



JUNE 2006
IMAGO
AFRICA

NEWS
TALK

Greetings and peace from Imago Africa News Talk.

In this issue we have:

- ♥ The Chairman's Report to the Imago Africa AGM
- ♥ News about Imago Relationships International
- ♥ Our bid to host the October 2007 Imago International Conference in Johannesburg
- ♥ Training Schedules
- ♥ Article by Dr Ian Opperman on The Creation and Manifestation of Reality Through the Formation of Subconscious Conclusions and Decisions – Part One
- ♥ A note from the editor.
- ♥ Notes about the Imago website

While some have expressed the feeling that they would prefer a much shorter form of the Imago Africa Newsletter and which comment we have really heard we do ask that you allow us to offer to you what has been put together in the present format for this edition. Future editions of "Imago Africa Newstalk" will try to accommodate requests for a shorter newsletter.

David Mills: Chairman

From The Imago Africa Chairman's Desk

Dear Friends in Imago,

I am once again privileged to serve for a further year as your Chairman, having been unanimously elected to this position at the recently held Imago Africa AGM. This meeting went well, although sadly not many were able to join us at the home of Kobus and Anita van der Merwe in Pretoria. A full report on this will appear in our next Imago Africa Newstalk, which will feature important news from Mia Mudie, who was elected as the Deputy Chair of Imago Africa.

For the purpose of this Newstalk I am including my Chairman's Report which follows:

Imago Africa Annual General Meeting 7th May 2006

Chairman's Report

It gives me great pleasure to present to the Imago Africa Community my Chairman's' report for the year 2005.

Since our meeting held on 6th February 2005 there have been a number of exciting and dynamic developments in the life of our community of Imago Africa, as also the worldwide Imago communities. I want to divide this report into two broad areas, these being Imago in Africa and Imago Internationally.

Imago in Africa

In looking at the minutes of our AGM, held in February 2006, it is clear that we have grown in a number of ways, both as an Executive Committee, as also as the wider community of Imago in Africa. Some of the key items that formed part of our journey together through 2005:

- **Our Meetings as the Executive Committee:** while at times it was difficult for us all to be together we did work hard at meeting as regularly as time and the many commitments we have as individuals permitted. The forward planning of dates of meetings at the beginning of 2006 will hopefully enable us to ensure that we keep meeting on a regular basis;
- **Clinical and other Trainings conducted by Maureen Brine:** This began in October 2005 and has marked the beginning of ongoing trainings run through Imago Africa. Kobus will report more fully on this in tabling his report of the Training Portfolio. My heartfelt thanks go to him as co-chair of Imago Africa for his sensitive, caring and wise leadership of this crucial portfolio, as also the work done through "Ident" in the setting up and running of training events in 2005/6;
- **Reception for Maureen Brine:** During last October it was a great joy to have a Reception in order to introduce Maureen Brine, then Chair of the IRI Board, to the Imago Africa Community. This was held at the home of David and Joy Mills and proved to be a very

happy occasion and opportunity to get to know Maureen in an informal setting;

