivation to reflect upon their cognitive processes and establish empathy with the other.
- When there is an obvious conscious agenda for power and control over the other.

#### **Possible problems**

- Focusing on the differences, and not the commonalities between groups or sides of an issue or argument.
- Spending too much time in the shadow (step two), and exacerbating the “darker” aspects of mind and behaviour – especially blame, anger and resentment.
- The shadow is often more difficult to deal with in practice than might be appreciated by novices. That is, it may bring forth feelings and issues that are far more profound and painful than one may consciously expect.
- A superficial enactment of this process may leave unresolved aspects lingering, and anger and judgment may simmer in the background, only to re-ignite in later times.
- Failing to continue to work on the shadow after the initial application of Harmonic Circles, and slipping back into old confrontational binaries.

### **Conclusion**

In this paper I have described the Futures tool I call Harmonic Circles and outlined a specific application. There are many other possible applications, and the processes can be taken to much deeper levels of mind. Other people and groups can be incorporated into the process. However my purpose here has been to keep the description simple, and to introduce the tool.

The ideal result of the Harmonic Circles process is that the individual’s projections are less likely to be transferred onto the other. This in turn permits a greater degree of empathy with the other to emerge. It is in effect a movement from an outward projection of any or all of judgment blame and anger, to an inward focus upon self. This means that conflict is less likely. Finally it permits the individual to “observe” the data of a given debate, argument or field of knowledge with a greater degree of receptivity, and with less hard defensiveness.

The Harmonic Circles process therefore opens up a space for increased learning, and for alternative ways of knowing to emerge. It is also about distancing oneself from ones own belief structure. As F. Scott Fitzgerald famously stated, the test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function.

This is in a sense a spiritual shift, a shift towards a more soft and receptive view of the world, and of the cosmos. Standing as a “witness” before a confrontational binary requires a sense of detachment, and with that sense of detachment comes the awareness that words, ideas and arguments are in themselves not “real”. This is not the aloof detachment of science, but a detachment born of deep introspection. It requires an appreciation that there are limits to intellectualisation, and that the ego’s insistence that it knows best is actually detrimental to genuine understanding.

Finally, it is a shift of focus from certainty to uncertainty, and from rationality to wisdom. As Richard Sternberg has stated “the wise person views himself and others as engaged in an unending dialectic with each other and the world” (quoted in Hart 2007: 117).

## Notes

1. Critical rationality is the term I use to describe the predominantly western approach to knowledge typically based upon logic, reason and the scientific method. The key ways of knowing are classification, analysis, experimentation, and verbal/linguistic and mathematical/logical intelligences, as I outlined in Anthony (2006, 2007). Critical rationality tends to downplay or ignore alternative ways of knowing, especially those which are intuitive, mystical, relational and affective. The critical/rational worldview is the worldview which emerges from critical rationality.
2. This is not to dismiss the possibility that such use of language is not an attempt at manipulation for the purposes of maintaining power over the people of China.
3. While aspects of this argument are taken directly from Jung, the totality of the understandings are my own and do not necessarily completely reflect Jung's views.
4. This paper cannot serve as an in depth description of the process, due to space constrictions. However I shall at a later date write a paper to follow this one which explores the method in more depth, taking a specific "conflict" as an exemplar. This will address deeper psychological processes that are not dealt with in this paper.
5. Using Harmonic Circles in groups is a more complex process, and I therefore strongly suggest that before any public sharing of "the shadow" occurs, an experienced facilitator should be present. This would ideally be a depth psychologist, or someone with experience with group work where emotional and psychological issues are brought to the fore. I advise against sharing shadow work for those inexperienced in such processes, as it will likely only make the process more problematic.
6. In this paper I am targeting readers with limited experience in working with the shadow. Shadow work can get very deep and very intricate. For example, transpersonal researcher Stan Grof (1996) has found that many of the world's major conflicts are projections of deep psycho-spiritual drives within the human psyche. These include perinatal (in utero), biographical and transpersonal issues. Obviously it is beyond the scope of this paper to explore these domains of mind. If in the course of doing shadow work an individual uncovers "issues" that are of concern, a depth psychologist or mental health professional should be consulted.
7. According to Slaughter (2003) there have been approximately four main phases of futures work. The first was the empirical tradition, which was most prominent in the USA. The second was a "culturally based" approach - predominantly European - which eventually led to critical futures studies. Then in the third phase an international and multicultural thrust emerged, which Slaughter finds is still developing. Yet it is with Slaughter's fourth phase that this paper is concerned - the emergence of post-conventional and Integral Futures studies. Integral Futures studies has developed from the work of Ken Wilber (amongst others) and the integral tradition (Slaughter 2003).

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