ALTARS TO A WOMAN'S EXPERIENCE OF LOVING, SUFFERING AND RE-CREATION THROUGH THE ARTS

Jenny Orford Hill

BA. (Psych), BEd (Counselling), MAEd. (Creative Arts Therapies)

Submitted in total fulfilment

Of the requirement for the degree of

Professional Doctorate in Therapeutic Arts Practice

The MIECAT Institute

Melbourne, Australia

July 2023

ABSTRACT

This arts based inquiry was driven by an urge to create altars on which to explore my experiences of a woman's roles as daughter, partner and mother. My focus was on the experiential nature of learning to love close others and cope with the burden of staying with my own experience of distress when loved ones were struggling with life threatening illnesses and conditions. I was interested to experience what might happen in the process of making these altars and to follow the emergence of how this might happen. I offer this dissertation as a resource to those in the fields of arts based research, therapeutic arts based practice, emergent research design, mental health, attachment issues, and trauma recovery for carers.

The emergent nature of the methodologies used were driven by the fact that this is a single subject subjective inquiry using arts based methods and processes. I had the freedom and the challenge of using procedures which matched the individual processes needed to both create each individual altar, and to present my findings from texts within the story of the inquiry. In line with Heron and Reason's (2008) four ways of knowing this inquiry is experiential and presentational in the arts making phase, presentational and conceptual in the writing phase, and aims to add to practical knowing. In this inquiry I relied on collaborative dialogues with others. This was multifunctional. These dialogues gave credibility and rigor to the work, and also helped co-construct meanings about the subject matter and the processes used in arts based practice. The ethical dilemma of privacy for others when creating images and writing words about my relationships with them, the topic of my inquiry, required great care.

The inquiry findings included knowing that came from the content in the process via dialogues with objects and materials, embodied self-awareness and in the experience of movement when making 3D Altars. These enabled expression of emotion in a created safe environment and enabled the making of personal meanings through collaboration with others. These processes accessed clarity to my relational patterns with close others, revealing an ongoing and fluid cycle of secure and insecure attachment with them dependent on environmental factors. The arts enabled the transformation of my anxieties into an acknowledgement of my capacities to recognise triggers in the environment that arouse insecurity. New perceptions were found around my capacity to face challenging situations, relief to understand that complex grief results in states of exhaustion, accepting my own ambivalences, and being more secure with my own opinions and decisions gives testimony to how the arts provide a way to make sense of things and to transform and heal.

DEDICATED TO

Mum and Dad

And
My three Children

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to the many people who have supported, encouraged and/or given me practical help this somewhat long and winding journey. Particularly I thank my two Supervisors who stuck with me through thick and thin with their insights and challenges, Jean Rumbold and Jan Allen. Their dedication and care kept me focused and I could not have finished this journey without their belief in me that I could 'do it'. I am also deeply grateful to Warren Lett who introduced us to how the arts can access the things that matter to us most.

I particularly want to thank Bronwyn and Ian Checkley for so generously making available their Studio at their home on the mountain which became a haven and a happy place to be when constructing my Altars.

Other vital supporters and companions on the journey kept me motivated to finish and I give my heart-felt thanks to Jenni Harris, Ailish Gill, Vivienne Howson, Cath Connelly, Rosemary May, Nicole Rotaru, Heather Bunting, Alexina Baldini, Rhonda Dingle, Sandra Joyce, Fiona Garrigan, Michael Mosely, and all of my wonderful Family.

I also acknowledge the participation of my co-collaborators in the studio, with heart felt gratitude to Edwina Entwistle and Kerry Kaskamanidis. Over time I also had much practical help with moving my collection of objects and altar tops between places, as well as some construction tasks that helped furthered my inquiry journey. I sincerely thank Gordon Reineker, Stephen Andrew, Jim R., Roger M. and Hugh M. for this help. With gratitude I also thank Peter Iorlano, Lynette Roberts, Trish Menzies, Beatrice and Yvonne.

Finally and thankfully this project would not exist if it was not for the approval of my three adult children and the encouragement of my husband Gav who never failed to bring me cups of tea when I was writing, and still writing, over the years since we first met.

DECLARATION

Except where reference is made in the text, this work contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in the whole or part from a work for the award of any other degree or diploma.

This work has not been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any other institution.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received approval of the MIECAT ethics committee on the 26 April, 2007.

Name: Jenny (Orford) Hill

Signature:

dermy O. Hill.

Date:

CONTENTS PAGES

Chapter 1 –

Introduction	1
Motivations and Agendas	1
Setting the Scene	3
The Researcher is the subject.	6
How the Data were generated in the Process of Making	7
Previous Art-making	9
Defining Loving and Suffering in this Inquiry	12
Why Altars?	16
Chapter 2 - Methodological Considerations	22
Preamble	22
Identifying the Research Paradigm.	24
My Grappling with a Participatory World View	26
Epistemological Concerns	29
Art making as a Way of Knowing	32
Emergence in Arts Inquiry	33
Writing as a Way of Knowing	34
More Considerations for this Inquiry	36

Intersubjective Experience with Art Materials	37
Intersubjective Experience with Peers	39
Gathering Memories	40
Reflection and Reflexivity	43
Phenomenology as a Methodological Framework	45
Chapter 3 – Methods	47
Preamble	47
The Research Settings	48
Collaborations	48
Procedures Used in the Process of Art-Making	55
Analysis of my Written and Spoken Texts	55
Ethical Considerations	61
Criteria for Evaluating This Studytudy	64
Chapter 4 – Emergent Knowing Arising In Dialogues	68
The Experience of Gleaning	69
Early Collaborative Inquiry with Peers	72
Recognition of Feelings of Sadness	79
Exploring the Experience of Sadness	80
My Dance with Patriarchy	88

Fam	nily Relationships	91
Atta	chments Exposed	93
Me	as Baby	95
App	proximations to Meaning Derived from These Inquiries	98
Wha	at I Think I Know About Myself Now	99
Met	aphors Arising from Intersubjective Dialogues	99
Eml	oodied Art-Making and Emotions	100
Foll	owing Hunches and Feelings	100
Kno	wing Within Collaborations with Others	101
Chapter 5 –		
Eme	ergent Knowing: Content In the Process of Constructing Altars (1)	102
Sect	tion One: The Childhood Altar	104
	The Kitchen Table Becomes an Altar	104
	The Personal Embedded in the Art-Making Process	106
	Analysis and Findings	113
	Enacting my relationship with my father: content and process	119
	Emerging Meanings of Me as Daughter	127
	Bringing Together My Experience of Representing My Mother	135
	Bringing Together My Experience of Representing My Father	
	Statements of Relational Patterns with My Parents	142

Th	ne transformative power of using collaborative arts based inquiry	144
Section To	wo: The Adolescent, Bride and Mothering Altars	146
Th	ne Adolescent Altar	146
Co	ontent and Process	149
Th	ne Bridal Altar	.150
Co	ontent and Process	158
Th	ne Mothering Altar	160
Co	ollaborating with My Adult Children	163
Co	ontent and Process	165
Sto	atements of Relationship Patterns Continued	.165
Re	e-constructing Meanings of Relational Patterns	167
Su	mmary of Arts-led Inquiry Processes	.167
Chapter 6 –		
Emergent	Knowing Through Construction of Altars: Content and Process (2)	169
Section O	ne: The Underworld Altar	.170
Ве	eginning the Making of the Underworld Altar	171
Me	ethods	.176
Co	ontinuation of the Underworld Altar in the Studio	181
En	nerging Findings Arising	.182
Re	elational Patterns: Content	185

Multimodal Interactions with the Materials: Process	185
Conclusion of Making the Underworld Altar	192
Section Two: Emergence of Altars Associated with the Underworld Altar	194
The Process of Broken Dolls, Torn Asunder and Torn Asunder Altars	194
Concluding This Section on the Underworld and Associated Altars	201
Statements about Anxious Relational Patterns in this Inquiry	202
Statements about the Arts-led Processes	203
Chapter 7 - Re-creation through Expression, Collaboration, and Insight	206
Section One: the Healing/Crying Altar	206
Process and Story: Refining Meanings	207
Section Two: Vital Moments of Insight across the Altars	212
Section Three: Collaborative Dialogues	219
The Viewings	220
One More Dialogue	224
Chapter 8 - Relational Patterns Emerging in 3D Art Making	228
Preamble	230
Section One: Content in the Process of Art Making	233
Knowing came from the content in the process:	
Specifically, my relational experience with my parents	233
My Experience of the Burden of Care	243

Section Two: Being in the Process of Art Making – a Dialogue with Literature253
Knowing came from the process: When finding, holding and dialoguing with
found and made objects253
Knowing came from the process of making Altars: Specifically from Embodied
self-awareness, expressing emotion, movement and moments of insight261
Embodied self-awareness
Emotions and feelings
Movement and Body Awareness
Perceptions changed over time and in moments of insight284
Moments of reverie287
Moments of challenge288
Vital moments of insight289
Section Three: Relational Experience with Collaborators and Environments295
Discussion of Intersubjective collaborations295
Discussing Relational experience with the studio place304
Chapter 9 – Conclusion
Drawing It All Together310
Strengths and Challenges of This Study
Recommendations
Suggestions for Further Research

Reference List	317
Figures List	357
Appendices	361

ALTARS TO A WOMAN'S EXPERIENCE OF LOVING, SUFFERING AND RE-CREATION THROUGH THE ARTS

Jenny Orford Hill 2023

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Love is my reason for living

Love is my reason for giving

Life would be only

Empty and lonely

If it were not for love

(Ivor Novello, 1945)

Motivations and Agendas

I set out on this experiential and arts-based inquiry with a number of motivations and agendas. Following a strong urge to make a series of Altars, or three-dimensional assemblages (Scotti & Chiltern, 2018, p. 356). I wanted to explore some of my experiences of loving and suffering as a daughter, partner and mother. I recognise that my approach to this arts-based research (ABR) is potentially full of risks since I am exploring my own experiences in relation to close others through using the arts. Rumbold et al (2013) noted that to let the image lead is entirely consistent with ABR and yet may lead to uncertainty "in exposing our representations to critique and judgment" and "may take me to places I do not anticipate" (p. 68). I wanted though to open up a conversation with others who might benefit from a dialogue about the anxiety of caring for loved ones who have lived with lifethreatening conditions and been in life-threatening situations. My curiosity extended to wanting to understand how I had coped with the anxiety for my loved ones in trouble. This in turn led me to explore my childhood experience to see if I could find the antecedents of my resilience there. These urges and curiosities opened me up to the possibility of making transparent my explorations into the processes of art-making to further illuminate what occurs in the arts are used as a method of inquiry into the things that

matter to us. Since Ettling (2000) wrote about the need to value and validate women's experiences, ideas and needs in research, others have paved the way for women's voices and stories to be investigated (Harris, 2011; Byrne, 2016; Van Laar, 2020). Ettling (2000) wrote that "It is the grounding in personal, individual experience that confronts writing from the position of a universal human being" (p. 2). She suggested that writing from the position of a collective rather than the individual standpoint was "disrespectful and irrespective of positionality and life story" (p. 2).

The position or standpoint that I took in this arts-based and arts-led inquiry was threefold. Firstly, to explicate what happens in the process of making art to make meaning of lived experience; secondly, to support others who take on home-based caring roles for loved ones who are suffering with mental health and addiction issues; and thirdly, to shine a light on how our childhood experiences may impact the patterns of our living when attempting to maintain relationships of significance. This inquiry comes about through the lens of my experience of being a heterosexual woman, and not surprisingly this project came at a time in my life (my mid-50s) when I was ready to review my values, explore myself in my relationships to those I loved, and seek to make sense of the difficulties in my life at that time.

In following these intentions I created processes in which I could contain and immerse myself in expressing, via altars, the experiences of relating to and caring for intimate others in my life. This initially began in a similar way to Moustakas' heuristic inquiry (1972, 1990, 1994) covering six main phases: engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication and creative synthesis. However, in staying as true as I could to the emergent nature of this inquiry I preferred to improvise instead of following a set format, realising that

interactions with the art materials and my collaborators could not be determined via a step by step format.

This arts-led inquiry may be seen as a life review that takes a progressive turn as my memories of childhood, adolescence, partnering and mothering unfolded. Research into the use of life review in elderly participants facing unresolved conflicts found that some resolution increased their quality of life (Butler, 1963; Haight & Haight, 2007; Lapsley et al, 2016; Sharif et al, 2018). Similarly, as for the terminally ill who wished to find meaning and peace in their lives (Jenko et al, 2010) my inquiry offered understanding of the events that shaped my experiences of loving and suffering. The data in this inquiry were generated from my own lived experience as a woman, in particular a woman who immersed herself into the role of carer for significant others who were in vulnerable states of serious ill-health, an experience that often led to me feeling deep exhaustion. In my work as a therapist many of my clients are women who are confused and distressed about how to continue to actualise their love and care for others when they themselves are exhausted. I hoped my work with them might be enriched by my own quest to find new ways of understanding the aspects of loving others that can lead to fatigue, suffering and sacrifice.

Setting the Scene

Because this inquiry explores aspects of my familial relationships, and because qualitative research calls on the researcher to locate themselves in relation to their research, I now set the context of my family of origin and the culture from which I come since research that has autoethnographic elements involves both reflection of the individual's own personal experiences and an understanding and exploration of the particular context within which

experiences are embedded. I note that I share a perspective of being a woman amongst women who have shared the social, spiritual, cultural and political aspects of having been born in post-war Australia in the 1950s. Agree (2017) claimed that one of the most anticipated demographic transformations in our society has been the aging population and in particular, the aging of the baby boomers. She wrote; "One reason this cohort has been the subject of fascination is because they have lived through some of the most turbulent social changes around women's roles, marriage and child bearing" (p. 63). While my inquiry explores aspects of my partnerships and my experience as a mother, I do not fill in the background details or names of these people for ethical reasons. My primary aim is to represent my story of creating the Altars that enabled my understanding of my relationships with my parents when I was a child and my experiences of caring for my offspring when they were most unwell in the their late adolescence and early adulthood.

I am one of five children born in Australia in the 1950s. With Mum and Dad, we lived in a three-bedroom house in a working-class suburb of Melbourne that was created for postwar servicemen and their families. I remember my childhood years as sunny and bright. The milkman and the baker delivered to homes by horse and cart. My mother kept a very tight hold on household order – everything was clean and ran on time. I liked it as I felt safe and secure. As a child I never heard her speak negatively about our somewhat impoverished circumstances, and I saw my father as basically happy and friendly; an extrovert and musical performer with a big smile.

My mother trained in commercial art (now known as graphic design) at RMIT in Melbourne during the 1940s. I saw her as beautiful. I loved watching her put her makeup on, her green eyeshadow, her jewellery and her clothes. She made cakes every Sunday afternoon. Watching her sew by hand and machine remain highlights of my childhood. She met my father at a dance when she was

only 17 years old and he was 23, during the Second World War before he was posted to New Guinea as part of the Entertainment Corps in the Air Force. My first memories of my father were of him coming home from work and walking through the kitchen door of our housing commission house. I remember him greeting me with a huge smile as I either sat in my highchair chewing on a rusk, or in my rocker which was affectionately known as 'Shoo-Fly'. At this stage I was unaware of Dad's unhappiness with working as a house painter and his wish to have been a full-time musician. When I was in primary school, he acquired a piano and I learnt to sing almost every lyric of the popular musicals of that, and previous, eras. In my early adolescence he played me his own composition for a musical he was working on. He never completed it, but I can still hear the melody he was working on in my mind. He intended to call it "Wimmera", and though I have looked for it since his death I have not found it. I think he imagined it to be an Australian version of Oklahoma.

During my adolescence I felt a growing discord between my parents and a certain chaos creeping into my home that frightened me into assuming a caring role towards my siblings. They may not have felt this care, but internally I was always on guard, alert to each family member's mood and well-being. Mum was a chronic asthmatic and was on a few occasions, according to the home visiting doctor, literally on "death's door". During this time I became aware of my mother's new-found 'complaining voice', which was in stark contrast to her 'no voice at all' moods. This, coupled with my observation of my father's palpable unhappiness, worried me. His regret at not having the musical career he had hoped for and his despair with his job as a painter and decorator became more obvious to me. Seeming to withdraw into himself, he gradually lost his voice and became a different father. With two parents changing, I saw their previous happiness with each other melting away like ice-cream in the sun. Not knowing who to trust, I felt caught between them, my loyalties divided.

Not everything in my family background was sad and worrying. Some things,

particularly the music in our home, remained delightful and nourishing to my soul. I am grateful to my many musical relatives, but particularly to my father who played several musical instruments. My father, without knowing it, serenaded me to sleep on many a night when I was a young child as he practiced his piano accordion in front of the large round mirror of my mother's dressing table after our bedtime. A few years later my aunty, his sister, came home from overseas where she had worked as a singer, actress and ballet dancer. After meeting her I came to idolize her. On Sunday nights at our grandparents' home, Dad would play their baby grand piano and she would sing. I still know the lyrics of many of Ivor Novello's songs from her repertoire. My mother was a music appreciator herself, and an artist. Music oftentimes functioned as the glue that held my family together. The positive influence of music throughout my life extended into this inquiry as a non-human companion as I worked on my Altars seemingly connecting me with embodied memories of the past in the present moment experience.

The Researcher is the Subject

As both subject and researcher here, I describe myself as a white Anglo-Saxon female who is now in her early seventies. My academic history is quite mixed. I did well in primary school and secondary school and my report cards usually referred to me as a good student. During primary school I was seen by my teachers as a "bright" student but when I failed to complete secondary school due to being in the grip of agoraphobia (undiagnosed at the time) and I believed I would never have a brilliant career after all. Anxieties as a teenager brought on by chaos in the family home at the time led me to find security in the local church. This experience left me intrigued but socially, I was frightened by the sexual revolution during the 1960s. I began studies in Interior Design at age 18 but went on to become a kindergarten

teacher before marrying the father of my three children. When the children were all in school I returned to academia to study psychology. I soon after began a private counselling practice and became involved in teaching counselling and arts-based practice at tertiary levels. My relationship status has changed several times over a thirty year period – clergy wife, divorcee, a de facto relationship, single woman in her fifties, and I recently re-married in my early sixties. I completed a master's degree in experiential and creative arts therapies in my midforties and began this doctoral dissertation in my mid-fifties. I love learning.

As the researcher I sense that I am drawing together a selection of the multiple realities of my life from the various life experiences I have described above — study, teaching, and becoming a psychologist who uses counselling and the arts in therapeutic practice. I sensed from the beginning that this inquiry would give me an opportunity to reflect further on the ways of knowing as articulated by Heron and Reason (1997). Of particular interest to me has been the juncture between my experiential knowing from memories, both recent and past, and the activity of making representations in art forms in present time experience. I have been curious about that wordless place that arises when I, or others, are in the process of making art to understand more about our experiences.

How the Data were generated in the Process of Making

My inquiry process emerged as an exploration into how arts-based methods can help make sense of our lives (Lett, 1993, 1998, 2007, 2011). I wanted to add to the understanding of how presentational knowing impacts on therapeutic practice, in the teaching of arts therapy, and in research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Knowles & Cole, 2008; and Leavy, 2018). Research questions inevitably arise out of one's experience and acknowledgment of a

particular epistemological and axiological orientation. This was true for me as a psychologist, experience focused arts therapist and art maker. My questions are:

What is it that we come to know when we use artistic representations to understand our experiences?

How do we come to know these things?

The ways of knowing as articulated by Heron and Reason (1997) experiential knowing, representational knowing, propositional knowing and practical knowing form the basis of my approach. My aim is to establish conversations between experiential content and multimodal arts-based processes, with the hope that this will allow me to re-experience and reflect on what I am coming to know as I construct my Altars. In this approach I also draw from the values and forms of inquiry developed at the Miecat institute in Melbourne, Australia that include a trust in process-driven, intersubjective methods of inquiry.

In this inquiry my work with multimodal and creative media will be enhanced by dialogues with the objects that seem to hold or evoke memory and meaning associated with my past. I am hoping to set the pace for accessing an ongoing rhythm of being critically reflective, able to look both inwards and outwards to recognize connections within the data that will be produced (Fook & Gardner, 2007, p. 27). This describes the manner in which I hoped to employ reflexivity in this inquiry, a close scrutiny of myself in the contexts of my roles as daughter, partner and mother, by continually returning to my data as it evolves in the making of the Altars. In this way reflexivity may help me to recognize that *all* aspects of myself in my contexts influence the way I research or create knowledge (Fook & Gardner, 2007, p. 31).

This arts-based/led research has similarities to the creative arts therapies. Malchiodi (2018) makes a distinction between creative arts therapies and arts-based research when she writes that arts-based research "supports a space for investigation in which complexities, contradictions, and confounding outcomes coexist and are validated", and that the core value of the creative arts therapies as agents of health and well-being is "their ability to expand the limits of language and give voice to that which cannot be communicated or known through words or logic" (p. 68). Malchiodi, in her personal inquiry into the experience of sustaining a mild traumatic injury, used the arts to process her experience. She also found that her artmaking became a vehicle through which to find the language she needed to explain the exact nature of her symptoms to the medical profession, "bringing a different form of knowledge and experience into the examination room" (2018, p. 72). These experiences somewhat parallel this arts-led inquiry. I will be expressing my relational experiences, and alongside this will be looking for ways to form knowledge through reflexive investigation to add to the fields of art therapy, relational experience and caregiving of loved ones. Because the creative arts therapies are essentially helping professions, the ultimate goal of ABR is to advance knowledge of how the arts support wellness more than the production of aesthetically pleasing art forms (Malchiodi, 2018, p. 74).

Previous Art-Making

To set the tone, or rhythm, of my way of enacting this inquiry, I present two examples of art-making experiences I had prior to starting this doctorate, both of which were important to my entering into this inquiry. The first one occurred when I attended a painting course facilitated by a woman who led a process she called "intuitive painting". The classes began with her reading a short piece from a book that she had selected, helping group member's

access something of interest to them as a way to begin painting. The painting below came about as a result of my connection to the words she read about the tendency to fall into shame when perceiving you are getting things wrong. As the words "getting things wrong" echoed in my mind I began painting, and what happened surprised me.



Figure 1. The Black Madonna's Wounded Breast, Jenny Hill, 2001.

I wrote in a personal journal at the time and the following key words and phrases that are pertinent to this inquiry are:-

The experience of painting

A black curved line (on the left) that I saw as a breast shape

A scar line appeared, a wound, in the breast shape on the left.