- **Global Committee, IRI Board Meeting and Conference held in October 2005, Atlanta, GA:** while I will report more fully on this in the next section I want to say how very grateful I am to the outgoing Executive Committee for their support, through which it was made possible for me to attend these meetings in Atlanta;
- **The Imago Africa Database:** Mia Mudie has done an outstanding job in tirelessly attempting to make contact with all those who, according to our records have done Imago Training in the past. In this way she has worked hard at updating our database to the point where we now have the most up-to-date list of therapists and their various stages of accreditation with IRI. These details have been passed on the New York Imago International office, through whom our therapists are now listed on the IRI website. Well done Mia – we owe you a great debt for this wonderful work!!;
- **Imago Africa Website and Newsletters:** I am also very grateful to Jenny Waters, Carmen Sear and Eleanor Bubb for their hard work towards achieving firstly the design and running of the new Imago Africa website at www.imagoafrica.com. This has taken many hours of hard work at minimal cost to Imago Africa and while of course there are still adjustments and fine-tuning still to be made to the website we have something of which I believe we can be really proud! Eleanor has taken over the responsibility of setting up the Newsletters for which I am also sincerely grateful – we will hopefully be in a position this year to be getting these distributed to all our members on a regular basis;
- **Imago Academic Support and Development:** this continues to be a matter which deserves our ongoing attention and which has recently had some good input via two presentations done at the Johannesburg University (formerly RAU) by Kobus and Ian. Many thanks for these that we gather drew great interest from the students. Wendy Lawson, based in Cape Town, who is doing Masters Degree, making use of research based on Imago methodology, has also expressed interest. We need to accelerate initiatives on this particular front, especially in our liaison with UNISA, through Callie Hugo's support;
- **Imago introduced into Communities of Colour:** While we had set the introduction of Imago into communities of colour as key goal for 2005, we have sadly not made any real inroads towards achieving this. Pursuing this goal with determination and diligence does remain, I feel, one of the key tasks of the incoming Executive Committee.
- **Meeting the Cape Town-based Therapists:** In April 2005 Joy and I traveled to Cape Town to meet with the Imago therapists based there. This meeting took place at Clarisse Roos' home in Oranjezicht and was a very useful time of connection and updating regarding the needs felt by these therapists. I met with them again recently at Marina Swart's home in Somerset West and will table a report on this at the first meeting of the newly elected Imago Africa Executive Committee.
- **Promotion of Imago:** We would also like to recognize the promotional work that both Kobus and Ian have done through radio and TV appearances. Well done!!

Imago on the International Scene

During 2005 some very significant links were forged between Imago Africa and the International Imago Community. As a result of these we can feel very proud of the place and profile that we now enjoy as members of the International Imago family. I am again going to highlight points to illustrate what developments took place during 2005 and continue to date:

- **IRI Board Nomination:** As will be seen from the minutes of the 2005 Imago Africa AGM I was nominated by this community to represent Imago on the IRI Board. This resulted in being elected on to the IRI Board as one of the Directors of Imago International. In this capacity I attended my first face-to-face Board meeting immediately prior to the IRI Conference in October 2005 and since then have participated in the monthly phone-bridge meetings of the Board, with the exception of the April 2006 meeting that was a face-to-face meeting in El Sueno, New Mexico;
- **2005 Global Summit and IRI Conference:** Joy and I had the privilege of representing Imago Africa at the Global Summit meetings which ran over the week preceding the IRI Conference held in Atlanta in October 2005. These were very useful meetings that helped to further deepen our connection with the International Imago Community. Joy and I made a full report on these experiences to members of the Imago community some time ago;
- **ILO Affiliation Agreement:** One of the exciting features of the IRI Conference was the signing of the Imago Local Organisation (ILO) Draft Affiliation Agreement at the Atlanta Conference. This is a two-year affiliation agreement, in draft form, in order to make necessary adjustments to this as we journey together with IRI on this.
- **Bid to Host the 2007 IRI Conference in SA:** I am deeply grateful to all the members of our Executive Committee who worked so hard in contributing towards the material which we used to make our bid to host the 2007 IRI Conference in South Africa. Sadly Imago Austria was successful in getting the vote of the IRI Board to host the 2007 Conference in Vienna, however we did put a very challenging and exciting proposal together in profiling our country and what we have to offer the wider community as Imago Africa. We will, I believe, have a very real chance of getting this opportunity next time the Conference is run outside of North America, which will probably be in 2009 or 2010.

IN CONCLUSION:

Looking back on 2005 there are quite a number of milestones of achievement for which we can be truly grateful. This said though there are still quite a number of aspects that merit energetic support and enthusiasm. I am thinking particularly of the matter of introducing Imago to communities of colour, which still has really not taken off in any significant way. This, together with the Matching Grants Programme offered through IRI must form, I suggest, a central part of the Imago Africa Executive Committee's planning and discussions through their next term of office.

