

CHANGING THE UNCHANGEABLE :

Special Project [CUSP]

- A Guide and Manual -

Jan Bronson and Anna Christensen

CHANGING THE UNCHANGEABLE: SPECIAL PROJECT (CUSP)

(A Guide and Manual)

Changing the Unchangeable may sound like an oxymoron; however, the project which was proposed by Robert Lee in 1996 offered that challenge to anyone interested. He stated that by using Focusing in a long-term partnership and with a particular structure, one could achieve a fundamental change in a dysfunctional, troublesome pattern.

Anna Christensen attended his workshop on this theme at his retreat on St. Simon's Island in October 1996. Here he introduced this project suggesting a structure, which he had developed. This structure included four visual concepts: a **GONG, SUPPORT ROPES - WITH STRANDS, GUARD DOGS, and A BEARING WALL**. These images would help us focus our sessions on those parts of ourselves that we experienced as impediments and which were resistant to change.

When Anna returned to New York City, enthusiastic about the project, she invited Jan Bronson to be her partner in this daunting and exciting endeavor. As fellow psychotherapists and members of Mary Hendrick's first therapist training group in New York City, we had often experienced one another as Focusing partners in Group One. After certification in 1997 the group has continued to meet every other month in Manhattan. As we embarked on the Changing the Unchangeable: Special Project, what developed was both a new dimension in our relationship and a radical shift in our personal growth. This paper sets forth our process.

When we began the Changing the Unchangeable: Special Project (CUSP) we met in person weekly, but after a few months we agreed to “meet” weekly in phone sessions due to time and travel constraints. We met for over three years for one-hour sessions – twenty minutes each - for intensive Focusing which was followed by a ten-minute discussion of each Focuser’s process. The Listener/Guide took notes of the other’s Focusing session while Listening (as instructed by Robert Lee) so that we could maintain a written record of our process over time. These records proved to be invaluable to us in the fourth year as we met to evaluate our changes in Changing the Unchangeable. Robert did not indicate specifically how often, or for what duration partners should Focus, nor what specific images among the ones he had suggested should be adopted. In our view, these decisions are left to the particular needs of the partners.

By its very definition, Robert’s notion of CUSP would address the behavior/s, attitudes and beliefs in ourselves that are felt as unchangeable or intractable regardless of how much work we have done on ourselves. Undertaking CUSP meant that at the very onset of the work each partner would name a specific issue, behavior or attitude that they wanted to change. However, our process did not take that form. Rather, our sessions seemed to form themselves organically. When we first began our partnership no specific issue jumped out at us. Yet, this did not deter us from embarking on CUSP. We trusted our intuition that something would present itself which would embody Robert’s paradigm. We had a felt sense that the issue would find us.

If one undertakes Robert’s project, whatever form the process takes, whether identifying an issue at the onset or letting the issues “present” themselves as we did, one can be assured that the deepest exploration will take place. Also, it is important that

partners who undertake CUSP are trained and experienced in Focusing. This process is not for beginning Focusers. Obviously, partners need to be compatible and willing to make a commitment to each other to spend the time necessary to do the long-term project. We recommend having only one CUSP partner at a time. However, partners can be involved in separate Focusing partnerships with others while engaged in CUSP.

As we began this project we had no idea that what we were beginning was the work of defining the very core of our personality structures. The experience has proved to be important far beyond our initial understanding. Not only did we build a deep and trusting bond but our own personal development was intrinsically altered. People who have long-term Focusing partners may be inspired by this paper to consider integrating some of the Changing the Unchangeable structure into their own long-term Focusing partnerships.

The imagery that Robert suggested consists of the following: the **Gong** which represents the primary issue/s; the **Ropes** which represent the supporting, defending behaviors and attitudes holding the Gong in place; **Guard Dogs**, defenses that fiercely protect the integrity of the Bearing Wall; **Bearing Wall**, the personality structure we have designed for how we function in the world. These visual images give a totally new dimension to Focusing, determining the process that evolves.