The pain of needing to choose to end my marriage

The impact of this on my children

A need to paint a curved horizon line (purple with black jagged lines)

An underworld area where dark things and things not really known reside Vigorously crisscrossing the colours red, green, brown and black An energy matching the thoughts of 'getting it wrong' Anguish regarding my children's pain

The liveliness of my dialogue with the painting as I did it.

The second art-making influence came about when I attended a course entitled Therapeutic Autobiography, led by Dr Warren Lett. I created a clay sculpture with circular grooves representing each year of my life to that time, shown below.



Figure 2. Circles of my life, Jenny Hill, 2003.

I was drawn to the grooves in the clay as I was making this work. The grooves in the clay, the circular marks, I came to see as representations of the valleys of my difficult life experiences. When looking again at these valleys I recognised in myself a feeling of deep sorrow and pain in relation to loved ones who were suffering. As part of the same course, I later enacted a presentation of my journey through "the valley of the shadow of death" with a

figure made in black cloth which I named the Shadow of Death.

When the opportunity to do this doctoral project presented itself, I spent some time picking up the threads and enthusiasms from these previous experiences of art-making by following key images and words – "wound", "underworld", "pain", "sorrow" and "loved ones who were suffering" – that became entry points to my art making.

Defining Loving and Suffering in this Inquiry

I begin by describing the parameters of love and suffering in this inquiry. Making my Altars (NB. I will use a capital A each time I refer to the Altars I am making) gave me a way to express my experiences of caring for others, and investigating my personal suffering when close others were in distressing circumstances. There are many perspectives on the study of love and as Hendrick and Hendrick (2002) noted "theories of love are disparate and difficult to classify" (p.473). However, I align with Rohr (2009) who claimed that "loving and suffering are a part of most human lives" (p. 122), and with Julian of Norwich who believed that loving and suffering sit side by side and that "for a time of this life we have in us an amazing mixture of well and woe" (cited in Manton, 2005, p. 104).

My inquiry seeks to understand the 'doing" of love and what this might look like when others' suffering becomes our own. Godden (2017), who undertook a co-operative inquiry with community workers in rural Australia, looked at "love as action" in her exploration of the place of love in community work (p. 77). Having been involved in many emergency situations the actions of immediate response came naturally, and in looking at the task of caring for infants, young children, adolescents, the elderly and others, love as action

seems often to involve sacrifice. My understanding of what it means to love others is very much influenced by St. Paul's words (Corinthians 1: 15, NRSV):

Christ has no body on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion for the world is to look out; yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good; and the hands with which he is to bless us now.

These words imply activity. In my experience of loving intimate others this activity is sometimes motivated by the feelings of love, other times by feelings of anxiety, and sometimes by deciding to be practical, such as calling for an ambulance or attending a detox centre to support one of my children. There have also been times when I have chosen to act lovingly towards others even when I did not feel loving towards them. In this inquiry I use the arts to explore and discover more about my natural tendencies to love, and to understand more deeply my experience of extreme anxiety when those I love were in deep distress.

In Enriquez's (2016) endeavour to expand the cultivation and practice of love, she wrote that to have a better grasp of a person's reality there is "the necessity of looking carefully at suffering, not turning one's face from it, seeing clearly and understanding its roots" (p. 71). In Christian and Buddhist practices and understandings of suffering, both traditions begin with "paying attention to one's own experience of suffering" (2016, p.71). In this inquiry I am "surrendering" to a process of "opening to the cracks" connected to "the hidden" life that has been "cloaked in normalcy for fear of being discovered" as Henderson and Black (2018) offered in their stories of mourning and loss (p. 267). Some of these hardships have been so overwhelming that I have been distracted for days, putting on a mask to keep my troubles hidden. In surrendering to this arts-led inquiry I am willing to further

explore and describe other aspects my experience of suffering that I may not have expressed. Similar to Breheney (2005) who wrote, "Memories lie deep in my heart like mud on the bottom of a river ... I am compelled to remember, to try and make some sort of sense of it, to give it a meaning – and in the process, to dare hope it may help another person." (p.180).

Beaumeister and Vohs (2002) (as cited in Snyder and Lopez, 2002, p.608) described the power of suffering as a stimulant to find meaning in the things that happen to us, therefore making these things easier to bear. I acknowledge that for anyone there is inevitable suffering when those we love are suffering. However, being in an anxious state for long periods of time has a detrimental effect on one's health and wellbeing. In this inquiry I am not researching suffering as a phenomenon, but rather I will be inquiring into how I experienced my suffering when those I loved were in dire straits involving the threat of lost lives. In choosing to reveal my suffering I am challenging myself to face my fears around speaking up about difficult things which were hidden in the distant and recent past, things that I might feel expose too much about me and those I cared for in times of great trouble. I resonate with Gilligan's (1993) comments about the presence of "an internal voice" which was interfering with [women's] ability to speak (p.ix). This internalised voice, she claimed, told women that it would be "selfish" to bring their voices into relationships.

King (2002) though wrote about a "natural" patriarchal voice within. She claimed that "the strong inner voice that women often reject as too harsh" without realizing it can cut them off from "the wisdom, authority, love and power inherent in their own patriarchal voice" (p.172). My values in times past determined that speaking up about difficulties and pain would be too harsh as it may have meant I was criticising others, which I have never felt comfortable doing. Being aware of my father's lost voice, and my once quiet mother's new

complaining voice in my adolescence, I became unwilling to share how I was really feeling during their troubling times, but later channelled my lost voice into action to rescue my own children from being 'lost'.

My observations of women who were the primary caregivers in my neighbourhood when I was a child, and the impact on me of church teachings to care for others before oneself, trained me to quietly take on the values of duty and care of others without talking about that. Christian feminist women such as Reuther (1996), Hunt & Neu (2010), and Briggs & Dixon (2013) raise the possibility that women have needed to find ways of caring for themselves as well, while caring for others. However, in contrast to the idea of loving and giving as an unfortunate trajectory towards hurt and burn-out, Traitler (as cited in Briggs & Dixon, 2013) indicates that women's spirituality often involves a deep sense of love, and that in experiencing a divine presence in the midst of all kinds of experiences such as mothering, social justice and caring for self and others there can be a sense of great fulfilment. I wanted to give voice to the concerns I had about the impact of walking closely with loved ones who were suffering with their mental health issues. I wanted to add to the dialogue around those who care for others, women specifically and people of all genders and ages who are suffering compassion fatigue, burnout and/or abuse cycles, to raise the importance of critical reflection on the impact of their willingness to foreground the care of others to the possible detriment of their own well-being.

In endeavouring to unravel the complexity of my pain as distinct from my loved ones' pain, I am careful not to harm them by revealing much about their actual circumstances and their personal experiences. Andrew (2017) writes about the nature of "harm" in qualitative

research and points out that, when looking at the harm that we may cause others when writing about our experiences of them, it may be useful to make a distinction between harm and pain. He writes that "harm is deliberately inflicted" and "pain is often dealt with as if it were harmful rather than unpleasant, annoying or uncomfortable" (p. 34). Harm is not what I wish to inflict, but the pain of unpleasantness, annoyance and discomfort that I sustained when worried for loved ones is what I wish to represent through making Altars.

My title for this doctoral inquiry emerged from the process itself when I included the word "re-creation". This denotes the experience of a sense of healing and wellbeing that emerged during the inquiry. For me re-creation means to have an experience of freedom, a sense of relief, a shifting of attitudes, new perceptions, a letting go of anxiousness, an opportunity to give expression to grief, a sense of greater understanding, a renewal in my sense of self as an autonomous agent in the world and a more solid sense of myself.

Exploring this sense of re-creation was not originally a goal of my research but is what emerged as a result of creating my Altars. As Harris (2011) wrote that this form of inquiry "does not seek to lay down any rigid process or sequence of procedures" ... "where the topic emerge[s] only from the process itself" (p. 138).

Why Altars?

Not long after my separation from my second partner, in a period of time when I was living alone and coping with the diagnoses of the illnesses of two of my young adult children, I found myself standing in my garage staring at my father's old disused workbench.



Figure 3. My father's workbench, 2005.

In my reverie I imagined it as an altar on which I might express my experiences of anxiety and coping with my offspring's ill-health. I resonate with Allen (1995) who suggested that: "appropriate methods of enquiry (for art therapists) [arts-based researchers] would be born out of a direct engagement with what connects us to our deepest selves. The heart of research is the burning passionate interest in a question, idea or image." (p. 16).

Altars first became important to me as an adolescent when I started out on my

Christian journey in the Anglican tradition. I saw how ritual aided the development of a

community of believers. I spent a great deal of time as a teenager pondering the Altar in the

sanctuary of my local church. This church offered me respite from the growing chaos in my

family home at that time becoming a mystical and mysterious place that evoked in me a

passionate interest in the matters of existence. I remember feeling connected to something

greater than myself at those times of reverie before the Altar; a sense of the numinous or

spirit-filled otherness of life, seemed to beckon me. During my marriage to a clergyman I

spent several more years sitting, standing and kneeling in meditation in front of Altars that

offered me a conducive space for my attempts to make sense of my life.

Having looked back through my folders of therapeutic art-making from the early 1990s just before I decided to do this doctorate, I found these two images (below) that now seem pertinent to this doctoral inquiry.





Figure 4. *Exhausted woman on Altar &* Figure 5. *A Celebration Altar,* Jenny Hill, 1994/1995.

Altars have been used for centuries by the organized religions of the world as places of sacrifice, offering, remembrance, celebration, communion with the divine and a representation of the liminal place between life and death. Telling my stories on Altars seems to fit with the experiences of loving and suffering that I wanted to explore. I see these Altars as providing a base on which to symbolize my wish to express myself and to make an offering to arts-based practice. In remembrance of the distress of those I love, I want to represent my experience of sacrifice and also to welcome celebration in the context of my ordinary life. In her book, Taylor (2009, p. xvii) suggests that we can use Altars for our own lives as a place of celebration. By making my own Altars I hope to find a way to accept and fully integrate the hard times and learnings of my life.

From my religious background I set my own Altars in the context of the Hebraic Christian accounts of Altars in the Bible (New Revised Standard Version: NRSV). In Genesis 35: 1-5 God tells Jacob to make an Altar, which he does because God had answered him in his day of distress and had been with him wherever he had gone. Descriptions of how Altars were to be constructed are recorded as either of earth (2 Kings 5:17) or of unhewn stone (Joshua 12:30). Altars were built at any place where the divine presence manifested itself (Genesis 35:6, Joshua 8:30). The New Testament Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) tell the story sitting at a table to break bread and drink wine at the last supper before Christ's crucifixion. This kind of table (Altar) binds the believers together with their God with the specific aim of finding meaning and purpose in their lives based in the teachings of Christ, love and forgiveness, death and resurrection. Making my Altars gave me a way to find clarity in my ways of loving and to integrate my suffering.

In some ways I felt it would be disrespectful to make Altars solely for my own purposes, and yet many today find comfort in simple home-made Altars where a candle may be lit and prayers are said for self or others. Like McMann (1998), who pointed to home altars being places of prayer and reflection to bridge the division between the sacred and the mundane. In her book, Turner (1999) pointed out that the age-old task of religious art has served to make this bridge between the spiritual and the material, the self and the other. She wrote about a different kind of altar, one that is not male-determined or dogma bound, but "an intimate altar, a home altar, made by a woman, and dedicated for her personal devotion to the deities she chooses" (1999, p.7). My "deities" include objects, representations of my love for others and my own experience of caring for them.

During my data collection period for my MA in creative arts therapies I invited the

participants on an eight day spiritual companioning course to gather their art making over the week to present their own small altars to integrate their learning experiences. Similarly, Levine, S. (1997) wrote of the spontaneous altars which were made during a ten-day residential on Conscious Living/Conscious Dying that involved gathering their mementos and memorabilia such as photographs, worn slippers, a telegram of a son not coming home from war, that became temples for their grieving to express "every way imaginable the joy and grief of the consequences of love" [to display] "our broken hearts and the spirit that heals" (p.101, 1997).

In concluding this introduction to my inquiry I present this image I made at the start of my research journey.



Figure 6. *Journey down a Golden Path*, Jenny Hill, 2005.

The golden path is seen as sweeping down from the top left-hand corner with the sun's rays illuminating the pathway downwards. Three small Altars line the pathway and trees stand opposite them. Behind the rightmost tree there is a golden line which ends at a small cottage at

a distance. The sun, moon and a star guide the way. In following this path I could not see the destination. All I knew was that I trusted the process in following my passion to create Altars.

The next chapter describes the methodological considerations that led me to develop my own structure in which to hold this inquiry.

CHAPTER 2

Methodological Considerations

How to Get There

Go to the end of the path until you get to the gate.

Go through the gate and head straight out

Towards the horizon

Keep going toward the horizon

Sit down and have a rest every now and again

But keep on going.

Just keep with it.

Keep on going as far as you can

That's how you get there.

(Michael Leunig, with permission)

Preamble

"Getting there" for me began with the urge to create Altars to continue exploring the meanings embedded in my earlier painting of *The Black Madonna's Wounded Breast*, which seemed to me to be connected to the chaos of living with loved ones who were struggling with life issues that manifested as mental health issues. I initially thought I might exhibit the Altars and write an exegesis about their making. It transpired that with the large amount of data generated, I decided midway through my candidature to opt for the 80,000 word thesis option. So from the beginning the way ahead was not clearly defined. Having known the power of the arts in my previous research (Hill, 1997), my counselling practice, and in teaching and group facilitation contexts, I knew that not knowing the destination is ameliorated by the thrill and the challenge of discovering "new ways to see, think and

communicate" (Leavy, 2018, p.3).

My methodology was not clearly known in advance but my hope was to bring something of value back to the fields of arts-based inquiry alongside care for others experiencing mental health issues and addictive behaviours. This chapter considers the paradigm, epistemology, ontology, axiology and methodological elements of undertaking a systematic search within an emergent design, commensurate with qualitative research.

Ansdell and Pavlicevic (2001) pointed out that by entering the research process you find out what you want to know "by just doing it" (p. 10). In such a way, I set my sail to explore what I thought I knew about my relational experiences (content) and to describe how I came to know these things through the arts (process).

Being an emergent arts-based inquiry, I expected that I would need to adapt as my understanding deepened or situations changed. As the researcher I chose to avoid set designs that I thought would preclude responding to opportunities to pursue new paths of discovery as they arose. Like Moustakas (1990) in his heuristic research model I firstly followed something that called me from "within my life experience" (p.13). I wanted to explore from the perspective of an "insider researcher" (Wilkinson & Morton, 2007) to bring my understandings to practical conclusions for others. I knew that to research my own experiential self-knowing is, as Lett (1998) pointed out, more than mere introspection.

Identifying the Research Paradigm

With the view of sharing my findings and hopefully adding to the field of arts-based research and therapeutic arts practice I wanted to develop a coherent approach based on using art as a way of knowing (Allen, 1995), with reference to the extended epistemology articulated by Heron and Reason (1997, 2008) and using dialogical collaborations with others to enable a critical review of this project of self-examination. I aim to find a way to write the narrative of the emergent journey of the inquiry, and to identify a position from which I could view the overall journey which might encapsulate the multiple perceptions of it (Richardson, 2000; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Leggo, 2008; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011; Scott, Brett-MacLean, Archibald & Hartling, 2013; Andrew, 2017).

It is important to note that while the methodology is inspired by Heron and Reason's extended epistemology (1997, 2008) my focus is on how the arts and the processes of art making illuminate experience, manifest into expressive forms and inform my propositional and practical knowing. Thus arts are central to this inquiry, and so it seems logical to describe it as arts-based research (ABR). Leavy (2018) discussed the challenges of how to situate arts-based research. She writes that "some suggest that ABR is a methodological field within the qualitative paradigm, and others assert it is its own paradigm" (2018, p.4). Leavy came to understand ABR as a paradigm of its own due to its novel worldview, citing, amongst other things, "an epistemology that assumes the arts can create or convey meaning, aesthetic knowing that fosters reflexivity, and empathy linked to care and compassion" (p. 5). She described ABR practices as methodological tools used by researchers across the disciplines during any or all phases of the research, including problem generation, data or content generation, analysis, interpretation, and representation (Leavy, 2018, p. 4)

I use this term loosely to describe the centrality of the arts in my inquiry, and understand that at different stages of this research and arts as inquirymy activities could well be described as arts led, practice led, arts informed and arts as inquiry. (Leavy, 2018, Smith and Dean, 2009).

The participatory paradigm holds the inquiry in a context of ideologies around ways to value and inform others including an epistemology of critical subjectivity. This worldview argues for a subjective-objective ontology, which speaks of resonances, transactions, interactions and perspectives with the other (Heron and Reason, 1997). Furthermore, this research is primarily made through dialogues or conversations – within personal reflection, between self and peers, between self and art objects, and between myself and my expression of subjective experience, all of which deals with ways of knowing, and transactional encounters within the intersubjective field.

The participatory paradigmatic position proffers an axiology that deals with the nature of values in the study of ethics and aesthetics (Heron and Reason, 1997) and the primary value of practical knowing being in the service of human flourishing. Of interest to me is that Lincoln and Guba (2000) argued that axiology (values) dealing with religion, as well as ethics and aesthetics, could be part of the basic foundational philosophical dimensions of Heron and Reason's (1997) proposing of the participatory position. Lincoln and Guba wrote: "If we had it to do all over again, we would make values, or more correctly, axiology (the branch of philosophy dealing with ethics, aesthetics, and religion) a part of the basic foundational philosophical dimensions of [a qualitative] paradigm ... [to] contribute to the consideration of and dialogue about the role of spirituality in human inquiry" (2000, p. 169). My ethical values of kindness to others and appreciation of aesthetic "rightness" have their

antecedents in the work ethic of my parents and other adults (such as extended family, parents of friends, and school teachers), strengthened by my association with religious and spiritual practices during my adolescence and beyond, which created the value systems and ethical principles I bring to this inquiry.

My Grappling with a Participatory World View

Whilst I acknowledge that the participatory worldview of being and reality is coconstructed, I continue to muse on the concept of selfhood linked to the question of "who am I?" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 108). Horwitz (2012) wrote:

Identity exists in past, present and future time frames. I am the "me" that was and my present contains a focus on my becoming even more of "me" in the future. Or, perhaps, I feel dissociated now from past "me", and my expectations of "what next" may seem conflicted (p. 2).

What interests me is the "me" who experiences my identity. This word "me" gives me a sense of an "I" who exists, referring to a continuity of my sense of self as a person (Horowitz, 2012) and an "I" who is always experiencing (something). For phenomenologists, the immediate and first-personal given-ness of experience is accounted for in terms of pre-reflective self-consciousness. In the most basic sense of the term, Gallagher and Zahavi (2020) suggest that "self-consciousness is not something that comes about the moment one attentively inspects or retrospectively introspects one's experiences ... or refers to oneself with the first-person pronoun, or constructs a self-narrative" (p. 1). Pre-reflective self-consciousness is pre-reflective in the sense that it is an awareness we have before we reflect on our experience, and it is an implicit and first-order awareness rather than an explicit or

Altars but was not completely conscious of what exactly, until I stepped into this doctoral research and became more aware of some of the past narratives I held about my relational patterns of being in the world.

Zahavi (2005) raised the possibility that "to tell different, even incompatible stories about one and the same life, not all of them can be true" (p. 110). He asks how we can distinguish true narratives from false narratives about who we think we are. His answers resonate with me: "I want to suggest that the narrative or hermeneutic take on self must be complimented by an experiential or phenomenological take on the self ... it takes a self to experience one's life story" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 114). He suggested that self-narratives may capture something important about who we are, but asks, "Are they capable of capturing the full capacity of the self?" (p. 112). He goes on to deliberate on how the storyteller will inevitably impose an order on the life events that they did not follow while they were lived. Drummond (2004) likened our narratives to reflective selections and organisations of life:

In this sense the narrative captures less than the individual's life, for not all of a life as pre-reflectively lived can be fitted into a narrative ... [we] should not confuse the reflective, narrative grasp of a life with an account of the pre-reflective experience that makes up that life prior to that experience being organised into a narrative (p. 119).

A neurological perspective that White (2015) highlighted regarding "I" is the role of "temporal functioning binding" (p. 1). He argued that the pre-reflective experience of "I" is as a continuously existing being, the foundation on which the narrative self is built:

The present moment is of ... brief duration. In the brain, however, there are

perceptual processes that bind together events occurring at different times, on a time scale of milliseconds, into a coherent and integrated temporal representation. These processes include temporal integration, as in perception of biological motion, synchronisation, and change detection. These processes [are] responsible for temporal integration and coherence in inner mental life, such as mental imagery (p. 1).

This explanation of how events (or experiences) integrate in the brain to give a sense of a continuous "I" is perhaps a way to denote my sense of being a continuous "me" and does not contradict my belief that I co-construct the meanings of my experiences with others.

Horowitz (2012) in his research into self-identity theory, claims that our different experiences of self arise from our organisation of the generalisations we make for inconsistent schemas that we hold about our multiple selves and determines the identity of a person. I openly bring my self to this inquiry with a desire to find ways to re-organise my thinking, and to not only connect with and express the stories of parts of my life, but also to connect them with what is not yet narrated that reside in pre-reflective experience.

Along with my orientation to the ontological and axiological tendencies of the participatory paradigm, I want to make transparent that I have a sense that there is a God. I experience this God as a relational being rather than a "judging" God who has a destiny planned for us from which we should not stray. I perceive God as a participator in our experience of living who co-creates the meanings of things with us though I don't know how. This is an intersubjective experience of a life force bigger than myself that sustains me in my living. To summarise my worldview, I participate in it with my own individual identity, with values that I hold and am capable of co-operating and participating with others, including animals, plants and all sentient beings, and also with a creator who accompanies me in my

quest to value, nourish and understand myself and others.

Epistemological Concerns

To the Gods and Goddesses of Research

Give us courage

To challenge the privileged paradigm

To break the illusion of objectivity

To carry lightly the loud weight of words

For we are longing for poetry

Woven through dance

And drama performed with music

Let us look with both eyes open

At our unexamined subjectivities

Let us crack the categories of our thinking

And find an epistemology of the senses

Where wonder and passion interplay with reason.