Thank you all for your hard work and help, given in so many different ways; it has been a tremendous opportunity and privilege for me to serve Imago as your Chair through this last year,

as also to represent Imago on the IRI Board. As that appointment is a three-year term, I am glad to be able to continue to be in a position to represent Imago Africa internationally for some time to come. To Joy and my children, Beth and Caroline, who have been such a vital part of all that has happened over the past year my appreciation can't be put into words. I can say though that I am blessed with the most amazing and special partner who travels alongside me in my own Imago journey of life!

David Mills
7th May 2006

Dr Ian Opperman, a clinical psychologist and who also serves on the Imago Africa Executive Committee, has kindly agreed to write a series of articles on how we create our own realities on a subconscious level. He explains how these early realities and egostates, which we self create, fits in with the Imago Theory and stages of development, and how childhood patterns are repeated in adulthood. This is a fascinating series of articles, which are based on Ian's doctorate, and will provide us with deeper insight to the underlying processes and dynamics which are found in our clients and ourselves and influence all our relationships on a daily basis. This makes for amazing reading so enjoy!

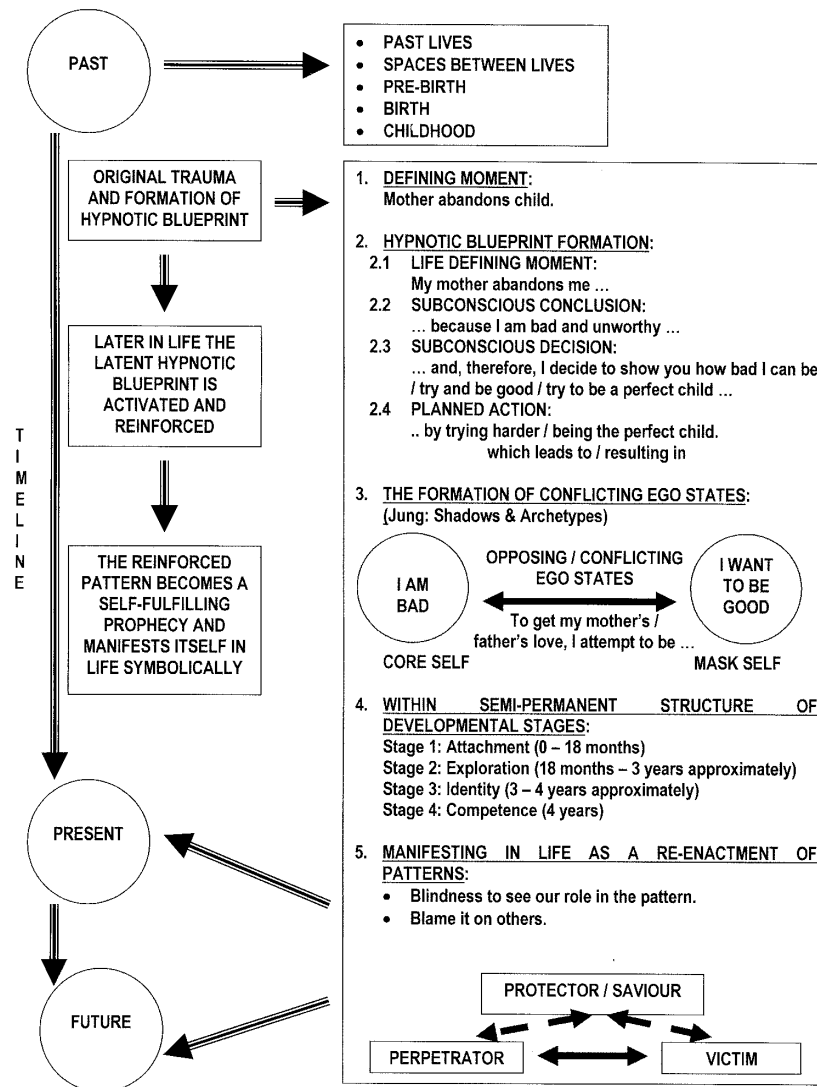
THE CREATION AND MANIFESTATION OF REALITY THROUGH THE FORMATION OF SUBCONSCIOUS CONCLUSIONS AND DECISIONS – PART ONE by Dr M C (Ian) Opperman – Clinical Psychologist