Robert also recommended that we keep a written record of each session. During the times when Anna Focused, Jan made a written record and vice versa using the format that Robert suggested. Our record of each session used the following categories: the page was dated and divided into three columns: the first column refers to the **FOCUSING ISSUE** (situation, topic, question, problem); the second column refers to the **FELT**

SENSE (the present moment/s when the felt sense manifests, when a specific inner reaction is identified – an image, a memory, an emotion, a sound, etc.); the third column refers to **SELF-EMPATHY/GUIDING SUGGESTIONS** (the Focuser’s empathic response to her/his Felt Sense, which could include appreciation, insight, action steps, or finding the unknowing edge. Some guiding suggestions or questions by the Listener to the Focuser might be, “Can you say hello, be kind, curious?” “Can you sense if it’s ok to keep this place company?”

We added a brief summary at the bottom of the Focusing record that indicated the Felt Shifts the Focuser had experienced in her respective Focusing session. This summary got verbally articulated during the ten minute, post-Focusing discussion of each partner’s session. Initially, taking notes may seem awkward and cumbersome; however, in our experience the note taking quickly became not only easy but felt natural. These process records became our written document and enabled us to continuously review and understand the depth of our process. (We mailed the process records to each other about every six to eight weeks.)

The following are some samples from our written process records:

[name of Focuser and date]

Issue	Felt Sense	Self-Empathy/Guiding Suggestions
Sample #1:		
My 96 year old mother is declining.	Mixed bowl of feelings: guilt, sadness, resentment, fear.	This is really hard on me, experiencing the decline of my once very independent mother.
I don’t know how to take care of her and not lose myself.	I’m in a meadow of high weeds - higher than me. I’m lost and can’t see the way out. Hard to breathe. Like being trapped. It feels so deep.	Can you sense if it would be ok to keep this place company right now?

I always assume I have to do it all.

Now I'm in a clear space – like a clear field – air. I can breathe more freely.

I'm not alone here. There is a strong support system. My family is ready to be with me. I'm saying hello to this place.

Sample #1: Brief Summary

The experience of my mother's decline, causing her loss of independence and a full life is hard for me – sad. And it is not my fault... It is a natural life process. - The sense of 2 ½ strands falling away from the rope.

Issue

Felt Sense

Self-Empathy/Guiding Suggestions

Sample #2:

I feel like I'm doing a dance with fear.

I hear it in my gut, like a Greek chorus. It's saying, "you can't do it." Lots of pressure, temperature is rising.

I want to make some room for this to be here right now.

I would like to adopt a cat from Petco.

It feels jumpy, there's a kind of thickness..... Now it's sort of excitement, sweetness.

So there are two places in you: the worried place and the excited place.

I would really like an animal companion, but I am not sure.

Would I be a bad person if I had to give the cat back?

It feels really good to let both places be there. I feel some air coming in.

Sample #2: Brief Summary

I felt like I really wanted a cat but I forgot about my eyes burning so much lately. I could be allergic to the dander. I feel a slowing down, the pressure is much less. I don't have to make up my mind right now. - Experiencing one strand falling away from the rope.

IMAGERY

The power of imagery is that it is experiential rather than cognitive. Among the images that Robert suggested, the Gong became central to us as the image for the primary issue. This image gave a new dimension to Focusing. The Gong supported by Ropes is imaged as a solid internal structure, a visual image of an entity residing in the middle area of the body. When the Gong is "struck", there is a direct experiencing of a central internal issue. When an issue is triggered, there is a resonating, an inner knowing that this is "it." Anna's Gong was round and hard, making a deeply resonating sound similar

to the big, brass Gong in the old English movies produced by the J. Arthur Rank studio. Jan's Gong was also large, brass and similar to those used in Far Eastern ceremonies. Once the Gong is felt in the middle area of the body – particularly the solar plexus – and the “Gong issue” is accessed, it resonates and reverberates throughout one's entire body. Really hearing the “sound” of the Gong *is* the direct expression of who we are at that moment. This application of imagery is one aspect of CUSP which distinguishes it from regular Focusing.

The Ropes hold the Gong in place bilaterally, and as we continued to Focus, over time, a Rope would fall away when there was a shift in perception or when some unconscious truth became conscious.

Regarding the image of the Ropes, we were, of course, free to visualize from the many assortments: some ropes have thick, loose strands; some are compact like a clothesline. Taking an image such as Gong, Ropes and Strands, and making it an expression of one's internal world is an aspect of one's creativity, as well. We each have to experience these images personally.