(Atkins, 2012, p. 59-60)

Before and since Atkins wrote this poetic plea, there has been much movement away from the objectivity of the "privileged paradigm" of positivism to the subjective and creative forms found in arts-based research as a way of knowing (Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2008; Knowles & Cole, 2008; Harris, 2011; Holman Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013; Leavy, 2018). During my 1989 post-graduate course in counselling psychology Warren Lett asked, "what do we think we know", "how do we know it" and "what will we do with what we know?" I felt my immediate response to these questions as a visceral shift of energy in my body and a flash of insight. It seemed that if we answered these questions we might take more responsibility for how we think about things and therefore how we behave. In this inquiry, I

am using the arts as the vehicle through which to ask myself what I think I know about the personal experiences I wish to understand. I specifically intend to focus on how I know these things through the vehicle of arts practice. Camargo-Borges (2018, p. 89) described epistemology as the study of knowledge, which also investigates questions such as "how do we know what we know?" Part of the challenge in this inquiry for me was to articulate my discoveries as constructions of knowledge. To aid this exploration and construction of meanings I will be drawing from Heron's (1992) writing of the four ways of knowing. Heron and Reason (1997, 2008), and Seeley and Reason (2008) claim that "all knowing is based in the experiential presence of persons in the world" (Heron and Reason, 1997).

In each transaction I make with objects, materials, memories and others with whom I collaborate, and with myself in the action of both making and reflecting on what I do, my narrative and the Altar constructions may change at each successive telling or making. Heron and Reason (1997) state that "presentational knowing emerges from experiential knowing" (p. 281) and I wish to make a distinction between experiential knowing from past experience becoming presentational knowing, and the experience of making representations of an experience in the present. In other words, it is the act of symbolising that I see as another form of experiencing and hope to explore in more depth in this inquiry.

Seeley and Reason (2008, p. 28) have extended the focus on the four ways of knowing to include the transitions in and out of presentational knowing when "coming up from experiential and then onwards into propositional knowing", citing Heron's observation that presentational knowing is "valuable in its own right, not only as a bridge between experiential grounding and propositional knowing" (1992, p. 175). In a way, I hope to join the conversation that Liamputtong and Rumbold (2008) had when they wrote that "much

academic research only samples experiential ('felt') knowing in precisely defined and narrow terms, in order to explain phenomena" (p. 2). Further to this, they state that "presentational ('symbolised') knowing which represents experiential knowing in expressive forms is relatively underdeveloped in academic research" (2008, p. 2). This inquiry, while emergent in order to find the content pertinent to the antecedents of my relational styles, also aims to further explore what happens in the experiential process when making presentational knowing available for others to see and understand.

I sought a way to acknowledge how the mixed voices from postmodern qualitative research could support the construction of knowledge that I undertook. As Park (2008) wrote, "conceptual understandings are negotiated through [all] languages and experience" (2008, p. 291). In this inquiry, "language" includes visual art in three-dimensional forms, performance, movement, music, poetry and responses from collaborators within their intersubjective resonance and dissonances with my data – this data being my object collection phase and my Altars, both in production and finished.

Eisner (2008) suggested that knowing is a multiple state of affairs, not a singular one, and we need to know different things for different purposes. I wanted to know a number of things about the roles I have lived into and the experience of caring for loved ones in distress. I wanted to know how I coped and how I could put my learning to good use, similar to the aims of bringing about change in art therapy. In a 2005 lecture at Melbourne's MIECAT Institute, Lett stated, "our work is about understanding experience and looking for meaning; looking for concepts that make life a worthwhile experience." This inquiry holds these concepts dear and looks towards discovering propositional and practical knowing from the actions arising from my experiences of my Altars. As Heron and Reason (2008) claimed,

"skills are needed in the action phase". They cite these skills as radical perception, being fully present, being imaginably open to experience, having the ability to bracket off habitual conceptual frames, and trying out new frameworks to find new ways to enact present situations. They also suggest that a prior outcome may simply be a transformative one involving behaviour change (2008, pp. 176-177) for the researcher and/or the participants.

Art making as a Way of Knowing

Following on from my Introduction I flag here that my approach in this inquiry is developed from the research and practice of Lett (1993, 1998, 2007, 2011), Betensky (1987, 1995), Allen (1995), Eisner (2008), Irwin (2008), McNiff (1998a, 1998b, 2004, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2018), Barone and Eisner (2012), Kossack (2012), Leavy (2018), Camargo-Borges, (2018), Malchiodi (2018), Scotti and Chilton (2018), Gullion and Schafer (2018) and Lapum (2018). Mine is a practice-based form of inquiry, and in one way I am exploring the synergy between arts-based research and therapeutic outcomes which are always emergent. As Kossack (2012) stated "art-based enquiry is at the heart of what we do as arts-based therapists. It includes multiple ways of knowing, including affective, sensory, creative, observational and intuitional, as well as the use of experimentation, risk taking, discovery and meaning making through art-making" (2012, p. 22).

Whilst I began with an urge to make Altars, in retrospect I might have formulated a question as follows: "how do parents cope in midlife with young adult children who experience mental health conditions?" This could have been a project which would include others who were asking this same question for themselves, and the inquiry, whilst still artsbased, would not have given me the first-person data I was seeking. The emergent processes

in making art to express personal material, followed by the analysis of one's findings, can be challenging. Two of the challenges I faced were a concern that my findings would be seen as too subjective and that they would not be relevant to others.

Emergence in Arts Inquiry

The different methodological approaches in this inquiry align with my own relational and multimodal ways of being, starting with experience and developing a capacity to work emergently in processes. What became obvious over the period of time I was immersed in the making of the Altars, and subsequently when I embarked on the writing up of the research, was that I was juggling various ways of knowing throughout. In other words, this inquiry, in its emergence, requires an alliance with the tenets of improvisation and a capacity to attend to being in the moment and deal "with the challenges of uncertainty" (Sajnani, 2012, p. 79). As Barone and Eisner (2012, p. 20) pointed out, arts-based approaches can open up new ways of seeing psychosocial phenomena. While I am enamoured by being in the state of emergence, I am also keen to find greater clarity of my relational experiences by being open to new ways of seeing things.

Lett (2011) regarded many of the post-positive and postmodern research paradigms as procedures that assist inquiry into human meaning. The procedures or methods used "constitute an integrative flow of inquiry, led by epistemology but welded into forms of inquiry by the flow of all the elements in interactive movement" (2011, p. 6). In this inquiry I intend to adopt steps as new understandings come to me via "recognition of how to proceed" or experiencing an "exploratory felt sense of how to go on" (Lett, 2011, p. 7). In other words, the reflexive processes of art-making and the writing of textual descriptions are what

influences the analyses to be performed in order to come to meanings and knowledge construction.

The art works in this inquiry are three-dimensional Altar assemblages made from collected objects, artefacts, paint, fabric, wood, wire and other materials, as well as drawings, photographs, poetic statements and the narrative of the inquiry. While the procedures that I use are similar to those I use in my therapy practice, the lens through which I use them are slightly different due to researching my own experience by myself. Thus, in the words of Barone and Eisner (2008, p. 96), I am performing this arts-led inquiry not as "a quest for certainty" but as an "enhancement of perspectives". Nor is my art-making seeking an aesthetic result that others will see as "good" art (Leavy, 2018), though I do not wish it to appear amateurish. Rather, I see my art-making as a way to engage with others, to communicate the meanings that emerge from the process of making art to make meaning, and, as Leavy (2018, p. 591) describes, to find "knowing by making".

Writing as a Way of Knowing

I felt the tension between writing an authentic and honest narrative and the fear of being charged with "narcissism and self-indulgence" (Winkler, 2018, p. 243). Knowing that the narrative included more than vignettes of my personal life, I found encouragers who wrote of the "diverse engagements" the researcher makes when including the personal in her research (Day, 2002). Kincheloe (2005) also pointed to writing from the multiple voices we can use from our lived experience to convey the complexity of our living in the world. By taking confidence in the standpoint of having differing voices or roles in this inquiry it seemed important for me to find an appropriate way to describe my (the inquirer's)

standpoint from which this story is written.

My position as the narrator of the research journey is as Henderson and Black (2018, p.3) suggested to "write about the storylines, trauma lines, love lines, and song lines" of my life. The way I write is similar to Giorgio (2013) who explained how "When I sit down to write, I remember scenes, exchanged words, rolled eyes; a smile. I remember an event from my perspective and in conversations with others, in flashes and in snippets, rarely in a narrative continuum" (p. 406). Memory is often piqued when in the act of writing, as if stumbling into "something unexpected" (Poulas, 2010, p. 49) For me it was the sensate experience of seeing and holding the paraphernalia that I collected to make my Altars that triggered my memories, evoking images of past events and offering me an opportunity to make new memories. Freeman (2015) put words to this: "at those moments when images from the past are triggered by sensations that are being experienced in the present, remembrance manages to fuse the past with the present" (p. 142).

Worth (2008) suggested that storytelling is one of our primary forms of communication with other people and "narratively is the principle way that human beings order their experience in time" (2008, p. 42). Worth argues that the epistemological benefits of reading, hearing and telling well-constructed narratives develop discursive reasoning skills which enable a more comprehensive understanding of the human experience. The narrative of this inquiry is aimed at fostering in those who read it a further discovery that "we are social creatures with brains and minds that are part of larger organisms called families, communities and cultures ... to understand a person, we need to look beyond the individual" (Cozolino, 2014, p. xiii). On understanding oneself as a reader of stories, Cozolino (2002) stated that "the process of listening to [or reading] stories brings together behaviour, affect, sensation,

and conscious awareness in a way that maximizes the integration of a wide variety of neural pathways" (p. 35), providing an opportunity for moral lessons, catharsis and self-reflection.

To this end I sought a terminology that could ground me in the narrator's voice and hold together the author of the vignettes of personal experience, the active inquirer using the arts as vehicles of knowing, and the researcher deliberating on propositional knowing and practical knowing. My autobiographical vignettes are similar to the works of autoethnographers who embed narratives of self in their research (Davis & Ellis, 2008, p.99; Holman Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013) requiring a willingness to make oneself vulnerable and open to criticism in the service of exploring definitions of personal reality, an inward gaze towards the self, while maintaining the outward gaze towards cultural practices (Burgess, 2006; Davis & Ellis, 2008; Brogden, 2010; Tedlock, 2013; Holman Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013; Cole & Knowles, 2008; Andrew, 2017).

Henderson and Black (2018) wrote that through "writing-exchanging-sharing-conversing" (p. 260) we gain a sense of life before and new ways of experiencing that which once was painful as we learn how to "excavate our stories" claim Henderson & Black (2018, p. 267). Having used multi-voiced and dialogical processes, hoping that my position as narrator will instil confidence in the integrity of my research practice and findings. I want to bring a transparency to my experience as both inquirer and respondent, as the one who comes to know the self within the process of research itself.

More Considerations for this Inquiry

Having established that my inquiry nestles under the participatory umbrella with an

extended epistemology that includes experiential, presentational, propositional and practical knowing, I include other methodological considerations that I think are pertinent to understanding the methods I used in my arts-led inquiry in Chapter 3. My intention is to combine the notion of the embodied nature of an arts-led inquiry with my intersubjective engagement with art materials and collaborators. I think also important is to point out that my memories, being part of my embodied experience, forged my entry into and throughout this inquiry. Using my memories challenged my awareness of when to bracket in and bracket out what I was coming to know. Reflection and critical reflexivity became critical activities that led to me being able to articulate my findings. Finally, I briefly introduce phenomenology as a methodological framework that influences the methods I used as tools and techniques that afforded me a way to analyse my data.

Intersubjective Experience with Art Materials

Collecting items and objects in preparation for creating the Altars began my ongoing intersubjective relationship with the objects, artefacts, paraphernalia and materials that would eventually become incorporated into my Altars. This relationship developed by my internal cues that fluctuated according to my moods and my handling of them as I projected meanings into them.

In order to expand the meanings that my objects already hold for me, I aim to make new combinations with them as they are incorporated on the Altars with the intention of creating personal metaphors. Metaphors have been important to psychotherapy, counselling and art therapy as a way to define complex concepts in which something concrete is projected onto something abstract (Jung, 1959). Gerber and Myers-Coffman (2018) directly relate the

interpretation and representation of knowledge in ABR symbolic language to "metaphors that lead to discovery ... [which] allows for the signification and representation of the ambiguous, illusive, invisible, partially or not fully known phenomena that are inexpressible in words" (p. 595). Just as McNiff (2004) explained in his therapeutic work with others, "the objects held memories, and they were charged with energy as people spoke about them and the roles they played in their lives" (p. 139). Similarly, McNiff (1998b) invites us to ask ourselves to consider "what the object says about itself, what it offers to your life" (pp. 209-210). My intention in this inquiry is to engage with objects as artefacts with the hope of evoking memories of parts of my experience. This speaks of my entanglement with the material and non-material worlds of present past and future times. In her preface, Barad (2007) writes "To be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals do not pre-exist their interactions; rather, individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating" (2007, p. ix).

In gathering these objects to arrange and connect with other art-making materials on my Altars, I was reminded of the processes involved in making collages. Scotti and Chiltern (2018) offer an introduction to collage as a post-modern philosophical position when used as a method in arts-based research. They describe collage as allowing for "the co-existence, juxtaposition, and integration of multiple experiences, on both verbal and visual dimensions" (p. 361) as I anticipate my method of constructing Altars will provide me. The use of artefacts demonstrated in a study by Hanson (2018) allowed participants to point to or pick up items when it was their turn to speak, using the items to explain, detail or amplify their stories (p. 13). My hope is that objects of memorabilia and other artefacts from my life will provide what Eisner (2008) called "evocative image[s] that generate the conditions for new

telling questions and for fruitful discussion" (p. 9).

Intersubjective Experience with Peers

I hoped that my collaborations with others in the first phase of my inquiry and during the construction of my Altars would add a level of trustworthiness through the intersubjectivity they provided. Intersubjectivity is the complexity of the felt sense within and between the co-researchers and from this the "witness" or "responder" may make what Lett (2011) describes as an intersubjective response. Lett (2011) claims that "the quality of the intersubjective response lies between the pre-reflective and the conscious awareness of emergent possibilities" (p. 278). These forms could include creative writing, poems, visual art-making, movement, gestures, selections of post cards, or anything that functions as a response to the researcher in her quest to further her inquiry. These forms come from a sense of resonance that arises in the interaction between participants. Some such responses are reflective and considered, whilst others are spontaneous and intuitive. This kind of collaboration creates opportunities for expressing complex inner feelings as we search for meaning, and can also allow us to challenge, confront or empathise with others.

Collaborative dialogues with others were important in aiding my journey towards understanding the content of my stories and influenced how I wrote about them. Being a self-study, I also needed collaboration with others to ground me, challenge my perceptions and provide companionship in the gathering and processing of my data. Heron and Reason (1997) claimed that what presents itself at any one time is shaped perceptually by the experiential knower. As Lett (2011) warned, staying attached to the idea that reality is supposed to be a certain way may mean we lay ourselves open to distortions thus my narrative has been

informed by and includes the voices of colleagues and peers.

These collaborations assisted my reflections on the topics I wished to explore and added to the reflexive nature of my research as I sought clarity. I became aware that connection and understanding are the aims of collaborations such as this, and community is built when this happens. I participated with others throughout the inquiry period – in monthly supervisory dialogues in a small group over the first five years, and thereafter with my supervisor Jean and my peer companion Jenni.

Gathering Memories

The access point to my immersion into my relational experiences began with memories, but I cannot claim that my memories are accurate portrayals of what happened between myself and others. Memory bias aside, my intention is to understand more about myself in my relational experiences despite the fact that, as Andrew (2017) raised "my story is only one of many, a particular point of view, and that it can be assumed that others' stories of [similar] relationships, events and topics would take a different course. Even when I write about others, I cannot speak for others. I can only speak for myself' (p. 41). As Freeman (2015) wrote, "memories can be accurate, but are not always accurate. Memories of events are always a mix of factual traces of sensory information overlaid with emotions, mingled with interpretation and filled with our own conscious and subconscious imaginings" (p. 146).

Remembering is a complex phenomenon, often unreliable, and is located in cognitive, body- and emotion-centred areas in the brain, explicit, implicit, semantic, episodic, declarative, autobiographical and procedural (Siegel, 1999, 2001, 2012; Rothschild, 2000;

Stern, 2004; Franklin, 2012; Mehl-Madrona & Maiguy, 2015; Freeman, 2015; Cotter, 2017; Henderson & Black, 2018; Badenoch, 2018; Winkler, 2018). Only several decades ago "memory was only thought of as 'long-term' memory and when memory failed it was called forgetting" (Rothschild, 2000, p. 27). Now we have a bourgeoning evidence from neuroscience that offers a language which extends our knowledge of memory and the understanding of the differences between explicit and implicit memory. We now know that our body and emotional memories (implicit/embodied memory) are stored in the brain's limbic system (the primitive brain) and that this area is not directly connected to the language centres in the brain (explicit memory) - (Rothschild, 2000; Siegel, 2012; Badenoch, 2018).

Siegel (2012, p. 73) referred to implicit memories as the first layer of memory holding our emotions, perceptions, actions and body sensations, from which we create mental models that shape our expectations about the way the world works. Badenoch (2018) claimed that "implicit memory encodes without us needing to consciously attend to the experience, while explicit memory requires conscious attention" (p. 166). Implicit encoding "occurs through the whole of life and harnesses the brain's capacity to generalise from experience ... and the brain summarises and combines similar events into one prototypical representation known as a schema" [this is how we] "construct mental models from repeated events" (Siegel, 2012, p. 150). On the other hand, "explicit encoding depends on the ability to focus attention and integrate elements of an experience into factual or autobiographical representations" (p. 153).

In this inquiry I will be dealing with implicit memories that my neural system has already encoded, generalising my experiences, therefore seeming to validate my perceptions and beliefs of past experience however, I anticipate ways to re-story my past experiences.

The locations in the brain prominent in understanding and producing story have been

pinpointed as neural substrates of narrative processes (Mehl-Madrona & Mainguy, 2015, Pp. 235 -256). These locations include the medial prefrontal cortex, the lateral prefrontal cortex, the temporo-parietal region, the anterior temporal region including temporal poles and the posterior cortex. Explicit memory of information over relatively long periods, activates fictional imagery, maintains complex information from all sensory modalities, and involve autobiographical memory via the amygdala, insula, superior temporal cortex and inferior prefrontal gyrus as part of an emotional circuit (Mehl-Madrona & Mainguy, 2015, pp. 235-241). Memory is narrative and our memories of important people in our lives are laid down as stories. We might forget who first told us the stories "or that we invented the story to hold on to some memories of happenings, and assume that that these stories are actually the truth" (2015, p. 108). Freeman (2015) claimed:

We have ... no accurate way of distinguishing which of our memories really happened in the ways we recall them and which are added images of events that never originally happened. We reconstruct what we think happened based on the images our minds contain and construct ... most reasonable people would have to admit that their recall could not be trusted (p. 136).

When memories materialise in art form they are removed from their original appearance and become something different. They are therefore not re-presentations, but in present time experience become something new or different. The challenge for me in beginning an inquiry that relied on my memories was to also find a way to suspend my attachment to previous memories in order to come to the activity of making my Altars in present time experience, as if for the very first time. I am hoping to offer a different or more nuanced present time understanding of my-self as daughter, mother and carer. This approach of suspending what we think we already know comes from the philosophical work of

Edmund Husserl, translated and added to by Giorgi (1994, 1997, and 2009), Betensky (1987), Valle et al, (1989), Spinelli (1989), Moustakas (1994) and Willis (2001). Husserl devised techniques such as epoche or bracketing to set aside prejudices and beliefs "in order to gain a clear view of the phenomenon" (Spinelli, 1989; Moustakas, 1994; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). This was going to be challenging for me, as my subjective experience of memories from the distant past, recent past and present were under investigation. I attempt to suspend what I think I already know, from my memories of past stories told to me and the narratives I have constructed of them and rely on my sensate experiences in present time in order to track how experience in my body may materialize in the art forms The procedure of "bracketing", in and out, relies on making choices (Lett, 2011, p. 268). When collecting objects and materials to create the Altars I firstly stay in a process of attending to memories which are "bracketed in", to enable my dialogues with them, but in order to come to making of the Altars which occurred sometime after the collection I adopt an attitude of starting afresh.

Reflection and Reflexivity

Reflection and reflexivity were part of my methodological approach. Reflection usually reflects on action already performed that might lead to insight about something not noticed at the time, perhaps pinpointing details that were missed. Reflexivity is about finding strategies to question our thought processes and assumptions. It is closely aligned with critical reflection, which asks us to stand back and examine our thinking by asking questions. Lett (2011) though explains that a great deal of our experiencing happens outside of cognition or reflection (2011, p. 283). However Bolten (2010) wrote of reflection as a "state of mind, an ongoing constituent of practice, not a technique, or a curriculum element" (p. 3). Reflection provides strategies to "bring things out into the open, and frame appropriate and

searching questions" (p. 3) perhaps not asked before. Reflection is an in-depth consideration of events or situations outside of oneself and "involves reliving the experience to bring it into focus" (Bolten, 2010, p. 13). As Bloom (2009) explained "the regressive movement, or ebb, is reflective; it takes one back on a journey of exploration among objects, people, places, and events which makes up the ground of one's being" (as cited in Lyle, 2009, p. 162).

Reflexivity in contrast to reflection, implies an ability to locate ourselves in situations and ask what can be changed, critiqued, questioned and evaluated (Watts, 2019). Where reflective analysis is an activity of creating order, making connections and constructing meanings in a retrospective way, reflexivity is an attitude of attending systematically to the context of knowledge construction at every step of the research process, questioning to highlight subjective, multiple and constructed realities and to expose contradictions, dilemmas and possibilities (Hardy & Palmer, 1999). Making Altars as inquiry, stopping to reflect on them and then returning back to another cycle of inquiry as I made them brought about a larger landscape of understanding the lived experience under investigation.

There are a number of ways that reflexivity has been used in qualitative research (Finlay & Gough, 2003; Doane, 2003; Finlay, 2003; Fook & Askeland, 2007; Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009; Ryan & Walsh, 2018; Watts, 2019). In contrast to reflection, reflexivity, as a stance of the researcher, involves a more dynamic and continuing awareness of self in context (Doane, 2003). Reflexivity seems to help the researcher move away from introspection towards critical realism (Finlay, 2003). In my experience of introspection when handling objects and making the Altars, multiple viewpoints, convergent and dissonant, created new possibilities for me as storyteller, artist, improviser and researcher (Rowe, 2003).

I will use several approaches to reflexivity in this inquiry. Firstly, being present in the here and now when making the Altars (Doane, 2003); as a tool for the analysis of multiple viewpoints (Smith, 2003); as a way to write from the inside out and the outside in (Rowe, 2003); as a storyteller (Harper, 2003); and finally as a research tool to audit the research process through introspection, intersubjective reflection and mutual collaboration with peers (Finlay, 2003).