INTRODUCTION

The researcher achieved his doctorate in psychology in 2005 at the University of South Africa (UNISA). He combined various aspects, including:

- The **holotropic model**, which suggests that **we are active participants in creating our realities**.
- During a **life defining moment** or a trauma, we form **subconscious conclusions** and **subconscious decisions**, which forms our life script or **hypnotic blueprint**.
- The hypnotic blueprint **manifests** in our life in that it attracts people and events that **re-create the original trauma on a symbolic level**, creating a **re-enactment** of the original life pattern.
- This occurs within the **developmental stages of Imago Relationship Therapy**, as defined by Hendrix (2004; 1997; 1993). In this newsletter, case studies illustrating the first four developmental stages of **attachment, exploration, identity and competence** will be published subsequently.
- In terms of therapeutic intervention, the researcher argues that the client has to be **dehypnotised** to understand that they themselves have created the situation they are in and, only by **consciously creating a new reality**, can they begin to change their circumstances.
- Please consult with Figure 1 for a graphic illustration of the Creation and Manifestation of Reality Model.

FIGURE 1: THE CREATION AND MANIFESTATION OF REALITY MODEL



THE HOLOGRAPHIC MODEL

The researcher argues that we are active creators and co-creators of our reality. The search for God in the sky outside of us is a futile endeavour, as godliness, or being able to create our lives, our realities, lies within. Thus, reality is not a given in which we just operate like a person going through a labyrinth. We co-create the labyrinth. Most of the labyrinth is an illusion. To substantiate this claim the researcher has touched on Constructivism and Social Constructivism, but the theory that excited him was the Holographic Model.

Talbot (1996:34), an advocate for the Holographic Model, was astonished by the fact that **quanta manifest as particles only when we look at them. When an electron is not being observed, experimental findings suggest that it is always a wave.** Talbot quotes physicist Herbert as saying that this causes him to imagine that **behind his back the world is a radically ambiguous and ceaselessly flowing quantum soup. But, whenever he turns around and looks at the soup, it turns back to ordinary reality.** He comes to the conclusion that humans, similar to King Midas, can never experience the true quality of quantum reality, because everything they touch turns to matter.

Talbot (1996:35) mentions that an aspect of quantum reality that Bohm found especially interesting was the **strange state of interconnectedness that seemed to exist between apparently unrelated subatomic events**. Talbot refers to one of the founding fathers of quantum physics, Niels Bohm, who recognized that if **subatomic particles only came into existence in the presence of an observer**, then it is meaningless to speak of a particle's characteristics and properties as existing before they are observed. This is a disturbing concept for scientists, for much of science is based on discovering the characteristics of phenomena. But how can this be done, if **the very act of observing, in fact, creates the phenomena!**

Orser and Zarro (1989:24) state that *"in a hologram every part of the image interpenetrates every other part, in the same way that Bohm's implicate order universe interpenetrates all its explicate order parts"*. Our lives will thus be interpenetrated by these erroneous life scripts, manifesting against what we consciously desire. Ray and Meyrs (1989) support David Bohm, a protégé of Albert Einstein, and one of today's foremost theoretical physicists. Bohm proposes what Pibram suspected: that the whole world has holographic properties and that each individual represents one fragment. This finding is a scientific depiction of the two main currents of spiritual truth: the Western *"The kingdom of God is within you"* and the Eastern *"As above, so below"* (Ray and Meyrs, 1989:25). They quote Bohm as saying: *"There is an implicate order and there is an infinite sea of energy, and this unfolds to form, space, time and matter"*. *"Thought"*, Bohm says, *"does not merely reflect things; it is something in and of itself. It is a real factor in the world."* (Ray and Meyrs, 1989:25-26).