For example, Anna felt the Ropes as plaited hemp, one and one-half inches thick with the strands having a curly, coarse texture. Jan felt the Ropes as being similar to a ship's hemp ropes with rough and shaggy strands. At the start of our work, the Gong felt impenetrable to each of us, holding a message which we could not access until the Ropes were broken, causing the Gong to collapse or fall.

We spoke of the bond that formed between us. The images, particularly of the Ropes, not only provided the visual structure in each session, but also the fact that we shared the image of Ropes with Strands. Without trying to we had developed our own

private language, which then bonded us in that place without words. We could say that the Ropes both released us individually and bound us together.

The Ropes were experienced as a Felt Sense, composed of individual Strands with each Strand needing attention and release. The Ropes were supporting the Gong. A Felt Sense followed by a Felt Shift was synonymous with a Strand coming undone from the supporting Rope, and we expressed these openings in words like: frayed, loosened, falling away, dropped. We celebrated each frayed Strand. Imagine the Felt Shift experience when an entire Rope fell away!

We want to add here that we did not ever refer to Robert's Guard Dogs or Bearing Wall. There was no particular reason. The dynamic between us was such that the two images, Gong and Ropes with Strands, seemed to work for us and the other two images just did not appear. However, if you wish to use the images of Guard Dog and Bearing Wall, Robert's descriptions are as follows: Robert describes **Guard Dogs** as a phenomenon that can arise when a person is trying to change at a deep level. He/she may be getting somewhere and there is a sudden backlash or setback. The Guard Dog is protecting the status quo – the Bearing Wall structure the person has in place is being “protected” from a particular change. One reason for a setback may be that new supports are not yet in place for the change and the Guard Dogs offer protection from a premature change in a deep structure. The **Bearing Wall** may be a primary supporting structure in the whole self-construction. Taking down a Bearing Wall requires that there be put in place a transitional structure, a plan that will enable you to process through your changes while still having a fundamental inner supporting structure. Part of the CUSP process, therefore, for Focusers who use the Guard Dog and Bearing Wall imagery would be

developing a transitional structure. **For the full text of Robert Lee’s article on CUSP, please see “The Focusing Connection.”, May, 1999, Vol. XVI, No 3.**

We chose to stay with two images that Robert proposed, but CUSP partners might gravitate toward any combination or all four images – or create their own imagery. We do, however, highly recommend initially beginning the CUSP project with at least two of Robert’s images in order to put a basic and formal structure in place.

When the Strands of the Rope fell away, and when a Rope fell away, an internal space would open. We verbalized this Felt Shift to each other. This space was not felt as a blank or a void but rather as an alive spaciousness which allowed the process to move forward and to be with the next Rope. When one Rope fell away, the Gong also shifted. Our belief structure was loosening up, as the Gong was now less solid and more permeable.

The issues, defenses and belief systems that were symbolized by the Ropes and Gong concepts got processed in such a way that eventually they did not have ground to stand on. This shift seemed to have taken place around the last quarter of the second year of our weekly phone sessions. During approximately the third year of our process, the whole metaphor of the Gong as a separate entity supported by Ropes was deconstructed, giving way to a brand new paradigm – the Core Belief.

CORE BELIEF

As we progressed in this project, we came to a new place of awareness. The *visual* image of a metallic Gong was replaced by something new, which did not take on a visual image. We substituted the Gong with the *concept* of the Core Belief, which Anna,

a Buddhist meditator, had borrowed from her Zen teacher, Charlotte Joko Beck, and Joko's specific way of working with Core Belief issues. According to Joko's view of the Core Belief and our own experience, Core Beliefs tend to be attached to thoughts that we are never enough, to a sense of felt inadequacy or painful inferiority. The Core Belief is founded on a personal conviction of an intrinsic deficit in the very core of our being. We cover our core pain by developing basic belief systems and specific strategies (defenses), which we think will allow us to function in the world. Though each Core Belief is unique to the individual, it is always in the realm of deficits, of not being enough. For example: "I am unlovable; worthless; a bad person; helpless; not able; can never do 'it' right; fundamentally lacking."