Phenomenology as a Methodological Framework

Mine is a mixed method and I am drawn to use procedures associated with phenomenology which has its roots in the philosophies of Husserl and Heideger as translated by Moustakas (1994), Betensky (1995), Giorgi (1997), Spinelli (1989, 2002), Lett (2011), Eddles-Hirsch (2015), and Englander (2016). Neubauer et al., (2019) explain phenomenology by reviewing the key philosophical and methodological differences between two major approaches to phenomenology – transcendental and hermeneutic – to understand the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning these approaches, as "essential for successfully conducting phenomenological research particularly attending to health professionals studying an individuals lived experience within the world" (2019, p. 90). In this inquiry I find myself drawn to the hermeneutic stream of phenomenology that seeks to "understand the deeper layers of human experience that lay obscured beneath surface awareness and how the individual's lifeworld, or the world he or she pre-reflectively experiences it, influences this experience" (Bynam & Varpio, 2017, p. 252-3).

As mentioned I did not explicitly choose my methods prior to embarking on the gathering of my data, as I had done in a previous thesis (Hill, 1997) as my methods emerged

in organic ways described in detail in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7. My approach generally was to 'do' phenomenology "directly on things" as van Manen and van Manen (2021) put it.

Through the "attentive practice of thoughtfulness" my search for possible meaning structures emerged in the experience of making Altars followed by the "writing of [my] lived experiences" (p. 38). van Manan and van Manan (2021) claimed that "doing phenomenology directly on the phenomena and things" requires a certain attitude and practice of attentive awareness to "the things of the world as we live and experience them" (2021, p. 1069). This attitude consists of a certain way of seeing, thinking and expressing aimed at "eidetic (essential) and inceptual insights into the phenomena and events of our existential lifeworld" (p. 1072). It was this kind of attitude that kept me in the flow of researching through the vehicle of art-making that enabled insights into my lived experience of making the Altars. With this attitude of thoughtfulness, I modified some of the phenomenological research methods for my own use and these are outlined in the following methods chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

Preamble

In this chapter, I present my account of the methods and procedures I used when creating my Altars and analysing the texts arising from this arts-led inquiry. My primary approach in this inquiry uses arts as a way to represent and express my experiences and from there to create "new understandings of process, spirit, purpose, subjectivities, emotion, responsiveness, and ethical dimensions of inquiry" (Knowles & Cole, 2008, p. 59).

Arts-based research is not, claim Barone & Eisner (2012), about proving answers, but rather asking better questions. Riddett-Moore and Siegesmund (2012) asked, "What are the data", "how are they analysed", and "how is an arts-based inquiry an insightful piece of research that expands our knowledge?" (p. 109). The data of my inquiry came from creating images and texts that generated knowledge as I worked with my materials and experimented with alternative shapes of representation and ways of sensing and getting to the inside of things – all part of the evolving construction of qualitative knowing (Cole & Knowles, 2008). In ordinary language I search for significant words, images and feelings with a reflexive attitude so as to arrive at approximations of meaning (Lett, 2011, p. 14) that may or may not result in discrete themes or topics but could be somehow important in this inquiry.

In this chapter I will firstly describe the research setting and the roles of my collaborators and co-researchers, followed by two examples of intersubjective dialogues. I will then describe in detail the procedures in I used in the process of art-making in as well as the methods I used to analyse the texts in this inquiry.

The Research Settings

The inquiry was conducted in several different places over time: four of my homes, three MIECAT studios, Jenni Harris' art therapy studio, and several coffee shops around Melbourne. The studio space where I brought together my collections to finish the Altars was situated on Mount Dandenong, east of Melbourne. The locations in which I produced the written representations of the cycles of my inquiry and the analyses of the texts were also numerous including homes mentioned and other people's holiday houses by the sea at Phillip Island and Aireys Inlet, Victoria. A convent in Cheltenham (south of Melbourne) and a monastery in Lysterfield, Victoria, near where I lived, were the places in which I could really concentrate on my analysis and writing. These environments supported, held and oriented me towards my research aims providing me a sense of internal stability.

Collaborations

In this chapter I include more detail about the roles of my collaborators to demonstrate how their participation became part of the methodology.

Supervisory Collaborators.

My principal research supervisor, Jean Rumbold, guided and companioned me throughout the long period of this inquiry. Jan Allen, took on the primary role as time progressed spending considerable time on her photographed responses to my work in the studio and in ongoing supervisory sessions. Jean's ongoing postcard responses throughout the many years of this inquiry, some sent whilst travelling overseas, helped facilitate my self-dialogue and always provided me with insights into the content and process of my inquiry.

Jenni Harris is my friend, and one of my co-researchers. We met regularly in small group supervision sessions over a five-year period and have continued to do so beyond her own submission of her doctoral thesis. She told me, "text message me whenever you are stuck at any time of day and night", which I have done. The encouragement of these three women underpins this work.

Collaborators in the Studio.

Edwina Entwistle and Kerry Kaskamanidis accompanied me in collaborative dialogues for many hours when I was creating the Altars to my childhood and the underworld. Although their styles of being in the world are very different, their intersubjective collaborations with me during my construction of the Altars were invaluable in helping me co-construct meanings and facilitated significant insights. These are recorded in the following chapters. Bronwyn Checkley, who allowed me the use of the studio on the mountain, gave warmth and cheer, a listening ear, compassion and companionship on many levels, including hot bowls of soup in winter, flowers in the spring, and cups of tea, sometimes late into the night. Various other peers and friends also visited the studio space when the Altars were under construction and some of their responses are included in the research. My adult children helped with making representations for the some of the Altars, including the Altar to my experience of motherhood. When the Altars were completed, I had three viewings in the studio to which I invited family, friends and colleagues. Some of these people, along with other colleagues in large group supervision and colloquium groups, provided me with intersubjective responses to the emerging content of my inquiry. I made selections of these (within chapters four, five, six and seven) to highlight my emergent meanings.

Arts Making as Collaboration – Dialogue with Objects.

A period of collecting and handling objects, artefacts, memorabilia and materials extended my reflections on my relationships with primary and intimate others. Though the objects are not the data, they become part of the data when they are either dialogued with (giving rise to text) or assembled together to form new representations of experience which are then described in the inquiry's narrative texts. This phase of collecting, dialoguing and creating presentations in small multimodal assemblages is described in full in chapter four. The following example of a dialogue with an art object denotes myself as "me" and the meat mincer (a 1950s kitchen utensil) as "MM":

Me: "I heard you calling me from the back of the shop via my expectation and hope that you would be here. Oh, meat mincer, I remember you, how you were fixed to the kitchen table with the green laminated top a day or two after Sunday roast. The body of you so heavy my chubby hands could hardly hold you. But I could undo the two smaller nuts after Mum unscrewed the larger one which held you upright on the table ledge. I unscrew the inside spiral section now and remember the pleasure of sucking the residual meat out of the indentations. I love the hold of you now, with my grown-up hands, twisting and turning each part of you around as I look and feel the heaviness and coldness of you. I have an urge to raise you to my nose to smell you. What do you want to say to me now?"

MM: "I was engineered in England, I come from the homeland of your ancestors."

Me: "Yes, and do you remember me in my childhood home, here in Australia?"

MM: "Oh yes, I do. What a delightful child you were, so gentle and unassuming. You loved the simple things of ordinary life, they made you feel secure."

Me: "You noticed that, how?"

MM: "The way you held me, the way you were grateful to me, you admired and respected me."

Me: "Yes, things were simpler then. She was quiet but purposeful, I trusted her then, I felt secure, and all was well, back then."

MM: "You are weeping now, I see, I hear."

[Time passes]

Me: "Now let me show you how I can put you back together again and marvel at your construction as I remember the whole process: setting you up, putting in the cut-up chunks of cold lamb, turning the handle and enjoying the result. And my mother's competence in making the rissoles. Then me undoing you from the table and sucking the leftover meat scraps, then putting you on the kitchen sink for washing. And looking forward to the next time we would meet, as if there was no choice for when that would be, knowing that adults were the bosses of how life would be managed." MM: "And back then, that was good; that was secure."

Me: "Yes, all was well back then. Thank you, meat mincer, for holding those memories for me.

MM: "You're welcome."

Reflection on Dialogue. This dialogue revealed a number of things to me. By experiencing the projection of myself onto the meat mincer, I found that my embodied memories revealed the actions and sensations that had evoked feelings of security. In turn, these memories brought about a great sense of a time when all was well in my life, a time when my mother provided me with an environment where even the simplest things brought happiness to both of us.

In a way, this activity of gathering became a warm up or rehearsal period before the Altars were constructed. This phase included dialogues with objects, art materials and peers in monthly supervisions. McNiff (1998) wrote of the intra-action/entanglement "when playing with art materials and expressive possibilities, the most fundamental advice is, 'withhold your desires for outcomes'" (p. 116). The meat mincer, when painted gold and placed on the childhood Altar, added a perspective of stability to an installation that had gathered unexpected meanings of instability.

A Dialogue with a Collaborator.

Throughout the inquiry period my peers became my collaborators, supporting me with their intersubjective responses in small and large group meetings. My collaborators, such as Edwina and Kerry, were formal co-researchers who engaged in dialogues with me, while others became witnesses to my making of Altars at various stages of their construction, sometimes supporting me with intersubjective responses (ISRs). I either filmed, audio taped or wrote my reflections on their input. This is an example of a dialogue with one of my formal co-researchers, Edwina. The setting is the first stage of the construction of the childhood Altar. I had been threading kitchen utensils to a peg-board in a symmetrical fashion:

Edwina: "What are you thinking?"

Me: "About right and wrong. I'm thinking about right and wrong in the sense of aesthetically pleasing, and suddenly the whole idea of it being symmetrical is not working for me."

Edwina: "How does that feel?"

Me: "Ah, it feels interesting. Oh, I don't think 'interesting' is a feeling – arr, it feels challenging and a bit quirky. I think we have to go in another direction. [Practicing moving the wooden spoon from vertical to horizontal back to vertical; can't make up my mind; gathering some more gold ribbon and scissors.] Hmm, I'm not sure. Suddenly, I am not sure."

Edwina: "Tell me more about not feeling sure – what does it feel like inside you?" Me: "I'm a bit shivery and shaky, actually. Uncertainty."

Edwina: "That makes it sound much harder to make a decision from a place like that." Me: "Hmm, yes, very much so. (Film transcript [3], July 2010)

Reflection on dialogue. As I write now, I remember how hungry I used to be on arriving home from school and how I could have eaten two slices of bread if I did not consider others and what they might want or need.

Procedures Used in the Process of Art-Making

Before presenting my methods used in the analysis of my written texts, which brought me approximations of meanings and allowed me to identify of some of the patterns in my relational experiences of loving and suffering, I thought it important to present the procedures I used in the process of making my Altars. These practical procedures are derived from several sources including the MIECAT forms of inquiry (Lett, 2011) and the research and writing of art therapists such as McNiff (1998a, 1998b, 2004, 2011, 2013) and Allen (1995, 2005), and influenced by phenomenology. Imaginative possibilities became important (Lett, 2011, p.277) as well as being fully present to how I was interacting with tools and materials, attending to my body felt sense, horizonalising, bracketing and being descriptive (Betensky, 1987, 1995; Spinelli, 1989, 2002; Moustakas, 1990; Giorgi, 1994, 2009).

In summary, the following actions describe my process of generating the Altar data:

- Clustering objects, memorabilia, materials and tables into groupings in preparation for each experience I wished to represent, as a way to orient myself towards how to begin the process of making the Altars.
- Engagement with the possibilities of how materials might be incorporated into each Altar. For example, when working with the bridal Altar, considering how these collected items wire, netting, perspex legs, and a medallion made of wood with a painted image could be assembled. The engagement required problem-solving to match my imagination with the practicality of how the materials could be connected.
- Re-experience of past experiences through the assemblage of objects, memorabilia and arts and crafts materials on and under tables to tell my stories. For example, in using the kitchen utensils and placing them on a peg board, with Edwina as witness

- and inquirer into my experience, I re-told some stories of my early relationship with my mother.
- Using imagination to keep me in an integrated flow and following hunches as they arose. For example, in placing and affixing all of the materials and objects I had chosen to connect to the underworld Altar, new ideas about where and how to place these arose and were incorporated as I trusted my intuition. This became a pattern for many of the Altars.
- Staying with each part of the experience in situ, which became a way to immerse
 myself in the unfolding of how and when to continue and complete the making of
 each Altar.
- Engagement and re-engagement in reflexive dialogues with others and the actions of making, particularly during the extended times I collaborated with Edwina and Kerry when making both the childhood and underworld Altars, and when I filmed myself alone and looked at the actions of my body. I was surprised by how I handled even ugly things in a gentle way which seemed contradictory to how I felt emotionally.
- Attending to the awareness of embodied, energetic and emotional experiencing during
 the process, and documenting this. For example, before I began the underworld Altar,
 I set up a camera to film myself in action to document what I said and how I felt as I
 constructed it.
- I engaged in the process of re-looking throughout the making of the Altars. During,
 between and after construction, I either intentionally focused on what I had made or
 noticed aspects that captured my curiosity or surprised me out of the corner of my
 eye.
- Horizonalising giving equal value to all materials as containers of meaning. This
 was an ongoing state of mind that I found easy to employ as I worked with the

- materials or stood back to look again at what I had done.
- Recognising my patterns of being in the world in situ, within the processes of making
 and solving problems. Staying focused and being able to find solutions in the arts
 making process mirrored my approach to trying to fix problems in my life.

Analysis of my Written and Spoken Texts

The texts for my analysis came from transcripts of video and audio tapes, process notes (written descriptions of my actions and motivations in the process of making the Altars), journal entries, notes from small group supervisions and colloquium meetings, intersubjective responses from co-researchers and witnesses, summary statements, poetic depictions, and the stories of making my Altars contained in the following four chapters. I performed some analysis of the data just after the construction of the Altars to childhood and the underworld, but made the final analysis of all data when all of the Altars were completed.

There were four films made (now edited down to 45 minutes in total, found in Appendix 1). The first one taken by Edwina at the beginning of the construction of the childhood Altar, the second when I worked on the underworld Altar in my backyard on my own, the third when I continued the construction of the underworld Altar in the studio space I acquired, on my own, and the fourth while working on my crying/healing Altar. I later viewed each film twice. In the second viewing I produced the transcripts. The collaboration with my co-researcher Kerry took a different form, being audio taped and then transcribed.

I use a coding system with coloured felt pens to look for key words and statements in my data (see Appendix 2) as other phenomenological researchers have (Cypress, 2018, p. 308). I considered each word and statement with respect to its significance to the description of my experience (Moustakas, 1994, p. 122). I then either grouped them into creative clusters or created a poetic response as a reduction to meanings that I was gleaning. The written texts arising, and the finished art representations, preceded the process of "reorganizing data into new structures ... or themes" that constitute the final results (Bostrom, 2019, p. 1002). Schenstead (2012) refers to this process as "arts-based reflexivity" which involves drawing out main themes from raw data, creating levels of artwork in response, and synthesizing everything together. Within the narrative structure there were "literally hundreds of thousands of words waiting to be transformed into research findings" (Harper, 2003, p. 80). The arts-based processes yielded me a focus on the way in which understanding I chose three main topics to become my focus – attachment/relational experience, caregiving/burden and an exploration into what happens in the process of art-making.

To describe the variations of the phenomenological analyses I utilised in this part of my inquiry I drew from the writings of van Manen (1984, 1990, 2007, 2014); Giorgi (1997); Spinelli (1998); Lett (2011); Eddles-Hirsch (2015); Englander (2016); Cypress (2018); Neubauer et al, (2019); and, van Manen & van Manen (2021).

In summary they are:

1). Reading through all of the texts in each section, of each chapter, I considered the significance of words and statements that described aspects of my experiences, a method first proposed by Giorgi (1975, 1994, 1997, 2009, and 2017). By staying with whatever came into my awareness when reading through the texts, I searched for units of meaning.

I chose key words, images and phrases which seemed significant based on my felt sensing, intuition, thinking, emotions and sense of rightness. I then clustered these key words and phrases and gave each cluster a provisional title:

Example: *Cluster One: experiencing in the body* (Chapter 5):

bodily felt sense
I do it by how it feels
satisfying to thread
I have enacted that
shivery and shaky
strength of the body
felt sense of wanting to hang on
walk the divide

2). Choices of which phrases to extend into approximations of meaning seemed to occur when insight aligned with my felt sense and strong emotion. Approximations to meaning (Lett, 2011, p.14) were written in summary statements and sometimes as poetic responses. Example:

Summary statement from reflection on making my father (Chapter 5):

In recreating memories of my experiences of Dad on his ladder was felt as a dynamic process. Heightened awareness of emotions and bodily sensations seemed to lead swiftly to insights in a free-flowing way. It was as if time slowed down as I experienced a heightened awareness of the 'me' who was perceiving, feeling, acting and coming to personal meanings.

Poetic summary based on the resonant key words, images and phrases from the story of making the adolescent Altar (Chapter 5):

Apprehension unveiled the confusion of not liking adolescent re-construction.

This time not irritated by order, but perplexed by unknown potentiality, she proceeds tentatively, still trusted the process. Uncertainty in coupling naïve in sexual expression she held herself back with no one else to trust. Could she lose her mind trapped in endless worry, to protect the skinny girl amidst her hope for love? Confused placement, The memorabilia of a time of black versus white and white versus black. No satisfaction in arrangements except the squares neatly planted on the table.

3). I sought textual depictions (Giorgi, 1997; Moustakas, 1994) that would enable me to explicate personal meanings and possibly reveal implicit knowledge which might shed light on things "not quite known yet" (Finlay & Gough, 2003; Allen & Rumbold, 2004; Srivastava and Hopwood, 2009; Lett, 2011; Parsons & Boydell, 2012; Scott et al, 2013; and Rajagopalan & Midgley, 2015). Textural descriptions afforded me insight into how the arts enable meanings and were written into the narrative of the inquiry (Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7). Textural descriptions are an integration, descriptively, of the invariant (relatively stable) constituents arising. For example, in Chapter 4:

To take the next art-making steps I felt closer to gaining access to prereflective experience and body and emotional responses when using the arts as representations of my experiences. These occurred when I engaged with the heavy rock sensation in my mid-body area which resulted in the representation as crumpled balls of newspaper covered with clay; also when holding the 'heavy burden' symbol as I spoke about difficult times; and in intuitive moments when I saw what I 'needed' to do with art materials and items such as threading the memorabilia in the wire torso which was connected to my family relationships. By recognising how much was taking place in inner experience I felt I was learning to trust the process of arts-led inquiry as I followed hunches and feelings along the way through this phase.

4). Reflexivity was a feature of both the procedures I used when making the Altars, and the analysis of the texts (Finlay, 2003; Doane, 2003; Harper, 2003; Rowe, 2003; Smith, 2003; Fook & Gardner, 2007; Morley, 2008; Attia & Edge, 2017; Ferguson, 2018). This action aligned with Lett's (2011) "reflexivity is the acknowledgement of one's own presence in the exchange of experiencing, as distinct from being an observer or a listener so as to interpret it" (p. 284). The role of iteration, is not a repetitive mechanical task but a deeply reflexive process and is key to sparking insight and developing meaning (Srivastava, 2009). Reflexivity also became a tool for the analysis of multiple viewpoints that came up in my construction of Altars and my reflections on them (Smith, 2003); these multiple viewpoints shifted and changed, affording me a way to write from the inside out (Rowe, 2003) as I storied the journey of my inquiry (Harper, 2003). Example (Chapter 6):

Having been greatly distressed about some difficult times in my life I wanted to make an underworld Altar to represent them. At the end of my first painting session painting it I said, "I'm going to fill in some gaps with this blue ... just noticed I am walking around and around, and around this underworld top, I'm aware of not being frightened of it ... Suddenly I love it."

In later iterations of the continuation of the underworld Altar I also experienced fear

and anger. These multiple viewpoints were also subjected to critical reflection.

Critical reflection I challenged myself me to step back to examine my own feelings, reactions, and motives. Doing so enabled me to return, again and again, in reflexive cycles to create meanings which led to propositional knowing (Fook & Gardner, 2007; Morley, 2008; Parsons & Boydel, 2012; Lett, 2011; Riddett-Moore & Siegesmund, 2012; Mackintosh et al, 2017).

5). Thematic and pattern identification came from grouping approximations to meaning, sometimes presented in tables for clarity. "In the inquiry into personal meanings, all forms of personal representation are built around core ideas or themes, which function in their lived experience" (Lett, p. 287, 2011). I also hope to find thematic statements which might be considered useful in professional fields, particularly in therapeutic arts practice and research. I searched for the potentiality of a connection between personal themes and public topics. I looked for elements the art-making process that stood out as affecting me in a strong way and progressing my inquiry. Two examples related to my experience of attachment to my parents:

When I feel my secure attachments failing, I become anxious.

When I have been faced with decisions involving complex perceptions and conflicting loyalties, I become unsure in my loyalties.

6). In gathering approximations to meaning and themes, my aim was to seek congruence between experiential, presentational, propositional, and practical knowing, which Lincoln and Guba (2000) claimed "leads to action to transform the world in the service of human flourishing" (p. 170). As I settled on final understandings and perceptions from the multiple viewpoints I could hold, I chose

two topics to offer as propositional knowing: one, a personal view of the field of attachment, and the other, a personal view of caring for the health of unwell close others. Alongside these I offer my findings of the processes inherent in therapeutic arts research and therapy.

Ethical Considerations

This inquiry was undertaken to understand how I had coped with the stress in my life when those I loved were in serious difficulties. I hoped that I might create a forum for dialogue with others who had struggled similarly in these ways. I also saw this as an opportunity to give voice to things in my life which were hidden. The greatest challenge in taking this project on was balancing my wish to be transparent about my life with my desire to do no harm to others. Thus, I have wrangled with trying to find a balance through the ethical principles of truthfulness, autonomy, doing no harm (non-maleficence), and doing good (beneficence).

There is risk involved in revealing aspects of our personal lives in our research making us vulnerable to exposure. This is a challenge for me in this inquiry as I live with the tension that Ellis (2007) articulated of protecting the privacy of those I care about, including myself, when I am using my own experiences to figure out my own life. Others, who have used autoethnographic and reflexive models, have given examples of how to create personal narratives which pay attention to the ethics of how to protect self and others by being transparent about what they are doing in their research (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Finlay & Gough, 2003; Doane, 2003; Smith, 2003; Harper, 2003; Poulos, 2010; Brogden, 2010; Ellis & Rawicki, 2013; Andrew, 2017).