"Reality is something we constantly create." (Neville, 1989:9). Wolinsky (1993:88) states, *"The observer, through the act of observation, creates his/her subjective internal response pattern"*. Dyer (1995:24) illustrates the point further by saying: *"Creation of anything in the physical universe is determined by what kind of attention you place on it. Remove the observer (attention) and you alter the creation."* Wolinsky (1991:2-3) states: ***"This means that how we subjectively experience events, interactions, and our inner self is created by us. This reality suggests a further one: that we, as the observers of experience, choose how an experience is experienced."*** Heaven (2001:39) concludes: *"The fact is that we are not passive consumers of the world around us, sponges for experience, but are active creators of it, and other worlds are possible and open to us right now."* (Heaven, 2001:39). Zukaf (1979:53-54) confirms this phenomenon, *"Not only do we influence our reality, but, in degree, we actually create it."*

On this point, Ray and Meyrs (1989:25), state: *"If the world is a hologram, that means that your perceptions form your world; that your thoughts (in the form of holograms) can have an effect on what you actually experience as the world; and that what exists inside you is what is manifested in your entire world. If the universe is holographic, its concreteness is an illusion created by our own mental construction."*

Carl Jung wrote: ***"The psychological rule says that when an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside, as fate. That is to say, when the individual remains undivided and does not become conscious of his inner contradictions, the world must perforce act out the conflict or be torn into the opposite halves."*** (Jung, 1978:70-71). In this study this refers to the opposing ego-states and how energy can work against energy.

In line with this thinking, the researcher suggests that when human beings project their unfulfilled lives, adaptations and childhood wounds onto the world, the world reacts accordingly. Our life situation responds in a magnificent unison with our projected needs and beliefs, and frequently

these function at a subconscious level. These needs are subconscious only because they have not been brought into consciousness. Therefore, people are often unaware of the needs they project onto their world. Thus, if a person, during sexual abuse as a young child **concludes** that she is bad, at a **subconscious level**, and makes the **decision** that, because she is bad, she deserves to be punished, she will attract **people and situations**, and **create a life** in which she is "*punished*", thus **re-enacting** the childhood sexual abuse. The subconscious need to be punished becomes an **unconscious "silent prayer"**. She might marry an abusive man or, in whatever way, create a punishing life.

According to the researcher, we are unable not to impact on our world. Everything that we say or do, everything that we are, gets "*put out there*" in the world. Added to this, in the world that we create, we can either consciously or unconsciously create, but **we cannot not create**. At any moment in our lives, waking or asleep, we create. We are creating our lives around our conscious and subconscious beliefs.

Wolinsky (1991:6) affirms that people create their own trance phenomena (which the researcher refers to as the hypnotic blueprint), which he describes as the means by which symptoms are created and maintained and which makes their symptoms possible. In some cases, the deep-trance phenomenon is the symptom itself. Wolinsky (1991:6) states that "*Trance was the core of the symptom structure and thus at the core of symptom relief.*" He goes on to say that "*Furthermore **the job of the hypnotherapist was no longer to induce a trance but rather to be de-hypnotising the individual out of the trance she was already experiencing.** In short, there was no reason to create another trance to counter the system; rather, it was simpler and easier to utilise the trance (symptom) the client brought into the session.*"

THE FORMATION OF SUBCONSCIOUS CONCLUSIONS AND DECISIONS MANIFESTING IN HYPNOTIC BLUEPRINTS OR SUBCONSCIOUS LIFE SCRIPTS

During **critical incidents**, including past lives, life between lives, in utero, birth and early childhood, critical incidents occur that the child does not have the ego strength to make an informed and conscious conclusions and decisions. It is important to note that it could be a once-off traumatic incident, or repeated traumas, or a series of mild events, like not responding to the needs of the child, or the child not feeling welcome at birth. These events can leave deep scars on the psyche of the child.

The objective of the study is, in part, the exploration of the construction of reality. During emotional and psychological traumas, referred to by McGraw (2001:98) as **defining moments**, the person perceives the event as potentially life-threatening; for instance, "*my father hurting me*". In response they often make erroneous **subconscious conclusions** about the event, such as "*therefore I must be bad*". These traumas act as formative events. "*The child makes certain incorrect conclusions about life, which sink into the unconscious, and then mould the life of the adult*" (Thesenga, 1994:93). The person then makes a **subconscious decision**: "*and I will try to be a super good person so that my daddy will love me*". McGraw refers to these conclusions and decisions as **critical choices**. This then becomes a life pattern or a **hypnotic blueprint**. "*As children, after we experience some of life's disappointments, we attempt to ward off future pain by making certain generalizations about life, forming conclusions based on our particular experience and our specific interactions with our unique parents*" (Thesenga, 1994:100).