The enactment of the Core Belief would be developing strategies to cover the Core pain. For example, if "I am unlovable," I will, therefore, be the life of the party; do good deeds; effusively express my love for others. "I am helpless" might take on the characteristics of being a dynamo, perhaps a C.E.O. of a large company; functioning as a "wonder woman." "I feel worthless" may function as a Mother Theresa type. Obviously, it does not mean that every time we express highly developed aspects of ourselves we are covering up for some core deficit. But it seems important to look at our intention, to see how much we are driven; how harsh is our Critic if our expectations to be perfect are not met. What is the Core deficit we are trying to cover? What strategies have we developed to protect us from the Core pain? When we are truly motivated by genuine compassion, we are never driven since our core belief is not operative. We are simply functioning.

To return to our process, we had become aware that the internalized image of the solid Gong had now shifted for us giving way to a more visceral Felt Sense that was at the very core of our being, where our deepest conditioning lay. We vowed to bring this deep and unconscious Core Belief, from which we constructed our intricate defense patterns, into conscious awareness using the Focusing process. As we introduced the new paradigm of the Core Belief, our CUSP work took on yet a new and deeper dimension.

Both the Buddhist and Focusing views share the understanding that Core Beliefs belie a basic truth - that we are whole and complete as we are. The Core Belief is not true in the deepest sense of who we really are, which is our innate capacity for kindness and generosity. When we can uncover the Core Belief and its particular coping strategies, we can directly touch our natural compassion and wisdom. Then there can be a whole sense of interconnectedness with all beings, and our authentic abilities can manifest more freely.

As we said above, our Core Belief has both passive and active characteristics. If we are high functioning we will choose strategies that go in opposition to our Core Belief in our effort to avoid painful feelings of perceived deficiency. If our Core Belief is “I am intrinsically unlovable,” we may find ourselves bending over backwards to please, whether we want to or not - saying “yes” when we want to say “no,” or saying “no” when we want to say “yes.” However, in moments of stress we may go in the *opposite* direction and yield to our Core Belief by enacting helplessness or failure. To really shine the light on our Core Belief, we found it essential to bring awareness to whether we were moving away from or toward our Core Belief and to begin to track those moments

when we functioned inauthentically. We fully embraced the Core Belief view and this became one of the guiding principles in our process work from this point on.

How did we arrive at our respective Core Belief in our Long-term project? We used Focusing to identify our individual Core Belief(s) by designating a full Focusing session (without a time limit), devoted entirely to asking the other only one question: “What is your Core Belief?” The Focuser would respond, waiting until the whole sense of it formed. The Listener reflected back the response exactly, without changing *any* words. The Listener wrote down the responses so this too would become a permanent document for the Focuser. Sometimes what felt like the Core Belief was actually a symptom or a strategy of the Core Belief. The Listener asked the question repeatedly until the Focuser reached that Felt Sense, that knowing without reservation, “Yes, this resonates, this is it!” We did not stop until this place was reached.

THE PROCESS, THE STRUCTURE, THE COMMITMENT

At approximately the middle of the third year of our partnership a situation arose between us in which we unconsciously enacted our respective Core Beliefs with each other. It was startling to each of us that what we had processed in our respective Focusing sessions regarding relationships with others, in which Strands of our Core Beliefs were operative, had now surfaced between us. It was inevitable. We had enjoyed an equanimity with each other that in part was born out of a safe distance. Our Core Beliefs were “safe” from one another. As Listener to each other we took on the role of the one who contains and mirrors. When our Core Beliefs “met” face to face outside of our customary telephone sessions, during one particular social occasion, our seemingly

mutual bond was tested. For the most part our relationship centered on our Focusing partnership with occasional social engagements. We were not immediately aware that a particular “incident” had triggered our Core Beliefs. We had to wend our way through hurt feelings and confusion and what felt like a rupture in our beautifully bonded relationship. We each experienced fear and anger that the rupture had damaged our bond and the continuity of our process felt lost.

But still, lingering in the background, amidst the whole “mess” was the “fact” (not yet a felt sense) that we had shared three years of continuity, that we had made this commitment to do the work. During the Focusing session following the rupture, at first we gingerly danced around each other (so painful). As familiarity and trust built during that session we began to describe our feelings of fear and anger, and the hurt and confusion. Our goal was not to move past or beyond our respective feelings but rather *to be*, to directly experience how we were feeling. We did not want to “cover” up anything with our usual conscious or unconscious strategies. During that same session, the felt sense of our partnership slowly resumed, and the Listener could reflect back the Focuser’s anger and hurt even though the object was herself.