In my context as a researcher using visual materials, techniques and methodologies, I might find myself "entangled in issues of power and trust" (Clark, 2013, p. 68). For example, neither my father nor mother gave specific consent around the details of my descriptions of them, nor other family members who could take umbrage to what I have written about them. In my inquiry I have direct responsibility to family members with whom I wish to stay in close relationship and so the risks are of a different kind. My children have been referred to in this text and have seen the pages which reference them. I have three children and two of them were very ill during their twenties and early thirties, facing life-threatening circumstances due to their mental health and addiction issues. I have decided not to explain these life-threatening circumstances in any detail to protect their privacy. However, I will say that the many hundreds of thousands of families who have a loved one so afflicted will most likely be familiar with late night calls to emergency and intensive care units at hospitals, attendance at police stations and court houses, and responding to other mixed emergency calls at other times. Fortunately, my unwell offspring are now quite well and managing life in ways I once thought would be impossible.

Also, I do not mention my offspring by name in order to protect their futures. During one family occasion my children did suggest pseudonyms for themselves if I wanted to go down that path, but amidst gales of laughter at what these names might be, they dropped the idea. I acknowledge, though, that in their obvious relationship to me, and the fact that I mention various mental health and traumatic situations they have been in, they are not protected completely. My children gave permission throughout the inquiry process.

I acknowledge that my parents, who have both died, cannot now read and consent to what I have written about them. As Ellis (2007) admitted, I also live "with the tension of that" (p. 3). I believe my father, who I have named and who died in 1993 from cancer, would be both pleased with and forgiving of what I show of my relationship with him. My mother herself participated in parts of the representation of our relationship at the studio before she died in 2013. She particularly enjoyed revisiting her own experience of being a young mother when she viewed the partially completed childhood Altar at that time. As my mother passed away in 2013 before I could get her consent for her participation I was asked to have my sister verify that our mother viewed the representation of my experience of her in my childhood. My sister signed a consent form in 2015 to verify this.

I chose to make transparent some personal experiences of being a daughter and a mother, but I do not divulge any details about my relationships with partners, though I do want to mention that I had invaluable support from one of them when one of my sons was diagnosed with schizophrenia. My first husband is potentially identifiable because I make mention of having been a clergy-wife. He did, however, give his approval to include our engagement and wedding cards in one of the Altars. We remain amicably involved with ongoing family events. I have not divulged any details about others who influenced my learning about intimate relationships as my focus has been on my journey of development through close relationships with parents and children. There were many collaborations with others as participants in my inquiry who generously responded to my representations during one-on-one visits to my work in the studio. Some of these collaborators have given written consent to use their names and their responses as data and text.

For me, relational ethics requires researchers "to act from hearts and minds, acknowledge our interpersonal bonds to others and take responsibility for actions and their consequences" (Ellis, 2007, p. 3). Included here in ethical considerations is the question of self-care and how to protect myself. In part, this raises the issue of who has the interpretive authority over my work. I realise that in revealing my own experiences in this inquiry I can welcome an academic discourse (Hastings, 2010) as you, the reader, construct your own ideas about and responses to the matters that I raise. I willingly dedicate the viewing of my images and stories as I transfer these into the public domain via this written thesis. However, as Tracey Emin experienced in her controversial public art displays, I am aware of the risks of being misinterpreted by others (as cited in Remes, 2009). There is always an emergent aspect, an interplay between design and what emerges, that I have not been able to hide from in this inquiry. Despite any fear of my exposure I can only surrender to giving voice to myself at the same time aiming to do no harm to others.

Criteria for Evaluating This Study

Where positivist research is evaluated against criteria of validity and reliability (often judged by replicability), arts-based research seeks to establish trustworthiness in other ways. Overall, I have sought to make this study trustworthy, useful and transparent through my use of peer researcher input and multiple layers and cycles of analysis. However, although I make my methods clear, it is not with any expectation that this study is replicable or that the inquiry can be repeated (even by myself) and yield the same outcomes. Lett (2007) pointed out that, because the person doing the research may have changed during their inquiry or in the passing of time, previous understandings and outcomes may have matured or grown. As this qualitative research is iterative rather than linear, it emerges in the back and forth movement

between design and implementation, thus being transparent in a way that contributes to its rigour. I have sought congruence between the formulations of procedures, literature reviewed, data collection and analyses, and used reflexive processes to interpret, monitor and constantly modify this research process to add to its own kind of rigour (Morse et al, 2002). I draw on values that seek to emancipate, and by doing this I hope to provide freedom from fixed restrictive ways of living (Morley, 2008).

Cole and Knowles (2008) have described a number of elements which they believe need to be present for a work to be considered as trustworthy in arts-based research. They ask for a commitment to a particular art form to be reflected in the creative research process, and that the methodological integrity is evident in the relationship between the art forms and the substance of the research text. I can only claim that, while I do not consider myself to be an artist, my art forms as representations of experience are able to stand alongside the texts which not only describe them but have been able to inform propositional knowing in the service of potentially helping others. I cannot judge if this is the case, though, until this dissertation is made public. I have trusted that the methodology I chose held me in a process of engagement that relied on my common sense, decision-making, intuition, and a responsiveness to the natural flow of events and experiences.

In reviewing my own work, my hope is that the approach and methods used here meet criteria of honesty, emotional reliability and a sense of transformation from an old self to a new one (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). My greatest hope is that my inquiry may in some ways be useful for a wider audience to use in their practice with women who struggle to understand their own roles as relational beings.

Richardson (2000) also offered the following four criteria for evaluation, all of which I believe I have met. I "can make a substantive contribution to our understanding of social life"; I only know my project's "artistic merit or success aesthetically by feedback from others"; and I believe "my work is reflectively reflexive"; and hope to "make an impact in the field of knowledge, emotionally or intellectually, in ways that may move others to ask questions, write, try new research practices or move into action". These are challenging criteria, and in some cases I think I must wait on others to assess aesthetic success or professional impact, but I know I have worked to fulfil these criteria in evaluation of this inquiry. What I think is important to state here, though, is that in presenting data from my lived experience I am open about my standpoint and transparent about my position in this arts-based inquiry in a way that I hope invites readers' engagement. In this meeting place we come up against each other and may find, through difference, our own boundaries, and see our preferences become starker. Where there are points of connection, we may bend into each other to find comfort or pleasure in shared stories, perhaps building a sense of community and belonging.



Figure 7. Altars along a precipice.

Pastel representation, Jenny Hill, 2005.

Near the end of the first year of my research I made this image which shows small Altars along the edges of the golden path that turns towards a blue river. A valley appears with threatening cliffs between the golden path and the cascading river below, representing my sense of the challenges inherent in taking this inquiry on.

The following four chapters pick up the story of the inquiry journey with my descriptions of what happened when making the Altars. The data that comes from these four chapters is then theorised in the discussion of my research findings, with the literature, in chapter eight.

CHAPTER 4

Emergent Knowing Via Dialogues with Others and Art Materials

In this chapter, the focus is on the phase of gleaning and constructing small assemblages and installations, both by myself and in presentations to small and large peer group setting that occurred alongside the making of the Altars. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 give an account of the processes and findings from the making of the Altars.

In preparation for the making of my large Altars, I developed the practice of presenting small installations, or assemblages, using parts of my collections for the Altars, to my peers at monthly small group supervisions and two large group colloquiums (from 2005 to 2009). I have come to recognize this as part of the inquiry itself, and not just preparation for it, and here I select those that inform the major strands of my inquiry.

I took to our monthly small group supervision sessions collections from my gathered artefacts and materials which represented my reflections on past experiences at that time. These supervision sessions were held in various studios and rooms that acted as holding places for our sharing. In the sessions I would present these articles in small installation formats as assemblages and describe my emotions, thoughts and bodily felt sense of them. My peers were invited to respond to my presentations by choosing and using a range of creative mediums.

The Experience of Gleaning

The act of gathering together objects and materials to make primitive clusters of my remembered experiences seemed similar to a pre-play period such as Betensky (1987) described, and became preparation for the later construction of the Altars. Bringing collected items together and placing them in configurations which held some relationship to each other became a practice that connected me to old memories and new ideas about my relationship to my past and present.

During the early phases of collecting objects and rehearsing the creation of the Altars I was given a postcard of the painting "The Gleaners". In this painting Millet (1857) depicted three women out in the fields after the wheat has been harvested. The women collect the leftovers to take home and grind into flour to make into loaves of bread. In responding to this postcard I felt I had come to a place within myself where I felt broken, wounded, sad, tired, and left over. I felt I needed to be picked up and gathered together. In this phase of the inquiry I became immersed in a process of deep engagement with the objects and paraphernalia I was choosing and being offered.

Alongside these responses offered to me I became acutely aware of the materials and tools I chose to use. Hafeli (2011) asked the question, "how do materials speak in an artwork and what do they have to say?" (p. 25). One of the first pieces I found was the wire bust below.



Figure 8. Wire Torso, found object.

I remember walking into a second-hand shop in Fitzroy not long after my pilgrimage overseas in search of the *Black Madonna*. My eyes scanned the many old pieces of furniture and bric-a-brac on display and a wire torso caught my eye. In those moments of looking, I became aware that it was breast-less, and I imagined some possibilities of how to transform the torso into a female form. The wire was strong and shiny, it was formed into neat rectangular shapes that appealed to me. Even without a head or arms or legs it seemed bold. I liked it very much and felt excited about how and where I would use it.

Following this discovery I found myself searching for, and often found by, objects in all sorts of places – while I was on holidays, just walking through a shopping centre, or past a hard rubbish collection. Discovering a kitchen table exactly the type and colour of the table in my family kitchen when I was a child immediately brought back memories of my mother teaching me how to use a meat-mincer. After this I went looking to find a meat-mincer, having no idea that there were so many makes and models from the 1950s. My body

memories, activated through sight and touch, convinced me that I found the right one amongst the many at the back of a huge second-hand and antique pavilion.



Figure 9. Meat-mincer, and other utensils circa 1950, found objects.

The collecting of kitchen items and items related to my father's workshop led me further into my reflections on my childhood. For example, the gender-specific differences between mother and father become more obvious to me, as the placement of the objects below depict. By reflecting in these ways, I started to get a sense of how these items enhanced the security and stability of my early childhood, and the gifts that (Mum's) kitchen and (Dad's) workshop gave me.



Figure 10. Dad's workshop items & a china piano, circa 1950, retrieved objects.

As a child, I used to love handling and dusting the various objects on display in my family home. Each object held a fascination for me, even dad's tools strewn on his workshop floor. I imagined stories which I saw embedded in them, or just giving pleasure to hold them and relate to them. I am now coming to see that the way in which I am collecting these objects and materials, is already providing revised meanings of some of the complexities which I want to explore. (Journal entry, 2005)

Early Collaborative Inquiry with Peers

The first colloquium with the whole group of my MIECAT professional doctoral peers took place in September 2005. I presented four assemblages of objects that summarised where I was up to at that stage in my inquiry.



Figure 11. Presentation at Colloquium, digital photo, Jean Rumbold, 2005.

In previous small group conversations with Jenni, Ailish and Jean, we had discussed the issues around virginal brides and the stressful impact of not acting on sexual desire until marriage which was my experience. In Figure 11, I am in the middle, Jenni is on my right dressed in white as a bride to represent the virginal and good woman, and Ailish on my left is dressed in black to represent hidden desires that women might supress for fear of judgement.

Beside Jenni is a representation of woman as sexual object made with the wire torso I bought from Fitzroy, complete with black bra and black stockings on a pair of Perspex legs lying on the floor in front of it. The second small Altar on the very left hand side is a golden cage holding cute kewpie dolls and developing adolescents are trapped. They seek perfectionism and are trapped by their expectations of how they should look. In the centre, on the outside of the roof, a witch reminds them about growing old and ugly.



Figure 12. Entrapment, wire cage, found objects, J. Hill, 2005

The third small assemblage (not shown here) had a small china bridal doll with a veil representing woman as bride. Below her were two small wooden boxes, one a hope chest which held keywords with hopeful messages, and the other a Pandora's Box with words related to disillusionment, shattered dreams and separation. The fourth small Altar (Figure 12), called "Broken dolls, broken dreams", represented my unlearning of the myth of "happily ever after".



Figure 13. Broken dolls, broken dreams, 1950s doll collection, Jenny Hill, 2005.

I invited those present at the colloquium to respond in multimodal representations to the presentation of these four Altars. They did so by writing poems, making something from the keywords I had used, drawing or choosing objects themselves.

I chose three examples of intersubjective responses (ISRs) to my presentation to show here because I felt that they helped this research advance.

ISR 1:

Jan (my co-supervisor) placed a blue cloth on the floor with a bottle and a wine glass upon it and presented this to me, asking, and "Can anything become an Altar?" This question somehow challenged me; I felt defensive. As I sat with that feeling I then got in touch with an inner smile as I realised that I did indeed want to make Altars from many any-things, any things that would help express and represent my experiences. I was certainly wanting to make

Altars with ordinary materials rather than with the formalized sacred objects which are usually consecrated within religious and some spiritual contexts. This thinking led me to a clarity of purpose: to pay homage to my own life experiences in a personal and meaningful way by using ordinary objects on Altars.

ISR 2:

As I spoke to the group about my small installations, various members jotted down key words from what I said. One member in the group wrote these keywords:

polarities between self-knowing dissolution-reconstruction core of me suffering loving-giving body rising above or beyond self sacred – Altar – mundane self & others life giving choices

Here is the poetic statement that he made from his key words:

When I make myself an object
without choice, do
I give myself to suffering?
Is this a place of transformation?
Maybe.
Is this a place of dissolution?
Maybe.

Is this a sacred place?

Maybe.

Is this the Altar of the mundane?

Maybe.

Is this a place of loving and giving?

Maybe.

If I give myself to suffering do I lose the core of me?

Maybe.

What sort of place is this Altar?

The giving of self into death?

Or the giving of self into life?

The Altar may be the place within
Where the core of being resides
daily, momentarily
the place where the choices to be
are transformed, starkly
which define us.
How shall we make them?

This was another way to view objects drawn from the ideas that Jan challenged me with. This also challenged me in a shocking way on both an intellectual and bodily felt level. I first felt shocked to think that I could collude in making myself an object by giving myself to suffering, but then I saw the words "without choice". Ah, yes, I thought. If it is without choice, then I do collude with my own suffering? But with choice the experience of suffering has a different quality – I have agency. This in turn gave greater clarity to the question of why I made Altars: I was choosing to inquire into loving and suffering, not to complain about loss or to traumatise myself or others, but to make sense of how we live with loving alongside suffering, and to make sense of my life and the giving of myself to life.

ISR 3:

Another response came from Jean in the form of a small piece of fabric and paper. She had found a long piece of crepe bandage in the art materials section in the room and rolled it up. Sticking out from its centre was a message on a strip of blue paper.



Figure 14. ISR: *Length of crepe bandage rolled up, blue paper*, digital photo, J. Hill, 2005.

The words on the blue paper tucked into the bandage were:

"to bind the wounds of others?our own freedom?

This response also challenged me to reflect on my role as carer of loved ones in distress. Was my caring for others, my loving of them, binding me, entrapping me, and restricting me? What if I took the bandage and rolled it around myself? How loose or tight? It pointed me to a conflict of loving oneself with loving the other; the question of how to do both without losing oneself.

I reviewed what was raised for me by these three intersubjective responses and all the others received that day and then created a summary statement:

It seems to me I need to ask a number of things of myself. Have I made an 'object' of myself? Have I lost sight of the core of me? Is my loving you, me trying to love me? Whose wounds take precedence, yours, or mine? How can shattered dreams enable the fragments of myself to come together, to fly free and live into my loving from a different perspective? (*Journal*, Oct 2005)

Recognition of Feelings of Sadness

The next month I arrived at our small group session with Jean, Jenni and Ailish feeling somewhat empty. The following journal entry summarises what happened when it was my turn to share:

I had nothing to present to my supervision group that day, other than a feeling of sadness. I felt I could risk being open and honest when asked where I was with my inquiry, and the only words I could say was that I was sad. The inquiry continued: "Where do you feel this?" It was felt in the centre of my being, in my stomach. "What does it look/feel like?" I described it as a heavy rock feeling. "What is the worst of it?" I began to cry. It felt like cracks opening to reveal a heavy rock within me, and I began sobbing. As I did I felt the 'rock sensation' in me dissolve. "What do you now need to do?" This question took me into action and I found two bowls, one bigger than the other and a glass, and a jug of water. I put the smaller bowl into the larger, then placed the glass into the smaller bowl on top. They were arranged as a tier of receptors. I picked up the jug of water and I began to pour this into the glass which when filled cascaded into the smaller bowl and likewise cascaded into the larger bowl. At the exact same time as I was doing this it began to rain outside. At first the rain sounded gentle on the tin roof above us, then it got louder. Astonishingly it became extremely loud, more-so than we had heard rain fall for quite some time. It was very loud. As it reached crescendo it was as if the whole world was crying inside of me. (Journal, October, 2005)

The four of us discussed the shared experience of this rain event and how it had come on as if timed to match the weeping event indoors. We wondered whether this was an ecotransformative moment such as Neville (2008) might be interested in. He asks if we might find "the condition of the world projected into the behaviour of human beings" (p. 5).

Exploring the Experience of Sadness

Several weeks later, while at home alone, it seemed important to reflect on those moments when I had cried in front of my small group of peers. I suddenly felt a momentary pain in my torso, not physical, but emotional. Immediately after experiencing this sensation I spontaneously reached out to some old newspapers that were nearby. I grabbed a sheet and rolled it up roughly with my hands to make a crumpled ball. I felt this to be an expression of the pain of the breakdown of one of my significant relationships. I grabbed another sheet, and another, and another. There were five in total, each roughly rolled up and squashed in my hands with force, and each representing a significant relationship which was lost or at risk of being lost.

I turned on my voice recorder as I worked, and I have chosen four sections that held the most impact from the transcript to show here.

Five crumpled masses of newspaper and I've got some string too and I'm binding these five crumpled masses into one big one, with the string so that there are six sections of string holding five crumpled masses of newspaper. I've tied them and now there is one long string suspended above to immerse them all into something which will represent tears.

I found a blue bucket and mixed a tube of blue acrylic paint into it. I then went outdoors with the entwined mass of paper and began to immerse it into the bucket held by the trail of string.

I've immersed the five masses, which become one, designating my pain, and I have immersed the whole lot now (into the bucket with blue water), I'm holding onto the length of string and am immersing it all into the bucket. I'm sloshing it all around now in the pool, pool of tears, into the water – emotions – into the depth. I'm going to leave it to soak – out here (can hear a wind chime in the breeze) – in this, umm, beautiful day.

Some days later I returned to the bucket.

So, I am aware of the sun and birds chirping and a wind chime in the breeze in the background while I also remember the sadness now contained in this bucket. The three broken relationships and the children with their problems, and my sorrow and anguish, is contained in this bucket and I'm holding this string, which is holding the five pieces, it's manageable. And now I'm walking out onto the grass, bringing the bucket out with me into the centre of this glorious landscape, I'm sloshing this around in the bucket and it just feels terrific, like I am managing the grief! It is very heavy now that it is saturated with the blue water, a pool of tears, but it is contained. I'm just trying to think what to do, I feel like I want to pull the whole mass out and leave it in the sun to dry. What to do with this remaining blue water in the bucket, I want a bowl to keep it in.

I was aware of the importance of the blue water in the bucket that represented the tears of sadness, which were the entry point into this exploration. I wanted to hold these tears with reverence. As I reflected on these things, I noticed above my head some early cherries on the branches, which felt representative of the fruit of my labours in facing my grief.

I made a further reduction to a poetic statement that I felt held the meanings I had found through my reflections and the making of this representation.

Attending to sadness Rain falls softly on the roof And with the poultice of gentle probing the heavy rock feeling bursts open releasing a cascade of tears while the rain thunders down on the roof. Rough newspaper handling Expressing anger and regret Five crumpled balls the expression of pain of relationships lost, or might be. Full immersion The pain is baptised in a bucket of collected tears heavy to haul up but, pain contained and, grief managed. Wind chimes and sun on skin interrupt the traces of sadness which become yesterday's grief. Light and shade together bear fruit.

The strands of my inquiry into loving and suffering were embedded in this exploration into an experience of sadness which had begun in my supervision group. After the immersion of the newspaper balls into the blue water, I let it hang up and dry under cover. It stayed suspended for months, until I became more and more curious about the full meaning of the experience of the rock of pain that I had felt in my stomach on that previous supervision day in October, 2005.

In May, 2006, I found some clay and covered the newspaper ball with a thin coating of it to depict the hard rock sensation I had experienced in the supervision group. I still had the

bucket of blue paint representing tears, after some searching I finally decided to spill it over some old white canvas that I had and attached this blue-painted canvas sheet to the clayencased pain to represent the tears flowing from the hard rock experience.



Figure 15. *Rock encased pain with river of tears,* Jenny Hill, May 2006.

I suddenly recognised that the shape of the encased ball of pain attached to the pool of tears looked similar to the intersubjective response that Jean had given me.





Figures 16. ISR and Rock encased pain, Jenny Hill, May 2006.

Looking again at the two shapes, the rock encased pain with the blue river of tears next to Jean's white bandage with the small piece of blue paper, I knew what I needed to do. I wanted that clay casing from which the tears flowed to burst open. I found a hammer and smashed the clay casing to represent the moment of bursting open that I had experienced in the supervision session in October the year before.

As I gazed at the exposed rock alongside the roll of bandage I felt compelled to dialogue with what I saw. I found myself projecting onto the bandage what it might say to me, an echo back to Jean's initial ISR with her message on the small piece of blue paper:

"You may unravel this bandage which has prevented you from experiencing your own freedom. You may now choose to bind your own wounds with me."

(Journal entry, May, 2006)

I read through all of the transcripts, process notes and journal entries and wrote the key words and phrases. I reduced these into a poetic summary (Appendix 3). I came to see that my experience during this time and this activity held several ways of knowing which were layered in and over each other across time. This seems now to have been an incubation process whereby impulses to attend to what had happened led to greater awareness of the choices I could make to heal myself.

Wrapping the Wound.

I did not feel finished with the rock-encased pain and so I took it along to a later small group supervision that year. I sensed I wanted to lay open my wound as a movement representation thus acknowledging my pain. I placed a cloth across a small table and lit a

candle. I bound the broken rock shape with the bandage from the ISR from our first group colloquium in September 2005. Then, in clutching it against the area on my body where I had first felt the sense of it as a rock of sadness, I was surprised by a sense of happiness and freedom.