Possibly residing within the areas of both the reality criteria and meaning acquisition, as children we lack the ego strength and the insight to interpret events correctly. Therefore, certain **thought distortions** occur. Bradshaw, using the research of developmental psychologist Jean Piaget, states that children interpret life events by absolutising, being non-logical, egocentric, universalising and detailing (Bradshaw, 1995:23-24). This then forms the Hypnotic Blueprint that forms the basis of the person's reality as they create it for themselves. The life script, or

characterological pattern, coupled with the belief system that feeds it, becomes a magnet or self-fulfilling prophecy that keeps on creating and attracting life experiences and people to confirm and reinforce this erroneous pattern, forming a feedback loop. Consequently, the magnet becomes increasingly strong, resulting in the repetition of these pervasive patterns throughout our lives. Life then merely mirrors what the individual has created.

CASE ILLUSTRATION

The following case study illustrates the point that what Wolinsky refers to as deep-trance phenomena and what the researcher calls the formation of the life script or hypnotic blueprint which usually have their origins in childhood experiences.

TM is a 31-year old black executive in a big organisation. She expressed herself to her boyfriend during an Imago session, which he mirrored, and it was transcribed as follows:

CASE STUDY 1: CASE STUDY TM ILLUSTRATING THE FORMATION AND IMPACT OF THE HYPNOTIC BLUEPRINT IN HER LIFE HISTORY

Client	Interpretation

I learned for me to be loved, I have to be on the straight and narrow. I have to be an exceptionally good girl. One step out of line, and I'll get the beating of my life. If I couldn't distinguish right from wrong, I got beatings. I didn't know what was expected of me. I had to be strong to defend others. I never knew what being strong meant