In this regard, we recommend again that there be only one Changing the Unchangeable partner at a time. Perhaps it was inevitable that the ultimate value and resolution of our CUSP work would be that we would actually trigger and enact our Core Beliefs with each other, that these beliefs would challenge the very connection we had created. At the same time, it would also provide us with the treasure of knowing the Core Belief from this very precious vantage point. Because we saw it this way, we were able to reclaim our intimate bond.

RESOLUTION

This session and the few to follow were the beginning of the conclusion of our Changing the Unchangeable Project. We knew we had achieved an incredible feat. We had been able to experience being caught in our Core Beliefs – *and* because of our bond and commitment to the long-term process, we were able to see this rupture as a “Merciful Avatar” or a “Merciful Teacher.” This Buddhist view (although certainly not limited to Buddhism) allowed us to embrace our deepest Core pain directly and to see it as our old conditioning manifesting in present time. And we seized the opportunity to respectfully hold our “red hot coal.” What a gift we gave each other.

Around this time, we began to view the word “Changing,” as in Changing the Unchangeable, from a new perspective. Seeing the “*ing*” in Changing as a state of *being*, in present time; seeing it as a process rather than taking it literally. Deeply held Core Belief systems do not completely vanish or change irrevocably. “Changing” should not be seen as a final state of mind, but rather as an on going moment-to-moment process.

At this point, we would like to offer the reader a brief, personal description of our own respective Core Beliefs and how they have manifested in our lives:

ANNA: My Core Belief is “I am helpless; I am unable to do ‘it.’ It isn’t so much that I want someone to help me or save me – although that’s certainly a part of it - but it is more of a nameless felt sense, of flailing around in space, and no one is coming. (Someone else could have the same CB but their felt sense of it would, of course, reflect their own unique internalized experience.)

I have, for the most part, functioned on a pretty high level in my life: raising my child alone; paying for her college by myself; starting a business with \$80, ending up on Madison Avenue; simultaneously starting a 2nd business in Philadelphia; getting my BSW and MSW while running my business. Pretty impressive. If I had not worked on uncovering my Core Belief, I would never have come face-to-face with my deepest fear, that I can't do it by myself, I feel helpless. My actions belie this, of course. (All the strategies I put in place to keep the CB at bay). The "helpless" was always experienced by me as a mood state, one that was pretty familiar, particularly when things got "too much." Uncovering the CB and its strategies has allowed me to give this mood state of anxiety and depression a name – "helpless." Paradoxically, this felt empowering and liberating, even though I didn't/don't like thinking of myself in this way. "Who me! I am a very capable person. Look at all I have done!" Yet, when I can allow myself to directly experience the pain of my core belief of helplessness, I can understand and experience myself in a fresh and new way in those moments when I feel driven, or when I feel I have failed because I have not lived up to my expectations to be perfect. This insight allows me to stop, sometimes right in the middle of one of those spiraling loops of not enoughness and to say the truth of the moment to myself, that "I am feeling helpless, I can't do it." It is becoming pretty exciting for me to notice these subtle, sometimes half-formed thoughts of helplessness cycling around in my mind, and to *really* feel the tightness in my body, right smack in the middle of the most ordinary moments: like carrying some groceries up a small incline on my way home, or reluctantly changing the vacuum cleaner filter. Coming into awareness by using my Focusing and Zen training in the very moments I wish to push away is *always* transformative for me. I feel more alive

and the world appears so much more expansive. I still have to carry the heavy bundles and change the vacuum cleaner filter, but the *extra*, the “I can’t do it,” falls away. Of course, I cannot always do this; hence the “*ing*” part in Changing the Unchangeable, and I get caught in the old CB patterns, but for much shorter periods than before. It’s really important to note that we are not trying to use a “bite the bullet” mentality or positive thinking. What we are after is the process of *changing* our very core structure over time.

JAN: My CB is “No matter what I do, I am never enough - not a loving enough daughter or friend; not a smart enough or creative enough student; not an efficient enough professional.” Even though practical experience, affirmations, degrees, awards and long-term relationships belied that, these did not ease the influence of the CB. My primary life experience has been framed (and still can be) by an underlying, agitating anxiousness. This inner irritant has been my sense of “normal.” A compensatory strategy has been “overdoing”, saying “O.K.” and seldom saying “No, sorry.” I would (and sometimes do still) take on multiple responsibilities with vigor and do whatever is needed to accomplish them successfully, meanwhile giving my own needs little attention.