Figure 17. Holding the bandaged wound against my body, felt right, digital photo, Jean Rumbold, 2006.

Exploring the Wound Further.

In the Talbot Studio at a later supervision session in June of 2007, I had arrived feeling overwhelmed. I told a "once upon a time" story about my life since the last time we had met. As well as working full time, I had taken on several new responsibilities: the care of my son who had been diagnosed with schizophrenia several years earlier; the worry of my child addicted to substances and abusing alcohol; responding to my elderly mother's ongoing needs for in-home care after her stroke; cooking daily meals for our now insulin-dependent pet dog recently diagnosed with diabetes; and various other personal and professional challenges. As

Jenni listened, she wrote some of my keywords on a large piece of white paper and then placed this in the sand play box. Next she amplified these words using her felt sense of me in these experiences by placing some objects into the box on top of these words. Suddenly, Jenni began hurling more and more objects into the sandbox, on top of the words she had written. What resonated within me was the way she picked up the collection of objects and threw them in and how I felt a strong sense of the impact of the avalanche of things upon me. I was then asked how I would like the scene to look (Figure 19).





Figure 18. *Avalanche*, sand-tray scene, J. Harris, June, 2007

Figure 19. *How I wanted it to be,* J. Hill, June, 2007.

Then, astonishingly, given that Vivienne had only recently joined us in the group, she gave her ISR in the form of a song. She invited us all to dance in a circle together then began singing: "I can see clearly now, the rain has gone; I can see all obstacles in my way." As she sang, I recalled the day the rain had fallen so heavily upon the roof – the day I had experienced the rock-encased pain. This triggered my desire to revisit my inquiry into the pain that had been hidden behind the sense of a hard rock place and which I had symbolically

covered up with clay and later smashed open. I became aware of the need to explore in more detail the patterns of chaos and mess in my life that were exposed in the sand-tray scene, and yet felt constrained by the ethics of not exposing others in my life whose choices had burdened me. I began to realise that it was as if I had entered into the wound in the Black Madonna painting and wanted to face the horror I might find there.

In reflecting further on the wound in the painting of the Black Madonna's breast that I did before this inquiry period, I mused on the adoration of the Madonna (Mary) in churches down the centuries. For me the Black Madonna represents the sexually hidden aspects of the mother of Jesus. She is as a wounded version of Mary, with no voice of her own. We have "progressed" to incorporate women's voices into spiritual, social and professional contexts, which leads me into curiosity about the impacts of the patriarchal nature of church life on me as an adolescent girl. I decided to bring these reflections to my next small group supervision. I now wanted to explore aspects of my relationship to some men and to the institutional and hierarchical Christian traditions to which I had belonged. As I left home for the next supervision session, I selected several objects from my own sand-play collection – items that reminded me of myself in relationship to men and the church. These symbols enabled me to not disclose who these people were, thus maintaining their privacy.

Since receiving Viv's ISR in the form of the song "I can see clearly now", I noticed growing feelings of anger in me that felt empowering. At the same time, the book *The Patriarchal Voice* by Mary King (2002) came my way. Her book explored the way men in positions of power had dominated women, and the way women gave their power away to men to stay in relationship with them. Her thesis suggests that patriarchy is an internal voice

that all genders can access, characterised by clarity of thought, order, and rules for guidance, some control over situations, protection, boundaries, limits, strength, courage, intellect, and reason. However, she believes that men have magnified this voice and women have subdued it over centuries. Her thesis raises the question of how women might embrace their own "patriarchal voice" within to counterbalance male-dominated cultures that have silenced women throughout the ages.

My Dance with Patriarchy

Not long after this session I felt really warmed up to share my experience of the patriarchal nature of some of my journey with Christianity. Jan, my colleague and 2nd supervisor at that time, joined our small group supervision session (July 6, 2007). Prior to this session I had felt 'warmed up' to processing some of my experiences in partnerships with some men and in relationship to the hierarchical nature within some Christian traditions I had belonged to. As I left home for this session I grabbed hold of several objects from my own sandtray therapy collection. This was done by just looking and intuitively choosing some items that reminded me of myself in relationship to men and church. With this attitude rising to the surface, alongside a deep weariness within, I began making a scene with objects and symbols I had brought with me, turning on the voice recorder (audio tape available).

"This large soldier figure (Figure 20) represents my experience of patriarchy or misogyny or men (said with anger). However, I do come to this place owning my own patriarchal voice, coming to this from the edge of something that I have only felt as negative (patriarchy) to some inner strength which seems to be evolving." I continued making the

scene with various objects representing my struggle with my submission in relationships with some men, and authority figures generally.



Figure 20. *Plaster soldier*, July, 2015. Figure 21. *A burden enters*, July, 2015. Digital photos, P. Iorlano.

I also used the object of a man/woman hunched over to represent my experience of feeling burdened (on the left hand side in Figure 21). I found that I wanted to keep holding it gently (Figure 22). When I chose to place the yellow lady sitting and drinking a cup of tea, in the centre of the scene with the other feminine symbols (Figure 23) the representation became a conversation between aspects of my feminine side. This then led to another level of insight into my growing desire to speak from my strong feminine voice, which has often been supressed by me.

It was Jan's ISR which brought forth laughter, shifting that which seemed so burdensome to a lightness. She had momentarily disappeared and returned with a small doll's dress. She put it on the patriarchal symbol and said: "My first impetus was to put a dress on him so he becomes her and can become part of the conversation!"





Figure 22. Holding my burdens gently.

Figure 23. Feminine conversations.



Figure 24. The feminisation of patriarchy.



Figure 25. Tea Party conversation.

Digital photographs, J. Rumbold, 2007.

After this I sat quietly and listened to the conversation at the end of my presentation. I recall hearing:

"Something about the strength that is really appealing; the burden is a bit much and she can actually hold it; for a long time you held that [the burden figure]; [a] part of you that has just soldiered on; [a] sort of strength within you that has carried the burden; and, it's resilience isn't it?"

I was soothed by the method of feedback where the others were talking about me as a third person; it offered me a new perspective on my experience. In all my doing for others I had not reflected on the possibility that I could be resilient. Hearing the conversation of my female peers (which seemed to become an amplification of the conversation I had enacted through the symbols) helped me realise I had more choices than I had previously thought. Responsibility came naturally to me, but I was very tired. In particular it was Jan's response which provided the shift from the perception of patriarchy as a critical and demanding voice to the possibility of relating to a stronger voice within me in a different way. I felt I moved from victim to survivor in those moments. My colleagues had noticed my strength. The experience of this supervision session turned me towards a desire to review my relations with my family of origin and extended family.

Family Relationships

Soon after this small group supervision session, at home, I followed through with an idea of reflecting on my family relationships within my family of origin. I picked up the wire torso and gathered together some of the memorabilia of my family of origin – my Aunt's watch, a Grandmother's suspender belt clip, an earring belonging to my mother not worn since the

1960s, a small piano to represent my father, and various other small symbols that represented my experience of having my children.



Figure 26. Small memorabilia of family, photo J. Hill.

I spent some time threading these small symbols inside the wire torso and recorded in writing my inner experience as I worked:

Family (1)

I have collected some objects which I want to thread inside the torso. I proceed by trusting the process and this becomes the way forward. I allow the sense of not knowing to take me somewhere as I thread with a very thin thread made of spun wool. I work for a while in silence. I feel my connection to my family of origin – I choose Gran's suspender belt clasp, my Auntie's watch (which stopped when she died of cancer, aged only fifty-three) and an earring from my mother's collection which probably has not been clasped since 1966! I step back and look again, each object holds my experience of my loving connections to them.

Family (2)

At the juncture between Mum's earing and Dad's piano I have felt the need to

strengthen and re-in-force the point of connection. This is such confirmation of what I think I knew about them. I sense that time past meets time present in a powerful way, as my fingers negotiate the threading for strengthening.

Family (3)

I became immersed in a variety of body felt sensations and emotional feelings. Wispy thoughts of the broken dreams of a little girl floated on the edges of awareness, and how this old theme sat with me now. As I now write I think perhaps the dreams were fractured too soon and that has led to a pattern of trying to find the dream which no longer matches present day circumstances. From the broken fairy doll, wings separated from her body, emerged a sense of freedom from the need to have past dreams mended. I understand now that I have been in a transition phase for a while. I sense that the last 3 objects, the lady bird, dolphin and three piglets suckling from the mother pig, belong to each other - and hold meanings of my lived experience of the illnesses of my children. Again I stop – and I feel the need for rest and recuperation.

Some days later I read through the process notes and reflected on the content I brought the meanings which stood out into an essence statement:

Reflecting on threading I notice that thin lines of connection seem fragile.

(Jenny Hill, 26th August 2007)

Attachments Exposed

My inquiry advanced in an unexpected way through my presentation at the next colloquium for all MIECAT doctoral students early in September, 2007. I began by showing the golden path representation that I had made at the very start of my professional doctoral journey. I then presented the representation of family connections in the wire bust, and read out loud the process notes related to threading symbols of my family into the bust.

At some point in this presentation I started to feel uncomfortable about showing too much of myself. This was a larger group than the small supervision one in which trust had

grown over more than two years of meeting together. This unsettled feeling extended to feeling confronted by my choice to do a subjective inquiry at all. Did I really want others to read me and see me?

The ISR which stood out the most for me from my presentation to the group that day was, "attachments are the feelings which wrap the emotional memories of the objects of our memorabilia."

This made me stop and ask myself about the quality of my attachment to others. How much should I favour emotion and feelings as the strongest base for quality and substantial relating? How much were my attachments based on neediness? The giver of this ISR may never had meant something like this, but I wondered why I didn't ask these questions when I felt a little threatened. I asked myself, do I maintain family relationships because I need to feel secure, or need to be a rescuer? Is it only in rescuing that I feel secure? Whatever the intention of this ISR, it obviously triggered something in me which I felt I needed to look at.

It was then I confronted a thought I knew I had resisted: "maybe I am only doing this research to have attention paid to me". I turned to the story of Narcissus. To my surprise, I found that while he was looking at himself he did not realise it was himself. I felt I needed to come to terms with the part of me who wanted to be noticed and the part of me who wanted to understand and recognise herself, in order to make better choices in caring for myself so as to care for others in less fear-driven ways. The first way seems to be needs-driven; the second seems value-driven. I was experiencing intersubjective responses as triggers of both positive

and negative perceptions of myself, regardless of the giver's intent. My pattern of self-doubt seemed never far from me.

Later I reflected on what I really wanted to show of myself in this inquiry, and what I did not. I had a choice. I saw that having clamoured to find and use my voice I also needed to do myself no harm. What to keep private, whose privacy to protect, and the ethics of subjective inquiry all became clearer to me.

Me as Baby

Following the colloquium, I returned to my small supervision group and decided to bring the story of my first months as a baby, based on family stories I had heard over time. This was a story primarily about what happened to my two-and-a-half-year-old brother when I was only a couple of weeks old. From time to time this story has haunted me, mostly because I have a body sense of the truth of it but no actual memories.

When my mother was full term with me, she and dad and my brother (2 ½ years old) went to live with my maternal grandparents. It was here that I first lived after my birth. One day my brother was outside 'helping' Pa as he was working on the engine of his car. Unexpectedly a fire erupted and both my brother and Pa received serious burns to parts of their bodies. My brother had burns up his left arm and alongside his face. At the same time my Nanna, inside the house, found that the overhead netting on my bassinette had bunched up over my face. Two events occurring at the same time, one major one minor. What was difficult for my mother was that my Nanna criticised her for neglecting her children and said something along the lines of: - "You have one of your children being burned out in the backyard and another one almost suffocating indoors. What kind of a mother are you?" Very soon after this my parents, brother and

I moved out into our own home in a new Housing Commission Estate on the other side of town. In those first few months my parents had the difficult task of changing the bandages on my brother's burns both morning and night. At some stage during my childhood my parents conveyed this story to me: - "Every evening at six o'clock little baby Jenny was fed, dry and put to bed in her bassinet to go to sleep. The lights were turned out and the door was shut tight, and she would cry. We had to change his bandages. After a while she stopped crying. She was such a good little baby girl because she learned not to cry".

(Journal entry, September 2007)

I wondered how it must have felt for that baby to cry and not be met with arms to pick her up, to soothe her, until she learned to soothe herself. I have cried alone for many years but only behind closed doors. I see now sense that "being good" for me meant not crying in front of others. I decided to make myself a baby and found the porcelain doll's head and hands that I had made many years ago. The doll had no eyes, just holes waiting for glass eyes to be put there. It seemed important to leave the doll without eyes, and I glued a tear on the left cheek. When I looked again at the doll with no eyes and a tear on the cheek I thought, "She has cried her eyes out". Then I made a body from a baby's suit and stuffed it with wadding. I placed the head and hands into the suit and cradled her. It felt good.



Figure 27. Baby put back together again, digital photo, Peter Iorlano, 2016.



Figure 28. She cried her eyes out, digital photo, Jan Allen, 2011.

Jean later wrote the following intersubjective response, which picks up key words from both this story and others that I had told in recent supervision meetings:

STORY OF ORIGINAL WOUNDINGS ~

(one of multiple perspectives)

"The needy baby in me"

"here she is again."

"time to pick me up"

"head and hands only, no body, no eyes"

"make my body"

"You were such a good little baby"

"you learned not to cry"

"felt the strain"

"authoritarian mother"

"creative father"

"trejected father because needed mother"

"they lived like that"

(Jean Rumbold, October 2007)

The phrases that most resonated with me were "pick me up" and "learned not to cry". I recognise the many times in my life I wanted to be picked up. As I write this now, I feel that

wanting to be picked up is a colloquialism for wanting to be approached by a love interest. I see the tendency I have always had to be on alert for a mate whenever I have been single, and I also recognize the tendency to go to my room to cry in private. Jean's final line, "they lived like that," seemed significant too. I started to think about my family back then and pondered how we did live. I began to feel an urgency to start making the Altar to my childhood to understand more.

Approximations to Meaning Derived from These Inquiries

These collaborative inquiries mirrored therapeutic processes as well as being a research investigation resulting in art as research becoming art as therapy. I found they resulted in an easing of my emotional pain. As well as this, and concurrently through the witnessing and responses of each companion, I became more aware of my innate resilience.

To search through the traces of meanings which had begun to arise for me, I read through all texts presented in this chapter several times. I selected key words, images and phrases which stood out as being significant both personally and in the art-making processes described. I clustered these key words and phrases separately into two sections under the headings of personal and art-led inquiry processes. I coded like statements under each section with different coloured highlight pens to denote words and phrases which held traces of similarity. I then clustered these under headings I thought brought their similarities together. A few of the key words and phrases seemed not to be part of a cluster, so I bracketed these to one side. The findings from this phase of the inquiry are presented here.

What I Think I Know About Myself Now

I came to see that I have more choices than I previously thought, and I experienced the shift from feeling like a victim to a survivor. I recognised that I felt broken, wounded, tired and sad, and I needed to feel safe and gathered together. I saw that in seeking perfection to protect myself from anxiousness I sometimes made myself an object, thereby entrapping myself. By accepting the myth of happily-ever-after my own dreams were broken, leaving me empty. I found I needed to explore the ethics of revealing my stories and the discomfort of showing too much of myself. I also became strongly aware of a sense of vulnerability in taking on this journey of inquiry into my own experience and struggled with the idea of it being narcissistic.

I get a sense of security and freedom when I acknowledge that yesterday's grief can be simply interrupted by the feel of the sun on my skin. This experience of freedom returns me to a sense of lightness. Choosing to bind my own wounds results in happiness by giving me a strong new voice that encourages me to be more conscious of my choices when following my quest to hold loved ones with love and grace. Confronting a thought that I had resisted led to a change in my perception and a greater ability to choose what I want for myself. In gently handing my own burdens I was seen by others as resilient.

Metaphors Arising from Intersubjective Dialogues with Others and Materials

I was able to put words and constructs into metaphorical and symbolic language. Language such as "entered the wound in the black Madonna painting" and the "rock-encased pain" developed my ability to bring experiential and representational knowing into propositions. I

brought objects and paraphernalia into configurations, assemblages and small installations and stayed open to a dialogue with and about them. An old crepe bandage became a bandage to metaphorically hold my own emotional wounding, crumpled newspaper became old news about difficult things that were still painful, and small objects became symbols of extended family relationships eliciting strong feelings of attachment. Pieces of an unfinished doll became myself as a baby, which in turn became an expression of my preverbal experience of crying myself to sleep. Rain became my sadness.

Embodied Art-Making and Emotions

Actions such as reflecting, spontaneity, immersion, looking again, smashing with a hammer, choosing where to place things, and picking up a wire torso to thread small symbols brought into my awareness how active in my body I was when representing experience with three-dimensional materials. Along with my physical actions, I was aware of the concurrent feelings of sadness, happiness, freedom, security, and doubt.

Following Hunches and Feelings

While taking the next art-making steps, I felt closer to gaining access to pre-reflective experience and physical and emotional responses as I used the arts as representations of my experiences. These occurred when I engaged with the heavy rock sensation in my mid-body area, which resulted in the representation as crumpled balls of newspaper covered with clay; when holding the heavy burden symbol as I spoke about difficult times; and in intuitive moments when I saw what I needed to do with art materials and items, such as threading the memorabilia in the wire torso which was connected to my family relationships. By

recognising how much was taking place in my inner experience, I felt I was learning to trust the process of arts-led inquiry as I followed hunches and feelings throughout this phase.

Knowing Within Collaborations with Others

Engaging in dialogues with peers extended my propositional knowing, particularly through their intersubjective responses. Through their creative responses in multimodal forms I experienced strong physical sensations, emotions and new thoughts which added to my reflections and shifted my perspective.

These themes gleaned from experiential and presentational knowing was a stage for creating propositional knowing that sets the pace for the following chapters dealing with my findings about content in process when making the Altars. As I moved my body about, following hunches and emotional responses while representing experiences, creating a presentation with the materials at hand which held meanings, I found that knowings seemed to overlay each other – experiential, presentational, propositional and practical as I worked with the emergent nature of my inquiry.

CHAPTER 5

Emergent Knowing: The Content In the Process of Constructing Altars (1)



A trail of spirals
Time to pass
Time to gather
To redraw
Time to
Tread backwards

(Jan Allen)

The image and words above from Jan were received early in the journey of this inquiry. They neatly describe the processes I engaged in before and during the making of the altars. Engaging in present time art making with my memories of experiences of relationships and the difficult times described in the previous chapter afforded me a kind of rehearsal before setting off into the altar making.

Below is a list of all altars and accompanying smaller assemblages created during the inquiry period.

ALTAR 1 "Thanksgiving to art materials."

ALTAR 2 "The Sentinel." (Small assemblage)

ALTAR 3 "The Childhood Altar."

ALTAR 4 "Broken dolls, broken dreams." (Small assemblage)

ALTAR 5 "Adolescent Altar."

ALTAR 6 "Wedding cake." (Small assemblage)

ALTAR 7 "The Bride Altar."

ALTAR 8 "Me as Mother Altar."

ALTAR 9 "Torn Asunder Altar."

ALTAR 10 "The Shadow of Death." (Small assemblage)

ALTAR 11 "The Underworld Altar."

ALTAR 12 "Exhaustion Altar."

ALTAR 13 "The Crying/Healing Altar."

ALTAR 14 "Celebration Altar."

ALTAR 15 "Heart Journeys." (Small assemblage)

ALTAR 16 "A Future." (Small assemblage)

ALTAR 17 "How I see myself now." (Small assemblage)

This chapter deals with the processes of making and understanding I came to when making alters to represent my relational patterns. The alters (above) that represent my relational patterns as daughter, partner and mother are numbers: (3) the 'childhood' altar; (5) the 'adolescent' altar; (7) the 'bride' altar; (8) the 'me as mother' altar.

I invite you, the reader, to make a choice about whether you want to view the montage of all of the finished altars now, found on the YouTube link below, or at the end of chapter seven after reading the narrative story of making them all, found in this and chapters six and

seven.

The YouTube link is here and will also be found at the end of chapter eight:-

https://youtu.be/ASbNVDlf9zQ

Section One: The Childhood Altar

In this section I noted that the experiential process of making and constructing the Altars

on my own brought into my awareness a greater sense of my body moving physically around

the spaces and places I worked. This was different to being focused on only moving with eye

hand co-ordination with the smaller objects.

The Kitchen Table Becomes an Altar.

In preparation for beginning the assemblage of the childhood altar, I reviewed all of my

photographs from small and large group supervisions, the intersubjective responses I had

received and my reflections on these. Then I gathered some of the objects and materials I

associated with my childhood to place on the back porch where I was living at the time. To

inquire into the foundations of my relationship patterns, I wished to reflect on my experience

of being in relationship with my parents, based on memories but in the knowledge that these

memories were not 'truth' but now constructed from my past and perspectives in the here and

now. I trusted that by doing this I might understand my patterns of relating with current loved

ones who were or had been in crises and dire-straits of one kind and another. My question

was: "What enabled me, as a mother of young adults, to cope in times of high anxiety?" I was looking for some clues based on the process of making this Altar coupled with recollections of my childhood, to understand not just my suffering but what had enabled me to become a survivor rather than a victim. Could I find something in what I'd felt in my secure childhood that could partly explain my resilience.

I lifted and carried, from the store room under the house, the items I had gathered for the childhood altar, including the 1950s kitchen table (Figure 27). I took them up the stairs to the back porch. I placed the table onto newspaper and painted the timber legs and table trim with a fresh coat of white paint. I recalled the identical table with the green laminated table-top that we used to have when I was young.



Figure 29. Utensils, kitchen table, collected objects; circa 1950s

Photograph, J. Hill, 2010

I had taken considerable time finding the "right colour" green (based on my childhood memories) for painting the pegboard I attached with clamps, to the table. I sprayed the clamps with gold paint because I saw it as a way to represent the continued journey of the

inquiry first represented as a golden path in the painting I painted at the start of the inquiry. I imagined this pegboard attached to the back of the table as a backing not too dissimilar to some church altars where there are often paintings or icons. I wanted this board to hold some kitchen utensils that my mother used to make our meals and Sunday cakes. On this first foray into making a large altar I reflected on some of the aspects of my relationship with my Mum. In previous chapters I write about bracketing out and here I deliberately bracketed in my prominent memories of her in the kitchen. I used golden ribbon to attach the implements onto the board to represent the spirit of goodness and love that I had felt from her as secure home maker. I set this board on an easel and using the ribbon I attached the first object, the egg beater, before the arrival of Edwina, my friend and creative arts therapy colleague, who was to help me by filming the beginning of making the childhood altar. Edwina is also familiar with arts-based companioning and has worked in media production. She had willingly agreed to help me and consented to being identified. Edwina has read this section of the thesis and approved of the content.