Childhood conclusion: *"For me to be loved".*

Childhood decision: *"I have to be an exceptionally good little girl".*

<p>show me how to make porridge. And he told me I am all my siblings have. I had to be strong because there was nobody else. The world told me to be strong no matter what. If somebody beat up my siblings, I will charge out and start fighting. All I knew was that I had to be strong, I could never break down. I made others feel safe, but I never considered myself. I was never good enough to be shown affection. I don't remember when somebody gave me a thing. When somebody encouraged me. All I know is being put down, being beaten."</p>	<p>thus banished or repressed in the subconscious mind. This creates the opposing or conflicting ego-states.</p>
<p>"When I fell pregnant, I was 16. My father was so disappointed with me. Then he made the whole world know how disappointed he was. My mother was having their time of her life. I was alone that no one to turn to. Six months later I wrote to my exams and I passed. To my father that wasn't good enough. He humiliated me in front of people that were excited for me. Everything I did in my life was to be on the straight and narrow and be perfect. I had to be perfect for my mother to treat me as her child. But that never came about. I had to be perfect for my father to be proud of me. I had to go to the end of the world to be recognised. I always wondered what was expected of me. I grew up believing I wasn't good enough. I grew up believing and protecting other people, and I never did anything for me. I knew for me to be cared for and loved, I had to be absolutely perfect."</p>	<p>She is starting to recreate or manifest her reality of: "Whatever I do, it will never be good enough for my father. I can never reach his expectations". Thus, consciously she works to impress her father, to find his love. Subconsciously she believes that she is not good enough and sets herself up for failure by falling pregnant. This provides an excellent illustration of conflicting ego-states, with the "weak" or "bad" ego-state having the stronger "silent prayer". The opposing ego-states are: "I have to be perfect to be loved" versus "I am not loved, therefore, I can just as well be imperfect/bad".</p>
<p>"When I met you for the first time I felt here was somebody who will take the time. Somebody who knows. Someone who understands what it's like to grow up without somebody to be there for you. Where you had to teach yourself about life. Because nobody took the time to show me in do's and the don'ts. What it takes to be a proper person. And how to avoid pitfalls."</p>	<p>Romantic love phase in adulthood. This is the time when we hope that all the hurts of childhood will be taken away by the one with whom we have fallen in love. This is the emotional honeymoon period.</p>
<p>"But we started having cracks in our relationship. And we tried to avoid pitfalls. You expected me to be perfect, you expected me to toe the line. One step out of line, and you came down on me like a ton of bricks. I had little safety, and I knew I was back to how it was all those years. I had to be strong. I have to, nothing is expected of me. Even though I wasn't told, even though I didn't know what was expected of me." (Client is tearful).</p>	<p>The power struggle is discussed by her again. The disenchantment of broken hopes and dreams, broken expectations, the disappointment that he did not live up to the promise.</p>
<p>"I used to feel so safe with you, I don't any more. For you to love me, I have to be perfect. For you to show me that you care, I must be an extremely good girl. I'm never allowed to say what I think. To be angry. To be disappointed." (Tearful). "Even if I did things that were wrong, you never told me. You never took the time to help me to learn from the wrongs that I did. Yet you were all too ready to tell the world what a bad girl I've been. I know I show the world how confident and strong I am. I don't know what it's like to be with somebody, to be secure with somebody. That whatever happens, they will always be there. Even if I fall out of line, they won't whip me. If I do something wonderful, they will marvel at my achievement."</p>	<p>The realisation that everything that happened in her childhood home is being repeated now in her adulthood. She combined her critical and disapproving parents in her lover. He has all the worst and best characteristics of her childhood caregivers. Her boyfriend now becomes her punishing father. She re-enacts her childhood critical moment with her boyfriend.</p>
<p>"I've learned not to be good enough. No matter how wonderful I have achieved, I must be exceptional. I feel more and more that with you, you never see the good I've done. I only know when I've done something wrong. I have to be perfect, no matter what". (Tearful)</p>	<p>The re-enactment or manifestation of her deepest childhood and adulthood fear of, "I am not good enough" (subconscious conclusion).</p>
<p>"The people have come to rely on most, hurt me the most. That no matter what happens; all I had to be was strong. I had to be perfect</p>	<p>The fact that she feels that she cannot rely on the people close to her is a self-fulfilling prophecy that she manifested.</p>

to be loved and cared for. With you I felt exactly the same. There is no room for mistakes. There is no room for my feelings and my thoughts, its only yours that matters and counts."

What the researcher found fascinating in this case study is that the client not only repeated her childhood issue in her personal love relationship, but also in the larger life scenario. She is 31 years old, very young to be appointed the first female Vice-President at a large corporation. Being a black woman in South Africa, she is an important political appointment. She is busy with her second Masters degree. In the initial interview she told the therapist that she feels overwhelmed. *"One moment everything works well, but then everything falls apart"*. In the beginning her relationship with her boss was excellent, but as the situation developed she realised that he was very autocratic, and he made sexual advances towards her. *"He made sinister comments and hit on me"*. One day she asserted herself and reported the offences to the Chairman of the Board and a senior politician. They promised to support her, and went through the motions of confronting her wrongdoer. He apologised, but as soon as the big guns pulled out, he started victimising her by bypassing her, and vilifying her to her co-workers. It was: *"The beginning of the road to hell"*. She asked herself whether she really deserved to get the job.

From this it is clear that she **manifested the childhood circumstances again** in her work situation. The boss is friendly as long as she does what he likes. The moment she oversteps his unwritten rule she complains she is left out in the cold. When she was a little girl and complained to her father about the abuse and beatings she suffered at her mother's hands, her father supported her mother, as the Chairman of the Board and the senior politician, are doing today. So the **pattern of her childhood is being repeated**. There is perfection in the way our realities are created on a subconscious level and manifested in life. She concludes in her childhood: *"I am not good enough in the eyes of my father, because he takes my mother's word over mine"*. She feels *"not good enough"*, which forms an **ego-state** and her childhood decision is to try harder (**the opposing ego-state**). The banished ego-state of *"not being good enough"* keeps manifesting in her relationship and her work, as this is her unconscious *"silent prayer"*.