The CUSP process opened a space for me to experience being free of the “not enough” anxiousness. In Focusing with Anna, I investigated the anxiousness, named my CB, related to it with compassion and delved into the fears about not being enough. The result is having a new relationship with this CB complex. Even though I can’t pretend that it is a constant to be free of the CB, I do know how it feels not to be imprisoned by it. I can experience myself through a clearer lens with a different perspective and with a new awareness of how I process *choosing* to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

Increasingly, there are moments when I *can feel* “I am reliable, empathic, competent, compassionate, effective.” I know better when to say ‘no’. In these moments I am free of my old “*friend and motivator,*” anxiety (not the kind of anxiety that provides motivation). For me, these moments are providing wonderful and new experiences: energy that is free of anxiousness; enthusiasm that is free of guilt and doubt; creativity that is free of the inner Critic; calm that is free of sadness. Obviously these “free” moments are not always as pure as I just described

This self-experience is fragile. Expanding it so that being it feels “normal” is part of my on going work. The “*ing*” in changing means to me that in life there can be a never-ending process called “growing up.”

AND THEN WHAT?

In the fourth year, when we got together to review our notes, it seemed to be a natural place to stop the formal weekly Focusing sessions. We then met in person, on a regular basis, in Jan’s office, with all our process recordings, which covered the period from 1997 to 2000.

We continue to meet occasionally to process through our notes from these sessions. We compare on a scale of one to ten how we are presently integrating our personal change around the particular issues we focused on over the course of the three year project. The number we select to designate this change arises out of our felt sense and not our head, with one being the least amount of change and ten being the most. This new exercise has actually begun yet another phase of the Project. We are systematically evaluating our individual “changes.” This phase provides a mirror for us to gauge and reflect on the entire process of CUSP.

SUMMARY

What distinguishes CUSP from long-term Focusing partnerships?

- Commitment to one partnership only for the CUSP duration. (*OTHER* Focusing Partnerships can remain in place.)
- Using Robert Lee's imagery (or some part thereof) to establish a working Structure, which can be modified over time, if desired.
- Commitment to Focusing on entrenched belief systems, regarding personality Structure which could take the form of a Core Belief; or a specific issue like chronic nail biting, hair pulling, managing persistent anger toward one's employee\employer, finding a love partner.
- Keeping written records of each session using Robert's format.
- Orienting the process goal to that place in which a fundamental change in a dysfunctional, troublesome pattern makes it less virulent.

In doing the profound work the CUSP invites, it may be inevitable that challenges arise in the partnership as it did in ours. In this regard, we recommend only one CUSP partnership at a time. This provides for the continuity of bond, trust and knowledge.

In our view, our carefully kept notes of each session, the imagery proposed by Robert and the "outline" of a specific goal of change distinguish this process from the regular Focusing sessions we both had with other Focusing partners.

There is freedom for the individual partners to be specific or general and the form of the sessions can change. The duration of CUSP depends on the agreement reached

by the partnership. Some of the by-products of our post-Focusing meetings at Jan's office were: additional deepening of our respective Felt Sense and Felt Shifts; a disciplined and intellectually stimulating experience that led to the writing of this paper; and a continual revisiting and fine tuning of the entire process. We also realized how much more complex and significant this project really has been for us and what it offers anyone who undertakes it fully.

In committing to the project as a long-term, intensive effort, we actually further developed Robert Lee's ideas. We have the deepest gratitude and respect and pay sincere homage to Robert for his brilliant conception. He has given us an enormous gift and has generously permitted us to shape it to fit our particular and personal qualities as partners. He has indeed contributed greatly to the expanding role of Focusing.

We also want to thank the other members of our Group One who gave us continued support throughout the project and excellent input during the initial reading: Ricki Morse (a special thanks for her excellent editing), Alan Neuberg, Marguerite Stratton, and Mary Ellen Summerville.

And we wish to extend a special thanks to Mary Hendricks whose provocative questions and suggestions helped us shape very important parts of our text.

In working through this project, we feel it fully embodies the spirit of Focusing. This experience has offered richness far beyond our original expectation. Not only did we build a deep and trusting relationship, we also met first hand and comprehensively our own inner sense of self.