The Personal Embedded in the Art-Making Process.

Having for some time imagined this altar with the collected objects placed on and under it Edwina and I agreed that once the camera was rolling we would just follow the process of being present to what ever happened. Her questions would be phenomenological, in that they would be about 'what is happening' and would be present moment focused.

I have selected nine sections of dialogue from the full transcript, which were the times during the 60 minute film when I felt something unexpected or significant happened (These

nine sections? Or the full transcript can be viewed in the Appendices Disc, at Appendix 1). The texts between excerpts are written after I reflected on the transcript from the film.

I began by attaching familiar and loved utensils which held my experience of a loving attachment to my mother in my childhood and the sense of security I had felt being with her there. I stayed with an openness to what would happen. I measured the gold ribbon, began to thread utensils onto the green pegboard with it and also counted the number of holes along the pegboard to arrange the utensils symmetrically.

The excerpts begin from this point.

Excerpt 1

Edwina: "And what are you putting on your Altar now?"

Me: "This is the sieve, very much like the sieve Mum used in the kitchen. She was a great cake maker so I suppose these utensils really are mostly about my memory of Mum in the kitchen and a sense of thanksgiving, I suppose an honouring of all the cooking – she used to make the most fabulous cakes. In fact Sunday afternoons was the day she would make, oh even, chocolate éclairs and all the usual Aussie cakes. So this is in honour of and memory of Mum doing those things which she can't do any longer now she is in the nursing home."

(Film transcript [1], July, 2010)

This was before I came to know that we lived in the "housing commission" end of our suburb and that my parents were doing it 'tough'. As I talked, my mind shifted to mum's current circumstances and I felt a sharp pang of sadness go through my chest at her current state of health. I felt the loss of the mum I used to know.

Excerpt 2

Me: "I used to get home from school and count the number of pieces of bread in the loaf before actually taking one; (nods) make sure there is enough for everybody. And (then) usually after school make a bit of toast, and put Vegemite on it. Now, I am trying to decide whether to count, to make it absolutely symmetrical, hmmm" (in reference to where to attach each utensil in relation to each other).

Edwina: "Symmetry doesn't seem to work in this case?"

Me: "No, I don't think I want it to be that symmetrical, maybe I need another piece".

(Trying things out!)" (Film transcript [2], July, 2010)

I remember as I write this, that I felt awkwardness and a loss of physical energy in my limbs when I spoke about coming home from school. I felt I was performing for the camera and that I should stay in dialogue with Edwina. This seemed to lead me to devalue symmetry in some way. I also now realise that I had just finished the story of counting pieces of bread, and I do wonder if my body memories of caring for others were activated and I lost my sense of excitement in the making of this altar.

Excerpt 3

Edwina: "What are you thinking?"

Me: "About right and wrong, I'm thinking about right and wrong in the sense of aesthetically pleasing. And suddenly the whole idea of it being symmetrical is not working for me."

Edwina: "How does that feel?"

Me: "Ahhh, it feels interesting, oh I don't think 'interesting' is a feeling, arr, it feels challenging and a bit quirky. I think we have to go in another direction (practicing moving the wooden spoon from vertical to horizontal back to vertical, can't make up my mind, gathering some more gold ribbon and scissors). Hmnnnn – I'm not sure, suddenly I am not sure."

Edwina: "Tell me more about not feeling sure, what does it feel like inside you."

Me: "I'm a bit shivery and shaky, actually, uncertainty."

Edwina: "That makes it sound much harder to make a decision from a place like that?"

Me: "Hmm, yes, very much so". (Film transcript [3], July, 2010)

Edwina picked up my uncertainty on how to proceed I felt challenged by continuing to count and place utensils symmetrically, (that felt like a parallel experience to counting bread). As I

write now I remember how hungry I used to be on arriving home from school and how I could have eaten two slices of bread if I had not considered others.

Excerpt 4

Me: "This is where Dad comes in

Ed: "What happens?"

Me: "Well, umm, umm, alright, this is Mum – everything is in order (Ed: "Yes!") Dad – on the contrary, and I'll have to just go around the corner and get Dad. The object which is to be Dad in this Installation, which, I had bracketed out to stay with Mum – and I find I can't just stay with Mum.

(I go behind the house to bring back the Ladder which is to represent Dad!)

Ed: "He is going to come into this Altar?"

Me: "This is Dad (carrying ladder).

Ed: "This is Dad, Dad is big!"

Me: "Yes, this is Dad, my house painting, musician Dad (erecting the ladder). This will eventually be beside the table, but I had bracketed him out (today) but he obviously doesn't want to be (bracketed out)." (Film transcript [4], July, 2010)

I was suddenly energized by an insightful moment that I needed my dad. This was completely surprising in the moment. I was pleased to find myself choosing to bracket him into the scene. I had a sense of not wanting to leave him anymore. As I write I begin to understand more about my need for my father during adolescence and beyond and how I never let him know this as if I lost my voice.

Excerpt 5

Ed: "So, Dad's here and ... you look re-assured by that?"

Me: "I do" (touching the ladder steps higher up) and I feel weepy as well....I'm just actually feeling, it's amazing I can't believe how I'm feeling about Dad at the moment."

Ed: "How are you feeling about Dad?"

Me: "Well, I just want to hang onto Dad (grasps the ladder) and ... these are actually feelings I've never let myself have (since my childhood!) – I'm really so struck by the strength of the body felt sensation of wanting to hang on – and just looking back now over there at Mum, and somehow ... my head is just actually spinning, spinning with

thoughts about a myriad of thoughts and feelings about my relationship with Dad and, how I sided with Mum (walks across to stand beside peg board panel) and I actually, saw Dad as deeply wounded. And yet I couldn't actually show him that (i.e. I saw his wounding) couldn't actually reach out and show him – something about the need of the girl to be aligned with the mother. (Walk back to hug and smile at ladder now). You know, Dad was a mess; he'd come home with paint all over himand then on the weekends he'd be in his suit and bow tie playing music.

Ed: "How is it now, being with him now?"

Me: "Very comforting. And great (smiling)! ...Through this dilemma of how much can I stay with the Mum-ness without needing the Dad-ness, I don't want to do it that way (pointing to Mum).... (Film transcript [5], July, 2010)

On reflection, the feelings that followed seemed to arrive concurrently with my bodily felt sense as I leant into, and grabbed onto, the ladder. Another perspective on how difficult my parents' relationship was for them both came into my awareness. I loved the sense I had in those moments of reclaiming the two sides of my father, the messy dad and the dressed up musical dad. Not only this, but I saw the split between the two of them from a different viewpoint. I had felt the divide between them from my early adolescence on, and have previously come to believe that the insecurity from feeling that divide between them was the antecedent to my experience of agoraphobia.

Excerpt 6

Me: ... there's a lot more, a lot more emotion attached ... I guess it does really represent (walking the divide between the ladder and the pegboard) the split that way (standing mid-way between, arms and legs stretched out) and does represent the split between (hands on head and heart and then in the middle) a preference to work from the feeling, emotion and body felt sense, but I do, I do also value my thinking. This is a core theme, here (touching pegboard hands gesturing vertically against the kitchen utensils currently tied to the pegboard – then walking towards the ladder) with well just kind of hang-out and free flow, and paint, laugh and have music, basically!! Be a bit of a mess!"(Film transcript [6], July, 2010)

This became a moment of recognizing parts of myself that I have experienced as being in opposition to each other – trying to think logically and get things straightened, but also just

wanting to be in the flow of feeling and sensing. By walking between the upright utensils and the messy paint splashed ladder, I see that I do operate out of each of these dimensions.

Excerpt 7

Ed: "And where exactly is your gaze, what are you looking at?"

Me: "The divide."

Ed: "Do we see the divide on the floor, or do we see it in the space between the two?"

Me: "Umm it's the space between the two." (Trying to decide where to place Dad.)

Ed: "Where does he want to be?" Me: (I move him closer to Mum)

Ed: "And where do you want him to be?"

Me: "..... Well, I think that the way that I have been looking at it today, I think the divide was large, where I want it to be is closer, but just, just as a beginning place... (I loosely tie one end of a found rope onto the potato masher) not tightly tied! (And then the other end of the rope to the ladder). This side is more tightly tied because Dad really loved Mum and I knew that he loved her – but I didn't know if she loved him. Blimey. I didn't know that till I just said that. So, standing at a distance ... it's cold (not just the day). (Film transcript [7], July, 2010)

This was an amazing and surprising moment, a moment of coming to understand something for the first time in a very conscious way. I had lived with years of worry about a potential loss of my security if my parents separated but had never articulated to myself that I did not know if my mother loved my father, but I knew that he loved her.

Excerpt 8

Ed: "What do you see?"

Me: "I can't see because I am feeling sad!"

Ed: "You're feeling sad as you look at the divide between your Dad and your Mum?"

Me: "Mmm, and angry, I'm getting angry now."

Ed: "Where's the anger coming from? What's causing the anger?"

Me: "Like, whooo, if you're not going to love him just tell us so we can get on with something else!!" (I move the rope from the potato masher and tie it around my own waist). (Film transcript [8], July, 2010)

This moment is representative of something already known. I have spent many years being sad. I now see this was a cover for anger. I was always wary about showing anger towards my mother, from adolescence right through to her dying day, for fear of her not loving me and leaving me. The significance of this is not lost on me since her death last year.

Excerpt 9

Ed: "So you are tying the divide between you and your Dad?"

Ed: "What do you want to say to him?"

Me: "Heaps (said with feeling, laughter). He died in 1993 – (I kiss the ladder and then looking at pegboard, taking time). Oh, now I feel disloyal to her, it's supposed to be all about her!

Ed: "What do you want to say to her?"

Me: "Here we go across the divide. (And then when I get to the pegboard I soften and gently touch the board saying) Poor thing, (and aside) this is very confusing. (Then) You thought he was going to be everything, "Someday my Prince will come!" (Some time passes and then I say) Now, where were we Mum?"

Ed: "Symmetry."

Me: Yes! (Film transcript [9], July, 2010)

In continuing to display my affection for my father by kissing the ladder a new question arose. If I showed my love for my father was I being disloyal to my mother? And yet when I go back into her zone I soften and become gentle towards her. This re-enactment with Edwina held no fear in it and I felt through it, my strong loving feelings for both of my parents.

Near the end of the filming I decided to attach a wooden spoon to the green peg board horizontally to take a different view of my ordered mother. As I was doing so the spoon fell down further than I intended and I gasped saying: "Mum has dropped the baton."



Figure 30. "She dropped the baton", Digital photograph, J. Hill, 2010.

This art making 'accident' seemed to open a door to an awareness that the loving experiences I had had with my mother as a child changed dramatically in my adolescence. It was as if she had dropped the baton in the race to be a 'perfect' at-home mother when she returned to work around this time. It became a time when she became more unavailable to me, and my siblings.

Analysis and Findings.

To immerse in the data I watched the film again, and read through the transcript several times to get a sense of the whole. I selected key words, images and phrases from the transcript and from my reflections on these. As well as I chose key words from my process notes and journal entries that described my embodied responses and aspects of the art making processes which stood out as significant to my inquiry. In the first instance I decided to cluster key words and phrases from the transcript excerpts and reflections that seemed to have similar meanings, to begin a manageable reduction of the texts.

Cluster One: experiencing in the body.

bodily felt sense
I do it by how it feels
satisfying to thread
I have enacted that
shivery and shaky
strength of the body felt
sense of wanting to hang on
walk the divide

Cluster Two: relational.

I am rather attached
I sided with Mum
this is where Dad comes in
I find I can't stay with Mum
a difficult relationship
saw Dad deeply wounded
I don't know if she loved him
they were two very different people

Cluster Three: feelings and emotions.

satisfying
pleasing
bored
feelings I never had since childhood
needy
preference to work from feeling
I can't see because I am feeling sad
I'm getting angry now
comforting
confusing

Cluster four: getting it right.

getting the right green
not going the way I want it to
right and wrong
it's not giving me a sense of confidence or competence
original idea was symmetry
how you will make a decision

Cluster five: not trying.

don't want to do it all Mum's way
don't want to do it all Dad's way
we can get on with something else
not perfect

These five clusters seemed quite disconnected and I wanted to see if I could identify how they might fit with both my understandings of the art making processes and of my personal content in the making process. I decided to compile a list of how my understanding of my relationship with each parent connected to art-making processes by reviewing the transcript excerpts again. In the Table below each statement of understanding sits next to the arts-led inquiry process that was taking place at the same time.

Table One: Content and Process.

Statement of understanding - Content	Art-led Inquiry Processes
"I honour my mother as homemaker."	Threading utensils on the peg board.

"Is there enough bread for everyone?"	Counting the holes in the board to make
	enough room for all of the utensils.
"Memories of counting the pieces of bread in the loaf."	Losing energy as the quest for symmetry continues.
"Trying to decide the right way to place the utensils."	I change a utensil to go horizontal not vertical.
"Thinking of the competing needs of self and other."	Feeling shivery and shaky, makes it hard to decide where to put the utensil.
"Wanting Dad here too, needing his energy, reassurance."	Hanging onto the ladder, as Dad.
"I sided with mother then."	Looking back at Mum I walk across to stand beside the peg board, which seems to now be her.
"I want to walk back to Dad for comfort."	Smiling I hug the ladder.
I ask: "How much can I stay with 'mumness' and/or 'dad-ness'?	I walk the divide between the ladder and the peg-board in an intentional way.
"Recognising the split between my parents holds a lot of emotion." "Recognition of parts of self in opposition to each other."	Move from peg-board to ladder again; hand gestures from heart to head. Gesturing to peg-board where symmetry is prominent, gesturing to ladder for 'free-flow'.

	Gazing at the divide, tie rope to utensil then
"Wenting loss distance between the divide"	to the ladder.
"Wanting less distance between the divide."	Tying the rope tightly to Dad's ladder.
	Tying the tope tightly to Dad's ladder.
"I knew my father loved my mother, but I	
didn't know if my mother loved my father."	
	Trying to look again at the divide
	Trying to look again at the divide.
"Feelings of anger and sadness block my	
view."	
	D. : 1: 4. 4:. 4
"Recognising the prohibition to feel anger."	Deciding to tie the rope around my own
Recognising the promotion to feel angel.	waist to connect myself to my father.
	I walk back towards her.
"Fasting distance to may meeth on if I show	
"Feeling disloyal to my mother if I show	
affection to my father."	
	I dialogue directly to the peg board and say
"I acknowledge her disappointment."	"Someday my prince will come".
	The wooden spoon falls down a little from
"I wanted another perspective and asked if	the horizontal position.
my mother had dropped the baton."	

I reflected once again on all of the key words and phrases from the transcript, the five titles for the clusters, and my felt sense of being in the process of beginning to make this childhood altar. I made a poetic summary for this part of the inquiry involving the representation of my experience as a daughter.

I am threading attachments to my mother but symmetry cannot hold my attention. In claiming Dad I have someone to hold onto, though he has his wounds there is free flow and affection. Uncertainty shakes my body, seeing the divide between two very different people, my loyalties challenged. Ambivalence between them becomes ambivalence within me, yet I walk the divide surprised by the nice feelings not felt since childhood.

Through my engagement with the art making and dialogue with Edwina at the same time, I understood more clearly the differences between them. I had learned later in life that my parents had decided to stay together for the sake of the children. I now understand something about what my mother sacrificed by staying, from my own experience of moving on from relationships which were not life giving. I was unprepared though, for the depth of affection which I encountered through handling the ladder which I called Dad and was surprised with how much I missed him being in my life.

Intersubjective response from Edwina.

Edwina sent through this intersubjective response of an image she found on the internet (below). It came from a magazine guide from the 1950s. I have no memory of close physical interactions between my parents but this does not mean they did not happen. My strongest early memory is of my father coming through the kitchen door from Work is his huge smile in my direction.



Figure 31. Edwina's ISR

Enacting my relationship with my father: content and process.

In this next phase I asked myself: "What do I think I know, now, about my relationship with my Dad?", and "How do I know this?" through making representations of my experience of him. On the back porch with Edwina I had felt a moving away from my previously held primary loyalty to Mum. This loyalty had for years resulted in my view of Dad as incompetent and unavailable to me emotionally. I felt a shift from somehow

perceiving my Dad through my mother's eyes in the enactment at the kitchen table and sensed a re-connection with my own childhood perceptions of him as a warm and friendly man, with a smile. This was a huge and happy revelation to me, enabling me to appreciate the wispy recollections of him that I had as a child.

Collecting the ladder representing my father on the day of Edwina's filming, became an access point to my further explorations of my experience of him. Alongside my memories of this positive father I also remember that he sometimes frightened me. Occasionally he would play a scary game of being a 'boogie man' at bed-time. This was not necessarily in an abusive way, since my brothers thought he was funny. I tried to see that, but it was not my experience. I think maybe my sense of Dad was confused because I struggled to incorporate what I experienced as his scary behavior with his loving ones. The word 'ambivalence' has often been forefront in my mind when I have wanted to be close to others and yet also sensed a need to withdraw from them if I did not understand their motives. My thoughts turned to his ladder and how I might reconstruct it in line with my sense of ambivalence in my relationship with him.

Another art therapy colleague viewed the ladder before I started work on it. In response to me saying I wished to pour white paint over it all, to make it shiny and new, she was concerned that I should not cover the whole ladder with paint, because it would cover some of Dad's original paint markings from the drips and splashes he had made. She suggested I use some masking tape to cover selected areas of some of his 'accidental' paint splashes thereby preserving the splashes of paint he had previously made. I immediately saw the value in this. On the day I began altering my Dad's ladder I inspected each of the old markings and

chose those I would like to 'protect' with tape. During this activity, I became tearful as I realized I was feeling reverent and tender towards these markings that were the things left over from my father's existence in my life. I tore strips of tape to place over his splashes of paint on the ladder.

As I worked I stopped now and then to record what had happened, to stay as closely to the present moment experience as possible. I chose segments from my process notes and bold typed the personal content and arts-based processes that made into my summary statements.

Having remembered that I had immediately seen the value in leaving some of the original paint splashes from dad's paint brushes on the ladder (in conversation with a friend) I tore the masking tape into strips by hand and inspected which parts I wanted to cover to protect from paint I was soon to apply. As I covered these markings I had various memories of Dad and how he hated being a house painter, how much he wished he could have pursued his music making and become a successful musician. With these and various other memories the process of covering many small spots where his 'fingerprints' were, became a ritual for me to 'protect' him in some way, to attend to some things painful for him. This sense of wanting to protect him surprised me. I felt quite moved as I remembered him, who he was, his creativity and workmanship. Then I started to pour some white paint over the ladder, from the top. This did not turn out as I had expected. I had wanted the paint to 'cascade' down the ladder from top to bottom, over each step of the ladder, in an aesthetically pleasing manner! It did not pour easily as it was too thick. Not to be thwarted, I found a plastic scoop spoon and selected areas to dribble the paint over. What I had imagined would be a 'free flow' activity became a slower and a more methodical activity. I was surprised to have this embodied relationship with the ladder representing a father who was loud and funny and sometimes messy. I stood back and noticed how, with less white paint covering the ladder, this allowed the original brown and mixed neutral colours to become more defined.



Figure 32. White paint on ladder, digital photograph, Jenny Hill, Oct, 2010.

For a second time, similar to bringing dad into the kitchen table scene, I felt a whole embodied sense of a shift in my definition of my perceptions of my relationship with my actual dad. This time the focus was on his hard life and his attempts at reaching his potential as a musician that were frustrated. At this point I had a recognition of my own frustrations about 'interrupted' flow in my life. I saw that whenever I am interrupted in finishing something, I start to feel despair but when I face that I am able to accept realities, giving me more definition of my sense of who I am. With this realization I had to stop and sit and stare at the ladder and all the garden around us. I felt awe and wonder. I felt peace.

I then approached the primary colour paint pots with a sense of moving onto the next stage. Remembered the difficulty of tipping the white paint on the top of the ladder I picked up a small brush and dipped a small brush into the blue paint to brush it gently on the top of the ladder. I quickly saw how holding the brush filled with the paint above the surface resulted in a dribble effect. Flicking the brush gave a splattering effect which felt satisfying. These actions brought a recognition that when I feel 'flow' in my life, when I think and feel in harmony, then there is flow and a great sense of satisfaction.



Figure 33. Colour added, digital photograph, Jenny Hill, Oct, 2010.

The white paint was applied in a thoughtful fashion and the red paint gave me energy. With random and spontaneous dabs and flicks of movement from my body, hand and brush I made red markings all over the ladder. Looking again gave me a sense that what resulted was aesthetically pleasing to me. This was followed by a bodily felt sense of release. Something to do with relief, joy and acknowledgment of my interest in my dad. A coming home to myself through interaction with my re-experiencing of happy times with him. I immersed into my thoughts of Dad and his creativity and his sense of failure and lack of accomplishment of his dreams! Then I cried. Tears for the loss of him, gratitude for him. A return of empathic feelings for him arose and took me over. In remembering his diagnosis and subsequent death from cancer I moved towards the yellow paint pot and ... I began to apply this very slowly. This put me into a reflective state, in contrast to the energetic red paint state. I began to hold the paint brush above the surface and was taken over by a sense of reverence. I thought of the golden path in my first visual representation at the start of the inquiry journey, the golden ribbon holding my mother's utensils and my desire to make a spiral path to join the altars when they are finished. Yellow to represent associations to the spirit of loving attachments with others. As I applied the yellow paint and it dribbled slowly onto each selected surface,

frame, steps, sides – inner and outer – a feeling of awe came over me. I felt myself being in a somewhat reverent state as if celebrating my memories of my father's life in those moments. I felt at peace.

(Process notes, July, 2010)



Figure 34. Close up of finished ladder, photo, J. Hill.

During the selection of significant phrases that stood out for me in the process notes on working with 'Dad's Ladder' it became more obvious to me that the text was yielding both content and process that overlapped in a dynamic way. The approximations to meaning were found within the process driven by the art making.

Table 2. Content and Process.

Statements of Understanding - Content	Art-led Inquiry Processes
"I felt I wanted to protect him."	I immediately saw the value in leaving some
	parts covered.
"Brought an intense feeling of emotional	The action of placing and leaving strips of masking tape to protect my father's original

pain in me, for him."

paint splashes.

"Created a new way to see him, to know him"

Reflecting on how I felt for his unfulfilled ambitions as a musician, seen from this end of my life.