CONCLUSION

In the next contribution a case illustration will be used to point out how the **hypnotic blueprint** is formed during the **attachment stage** and **re-enacted** or **re-created** during life. In each subsequent newsletter the **different stages of exploration, identity and competence** will be illustrated.

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BID FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN 2007

We recently learnt that Austria was awarded the first international Imago Conference outside of North America. This was met with much relief from many members as we became more aware of the amount of work and time required for the conference.

We wish the Austrian Imago Community good luck and our full support during the next year of hard work. We also now all have a good excuse to go to Vienna in October of 2007 and to enjoy the Imago Conference at the same time. Vienna must be one of the most beautiful cities in the world with wonderful people. So let us see if we can arrange a large South African Contingent for Vienna next year!

Imago Africa Training News

Positive feedback with regard to the Advanced workshop on Intervention in Addictions by Maureen Brine was received. This appears to have been an informative and useful workshop with trainees gaining valuable experience.

- ☞ From June 20 -24 Maureen Brine will be doing Clinical Training in Johannesburg.
- ☞ From 17 to 18 June Maureen Brine will be doing advanced training on couples with addictions and affairs.

Please make direct contact with Kobus van der Merwe, who is the Imago Africa Training Co-ordinator. Kobus can be contacted as follows: e-mail: kobus@ident.co.za

List of Registered Imago Therapists

To see the most up-to-date schedule of Imago Africa therapists kindly log onto our Imago Africa website which is as www.imagoafrica.com

Imago Africa Website

A Message from Jenny Waters, our IT Manager

I am thrilled to be working on the Imago Africa website and I hope it will become a site that will be easily and regularly used by both therapists and clients alike. It is up and running despite being under construction and I will be updating the site regularly until it is fully completed, please take a look at the site www.imagoafrica.com. I will be registering it with Google as soon as I have all the contact details in place. All feedback and suggestions will be appreciated. I feel it is very important that the Imago website reflects the thoughts and feelings of the therapists, so please have your say and mail me at shootingstar@mweb.co.za.

From the editor

Trying to make sense of the Imago Process for couples after my training, I often found I could not explain the profoundness of the experience. Soon afterwards, I was glancing through Chicken Soup for the Soul (Canfield and Hansen) and found a story about a Golden Buddha in Thailand. In 1957 a Buddha monastery had to relocate its clay Buddha from its temple as they were going to build a highway through the temple. The Buddha was about 2.5 metres high and weighed more than 2.5 tons. When the crane began to lift the large statue it started to crack and later during the day it began to rain. The monks covered it with a large tarpaulin so that the rain did not damage the clay. That night the head monk went to check on the Buddha to see if it was sufficiently protected. He shone his torch under the cover and saw something gleaming in the clay. As he took a closer look he wondered if there was something under the clay. He fetched a chisel and hammer from the monastery and slowly and carefully began to chip away at the clay throughout the night. The gleam became bigger and brighter as each shard of clay fell away as

he chipped at them. Many hours later he stood face to face with a solid gold Buddha.

Historians think that hundreds of years ago the Burmanese army was going to invade Thailand. The monks at the monastery, realising they were going to be attacked, covered their priceless Buddha with clay in order to keep this treasure safe from the looting of the Burmese. It appears that the Burmese slaughtered all the monks and this secret remained well preserved until that day in 1957.

This reminded me of the Imago Process. Each of us is a priceless treasure and often this treasure is hidden below our survival defences. Our relationships force us to be moved from a comfort zone and the Imago Processes allow for us, with the help of our partners to chip away at these defences to discover the priceless treasure below. At times it feels as if we are doing this in the dark, but each time a couple connect they allow for more shards to be chipped away. As a partner we are given the wonderful gift of "holding" our partner while they chip away at their own defences, until they discover their own priceless treasure and reveal more and more, with each shard falling away, to their partners.

As therapists we are honoured and privilege to be able to facilitate the process in which couples discover the treasure in themselves and each other. So keep on with your treasure hunt.

Please feel free to send in articles and comments on the newsletter. They are welcome and it will help our newsletter to grow and become more informative.

In love and light, Eleanor.