"I felt an embodied shift in my perceptions of my relationship with my Dad."

When I found that what I had imagined did not happen, I found a different way to paint that resulted in the uncovered marks of my father's original paint splashes becoming more obvious to me.

"I recognized that his struggles had interrupted his flow in my life, and then recognized the same pattern for my own life."

When I realized this, I felt a shift within me, through my whole body.

"I then recognized that I feel flow in life, when my thinking and feeling are in harmony."

In present time of being in action and feeling satisfied with immediate results my thinking and feeling come into harmony as painting connects me to feelings of excitement and inspiration.

"I found I had empathy for my father for the

involvement with my dad in a visual, feeling and embodied way.

As I painted the ladder I felt a keen

loss of his dreams."	

My experience in this retelling of my re-experiencing of my father revealed the content of both my happy times with him and my regret in present time experience that I could not protect him from his pain over lost dreams. It was being in the process of making the ladder that I found these understandings.

When I tore the masking tape to cover some of Dad's ladder where his original paint splashes were, the pieces of tape looked like band aids. In placing them in the various places down the ladder it felt as if my hands were applying protection for him. In the process of doing this my memories re-presented on this ladder seemed to be like his fingerprints. I felt I was 'touching' his fingertips with my own as I immersed in these actions-with-memories. The tearing of tape and the action of metaphorically protecting my father offered me a way to reconnect with my sense of him in an embodied way. Using the plastic scoop to dribble the paint felt tedious, but I persisted. When I chose the smallest brush to flick paint this action brought unexpected emotional satisfaction and I was able to stay painting this way for quite a while. The action of flicking felt like spitting or swatting flies as if I was getting rid of small irritations that had built up over time and needed to be expunged. The repetitive, but random use of red and blue paint seemed to bring me closer to my happy feelings of my interaction with my father. In contrast to the energy in flicking the red paint, I experienced a slowing down when dribbling the yellow paint which reminded me of the golden path from the start of the inquiry and brought me into a sense of reverence in the experience of representing my father. The congruence of actions, paint, memories, feelings, felt senses, thoughts and openness to furthering questions seemed to bring me a sense of peace and resolution. It was

as if time slowed down as I experienced a heightened awareness of the 'me' who was perceiving, feeling, acting and coming to know more about my significant relationships.

~ // ~

My doctoral inquiry was interrupted by an unexpected house move just after I had begun the childhood and underworld Altars. I found somewhere else to live which was smaller and was offered the use of a studio space to continue making my Altars by friends who lived near the top of Mt. Dandenong east of the city of Melbourne. The studio, surrounded by trees, gave me a private and secure base. It became the place where I could construct the entire ensemble of collected objects and half made altars simultaneously. Having a good stretch of time (more than twelve months) with everything in the one place made it easy to proceed with the construction of the altars and to include studio time in my weekly planning. I now pick up the inquiry by continuing the story of making of the childhood altar.

 \sim // \sim

Emerging Meanings of Me as Daughter.

In this phase I continue with using dialogues with materials and collaborators with my own reflections, to bring together what I was coming to know about my relationships with my mother, and my father.

Relationship with mother. Once I positioned the childhood altar in the "new" studio space I collected all of my objects and materials together again. I continued my immersion into the experience of drawing from my memories of my mother. Working alone helped me stay in a meditative state. I placed a large calico doll that I had decided to use as the representation of my mother, in a slumped posture across the table. Underneath the table I put a basket of coloured wool and the baby doll I had made during the collaboration with peers in the first stage of the inquiry.



Figure 35. *Slumped on kitchen table,* Jenny Hill, Nov, 2010

Using the golden ribbon I finished attaching the kitchen utensils onto the green peg board including the wooden spoon that I had positioned horizontally when I was with Edwina on the back porch. When positioning the wooden spoon this time it fell down and I jumped at the sound of it landing on the table top. My mouth fell open as I inhaled a small gasp of air and my body trembled. With this 'event' I immediately recalled my mother's passive threats to leave my father, when I was a young adolescent. I stood transfixed as an old sense of insecurity visited me. With this memory came the memory of how each parent had independently of each other told me that I could 'go' with the other parent. This was before

any information or decisions were given to us children about them separating. The fallen spoon in the down position seemed representative of the felt sense I had back then, of having fallen into the middle of their discontent.

Not long after this my friend and colleague from Miecat, Kerry, accepted my invitation to visit the studio on the mountain and agreed to our conversation being recorded. Knowing I trusted Kerry, I began with the stories of how a sense of insecurity seemed to be arising in the content of the inquiry by recounting the story of me as a baby who learnt not to cry. I indicated that a rope I had attached from the kitchen table to Dad's ladder represented the tenuous link between my parents. I told her the story of a feverish dream I had one night as a sick child lying in my parents' bed. I remember the half-awake, half-asleep dreaming of tangled wool in my mother's wardrobe. As I was speaking to her I noticed that the calico rag doll I was using as my mother had no face. I felt disturbed by the images of tangled wool and a mother with no face. After this session I transcribed our dialogue from the audio recording. I have chosen the excerpt below as the most significant.

- J: "Mum has no face, it doesn't feel right. I want also to tangle all that wool to represent a dreamlike state I was once in when aged about 5 years old. I had an ear infection and a fever with it. I was lying in my parent's bed at dusk and I thought I saw a whole lot of tangled wool in my mother's wardrobe."
- K: "Mum has no face, or no face that feels right to you and you have all this tangled ambivalence. There is something of that tangling that originated in a cupboard and the question is how ..."
- J: (I cut Kerry off because I am focused on what I want to do with the wool and perhaps because the word 'ambivalence' has challenged me in some way). "I just want to be in the tangled wool, I want to construct it ... in the part at the back (of the kitchen table). I'm looking

... and making it so tangled ... I'm looking forward to that actually because (I am sensing how I can trust my bodily responses can lead me to my understandings) [after working on Dad's ladder].

J: "So, **it's a combination of my body moving with the wool**. I just have this sensation already, it's like I cannot wait to make the tangled wool construction at the back. And to 'be in it' and to be weaving it and feeling it. (I see again the emotional 'tangle' between myself and Mum and Dad). Certainly, with the making of Dad's ladder the emotion that came up ... really made clear to me what I feel about him, coz at the start my adolescence I sided with Mum, and all the time I knew he was suffering. I really would have preferred to side with him back then except there was a threat that Mum would leave us all, which was a terrible fear to me then."

K: "Physically, like really gone?"

J: "Hmmm (sounds tired) – that's where I first learned about responsibility."

K: "Well, as a baby you learnt not to cry, and then, responsibility to stay with Mum or lose Mum?"

J: "Yep." (Transcript, 17 December, 2010)

Reflection on Dialogue. When Kerry said all this tangled ambivalence I once again felt a physical jolt in my body felt sense. Like someone had pushed my chest in. With her words "As a baby you learnt not to cry and then took responsibility to stay with mum or lose mum", I felt she picked up an important link between my infant self who learned not to cry and the pattern I think I adopted of being a good girl for my mother to keep her close so she would not leave us in my adolescence. While I appreciated this insight I also felt it as a shocking truth, one that was true but which I had never articulated. I started to wonder how his pattern may have translated to other relationships in my life. It became clear to me that making the childhood altar was becoming the site for facing the fear that my mother would leave home.

Following this session I worked with some old skeins of wool to express the feverish dream of the tangled wool in my mother's wardrobe. It was difficult to tangle and as I pulled long strands from each skein I got tangled in. Despite the irony of this I also saw that in aligning with her I had participated in her anger at Dad because I wanted to stay close to her, to feel secure.

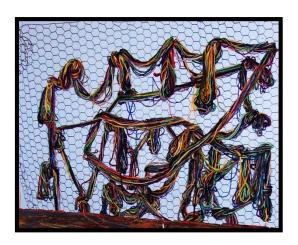


Figure 36. *Tangled wool ambivalence*, Jenny Hill, Nov, 2010

I summarised my reflections of the collaboration with Kerry in a poetic statement:-

It is not right to have no face
to face the tangle of ambivalence
between my feelings for
both Dad and Mum.
It is a terrible fear,
to need security

and to not learn
how to speak of it.

Closeness prevents loss,
but wounds me as well if
it is only to ward off abandonment.

Whose is the feverish dance
of 'stay or to go'

Hers or mine?

An amplification of the tenuous link. After Kerry's visit, I saw that the rope I had rigged up between the kitchen table (Mum's domain) and the ladder (Dad) had a kink in it at Dad's end where the gold ribbon I had tried to thread onto it ran out. I could not entwine the ribbon with the rope properly.

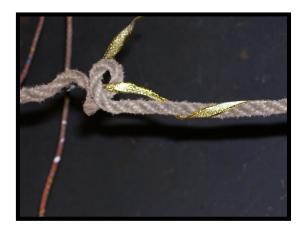


Figure 37. I could not keep them connected, Jenny Hill, Nov, 2010.

At this point I felt an overwhelming sense of the insecurity and sensed the similarity to that which I had experienced in not knowing whose side to take. Memories of my mother with her frayed discontent with my father and my father with his loss of loving feelings for

her seemed represented in the gold ribbon not reaching his ladder. He once shared with me that he "used to love" our mother, though I was only fourteen at the time. I also recognized that the tenuous link could also represent the place within me from which my deepest anxieties first emerged as a teenager: the constant 'threat' that they would separate. That was the time when my panic attacks began whenever I went to cross a road. No-one knew about these attacks at that time. By the time I turned seventeen years old I was silently suffering with what I now know is agoraphobia. The terror abated soon after the birth of my children, when I became a more confident and secure person as I developed my secure care for them.

Looking again at my Mum. A few weeks after Kerry's visit, I noticed once again the calico rag doll as my mother, the mother with no face, still slumped on the kitchen table. It just so happened that the CD I had put on as background music to companion me this day in the studio had reached the "Ave Maria" track. I stood again to look intentionally at the calico doll with no face, and as my gaze drifted around the studio space, I saw another mannequin head in my collection with hair shape which was not too dissimilar to how Mum's hair would have been when I was a child. I began to imagine how easy it would be to paint Mum's hair and a face. I imagined her eye lids painted with the green eye shadow I used to watch her apply when I was a child.

An "Ave Maria" refrain in the background suddenly triggered an outburst of unexpected sobbing. I became aware that I was cradling my 'mother's' head in my arms like a baby, and in holding her against my belly, I sensed I was holding myself. This was the same place where the original 'rock' was experienced in my centre, in a significant earlier supervision session. In the crying I felt release and comfort, sorrow and disappointment, all mixed together. I felt the release from chest to face to eyes to tears. The comfort came from my arms

and hands in the holding. The sorrow was in the thoughts accompanying the sensation of tears that led me to feelings of the loss of a comforting mother in the past. The music finally seemed to soothe the overwhelming experience of the complex grief in which I found myself immersed. I felt a whole body experience of love for myself which seemed to transform my grief into moments of compassion for her as well. The music aided this transition to a felt sense of well-being and peace.

I began to paint 'Mum's head' soon after I stopped crying and was transported back to the times I used to sit in the bathroom to watch her put her make-up on. As I painted the soft pink colour over her face and head I felt that the brush strokes were covering the places in her brain where she had suffered several strokes. Most particularly the one resulting in Aphasia just before I started this doctoral journey. The activity of painting became a meditation on the value of my mother. With tenderness I painted her head in a purposeful way, with an intention to symbolically soothe her, and therefore soothe my memories of the feelings of the fear of losing her all those years ago. The Mum who gazed into the looking glass back then did the best she could with what she knew when I was born and growing up. And yet, through her tumultuous years of disappointment and regret, when I was an adolescent, she scared me.



Figure 38. *My Mother's face,*Mannequin head, acrylic paint, false eyelashes,
Jenny Hill, 2011.

Bringing together my experience of representing my mother.

What became the final working on my mother's body in this inquiry included the use of the wire bust from an earlier small presentation to my peers on a colloquium day. The symbols representing family attachments were removed and I set the wire bust on a podium and used chicken wire as an under skirt on which to place a 1950s dress I had found in a retro op shop years earlier. I smiled to see my mother forming in this altar installation even though her head was removed from her body and placed on a number of cake tins on the childhood altar table. I noticed the separation of head and body but did not then dwell on its significance. I placed a cut out piece from an actual x-ray of my mother's spine, and slid it down inside the back of the wire torso. Her head upright on kitchen tins gave me a sense of secure kitchen baking. I had adored her then. I was focused on her beauty and the stability

she provided me, and once again I wept, this time for the value of security for a child. The photo representing my mother at the kitchen altar shows the baby in the basket (made in an earlier supervision session) who cannot see her mother's face. The mother is gazing straight ahead and the veil across the baby's basket prevents direct connection. This seemed reminiscent of my mother's story about her mother chiding her for the veil over my face when I was a baby. However, the baby doll has a view of my mother's art works placed around the edges of the table.



Figure 39. On the edge can't see her face, but can see her art-work.

Digital photo, Rosemary May, 2011

Collaborative Dialogue with Jan. When Jan viewed this altar in the production stages she noticed the silver shoes that are now at my mother's feet under the table near her body (see above). When I was a child my Mum and Dad went square dancing sometimes. I used to be

enchanted by the clothes they put on, they were so different to their ordinary and work clothes. I looked for a long time for shoes the same as the ones Mum wore then. Jan took photographs (digitally altered) of some of the smaller items including silver shoes and the mirror which she placed showing the face of one of the busts from my adolescent altar. My face reflected in the mirror that is held by 'mother's' hand, made me think of how much I had wanted my mother to see me in my adolescence, when she had been distracted from her previously attentive relationship with me.





Figure 40. Aspects of Mother, of me? Digital photographs, Jan Allen, 2011

I combined the words from Kerry and the images from Jan into a poetic summary to summarise my personal experience of representing my mother:-

Each time I look again

I see another side of her.

Disconnections

of head from her body,

speaks to me, of her suffering,
as much as mine.

But when I make her face
and paint her lids
with tender devotion,
the gentle brush strokes
heal my brain.
Connecting me to
my memories of when she danced
and painted her face.

But did she ever cry?

Who saw her then?

I sense that the dialogue with my representation of my mother is not yet over as there are more questions arising. The way I have placed my mother's head on top of the cake tins and not on her body concerns me.

Bringing Together My Experience of representing My Father.

I now pick up the inquiry into my relationship with my father which was left off where I described the experience of re-creating my memories of him on the ladder. This section is brief and most of the data are not detailed here except for Kerry's collaboration with me about my father, and visual and poetic summaries pertinent to our collaboration. I then conclude this Section about my role as daughter with a reduction to what I came to know about my relationship patterns with my parents and how the transformative power of art-making supported me in this.

Collaborative dialogue with Kerry. As previously mentioned, Kerry, my colleague and friend, made her visit to hear and see the progress of my inquiry and offered responses to my childhood altar with a focus on me as a baby and on my experiences of my mother. I showed her my paternal grandmother's dress-making measuring stick which I had placed beside the ladder in acknowledging a[n] assumed shared experience with Dad in trying to measure up to Mum's expectations.



Figure 41. Measuring Up, Digital photograph, Jan Allen, 2011

"Feet of Clay,
take these steps
and meet me here
at this ladder of your lived history.
I lovingly mark
All the parts I wish to keep
and join my paint with yours.
Finding you and
holding you,
"Hello Dad —
It's Jenny,
Did we measure up?" (Kerry, 2011).

In Kerry's poetic response I saw that meeting Dad at the ladder and joining my paint with his somehow transformed the guilt of abandoning him into a reunion of happy memories of him. I later returned to my unfinished representation of my father by placing his small tools and a toy car from his childhood. In attaching these with thin golden wire to the inside top section of the ladder I paid homage to him. This became a way for me to do something new in the here-and-now to assuage my feelings of guilt for abandoning him in the past.



Figure 42. Dad's things, digital photo, Jan Allen, 2011

Remembering my father's wish to be a successful musician and his regret at not having a full-time career in this field, I also chose from my collection an old china baby grand piano. He had wished he owned a baby grand piano himself. I spray painted it gold and as I placed it on the top of the ladder. When bundling up his (actual) old work tools in a bag just like the one he had owned that I found at an outdoor sale, I felt I was tidying up his mess, but, on reflection it was more like tidying up the mess of my experience of him throughout my adolescence and beyond.





Figure 43. Music and work tools, mixed media representations, Jenny Hill, 2011



Figure 44. An Altar to my Dad, Jenny Hill, 2011

Statements of Relational Patterns with My Parents.

I read through all I had so far written about my relationship with my parents. I found key words, images and phrases that stood out for me and clustered them (data available on request). The ease with which this happened seemed linked to the length of time I had been immersed in the construction of the childhood altar where the traces of personal meaning emerged within the reflexive turns of the inquiry.

A key finding: "When I felt my secure attachments failing in the past I became anxious".

My initial attachment to my mother was secure and only interrupted by anxiety when my siblings experienced trauma. The anxiety seemed to arise from my perceptions of her worry and unhappiness. She did however provide me with a strong sense of the security of having structure and I was surprised how my focus on my childhood shifted to my adolescent distress when working on this altar. As I noticed my mother becoming sadder during my adolescence, I became more worried as I experienced her withdrawing emotionally. As I grew into my adolescence, I saw her discontent with my father and there began my sense of an anxious attachment to her which was an expression of my fear that she would leave home.

A key finding: "When I have been faced with decisions involving complex perceptions and conflicting loyalties, I become unsure in my loyalties".

My initial attachment with my father was secure and fun. As I grew, I came to love his musicality but was also frightened by some of his games. As the distance between mum and him became more obvious to me, I became entangled in their ambivalence, which somehow became my ambivalence, who to love, him or her? I saw my father's suffering and the emotional wounds he bore. I was unable to speak to him about this even though I loved him. As I aligned more with my mother, I lost the ability to tell him I needed him. While I wanted his creativity and spontaneity, I also feared to embrace him, for fear it would lead to my mother rejecting me too. I became frozen in my expressions of love to both of them and mistrust in myself was born, making it difficult for me to be certain of my decisions.

I looked at these two relational patterns and felt they were connected, so I merged them: "When my secure attachments fail I become anxious and unsure, which leaves me finding it

difficult to make decisions".

In reflecting on this relational pattern I recognize how I have changed during the construction of the altar to my childhood, which also took me into reviewing my adolescent experience. By re-creating my perceptions I have reviewed my parents as people in their own right, with their own strengths and struggles. This allowed me to see how I had co-created with them a sense of insecurity through internalizing their struggles and incorporating these as part of my own being in the world.

The Transformative Power of Using Collaborative Arts Based Inquiry.

I conclude this section on my investigations into my experience of my parents by acknowledging that through the art making and the collaborative dialogues with others there has been a shift, in my felt sense and memories of them and their relationship. The process of transformation alludes to several things. Firstly I gained a shift in my perceptions of both parents as individuals with their own struggles and also I was able to articulate how some of their choices and behaviours had actually hurt me. Creating them at the kitchen table site, the altar to my childhood, afforded me an active engagement with materials and memorabilia, which, in the handling of them and the positioning of them, gave me a sense of agency. In being able to review my experiences as a daughter in a different way to just 'telling my stories' about this, the arts processes enabled a bodily connection to my own story of how I saw and experienced them. Of particular significance was the collaboration with Edwina when the divide between my parents became visible to me when I walked between the ladder and the peg board with the utensils attached to it. Through our inquiry I recognised that I needed the presence of my father's style of being in the world, that I seemed to have

abandoned in preference to trying to 'get everything right' according to my early childhood experience of my mother's style. A similar impact came from Kerry's attentiveness to "a mother with no face". This facilitated my later work painting my mother's face where, despite the overt disconnection of the body parts, I nonetheless felt more connected to the memory of her as I cradled 'her' head against my stomach. These embodied art actions and my reflections on them have led to insights about my experiences of my relationships with my mother and my father, changing my perceptions and empowering me to accept their differences. The significance of attaching objects and materials to re-present my experiences of them both, on the kitchen table and on a ladder, has transformed my understandings of myself and my attachment patterns with them. As their daughter I can now see more clearly the transition from secure child to insecure adolescent in a much clearer way.

~ //~

On January 11th 2011, I collected my Mum from the Nursing Home she had moved to 3 years earlier. I wanted to show her my representation of her at the kitchen table, Dad as ladder and the other altars I had begun to make. We talked about our memories of my childhood years, and in particular she enjoyed the green paint as her eye shadow. I think she was quite overawed by the whole production in the Studio and, being the introvert she was, said little, but appeared pleased. I did not mention my story of the baby who learned not to cry as that was mine to deal with; I chose not to burden her with any more difficult experiences at the end days of her life. We both just enjoyed the intimacy of sharing good memories together.

Section Two: The Adolescent, Bride and Mothering Altars.

Knowing my attachment patterns with my parents makes clearer what I understand about myself in my intimate love relationships. In this section I reflect on past experiences as they inform the processes of making these three altars. In presenting the experience of making the altars to my adolescence, my first wedding, and the birth of my children I continued the process of reflecting on past experiences. I was looking to see and to know anything which might appear novel or from a perspective different from what I previously may have thought about myself relationally, as I had already experienced the delight of surprise, the insight and also discomfort in my engagement with the childhood altar.

The Adolescent Altar

I had found that working on the childhood altar triggered memories of my adolescent experience of my parents. I wanted to explore some of this experience in the adolescent altar. I found in my re-experiencing while handling the materials, a way to review some of the foundations on which my desire to be partnered was played out. I had at some stage in the collection period of my doctorate, seen an old dressing table on a hard rubbish collection and when I took it from the roadside had no clear sense of its use. During the time I was still working on other altars I was drawn to two plastic busts in the corner of the studio that I thought might fit into the drawers of the dressing table top to represent something of my adolescence. I was quite tentative about this representation. My primary body felt sense and my thinking about it were apprehension and confusion. I seemed to be holding a tight rein on remembering too much from that time. I felt discomfort and a belief that I would not share anything about its making or its meaning in this inquiry.

I followed the urge to make the adolescent altar, though being apprehensive about it I could only do so sporadically. The first thing I did do was to place the two busts into the drawers of the table. On the flesh coloured one with the head I placed some left over black netting fabric which had been part of a swimming costume of mine in the sixties. I did not like the look of it on the bust, but I felt compelled to leave it there. I didn't know why. The white net that I put on the black bust that had no head is from my wedding veil, from some forty years earlier. These two busts irritated me. But I left them there like that. I thought if I left them there as I had left other representations in various stages of production, something would arise which may hold some meaning for me. What I did find more satisfying was making a black and white checker board on the table top. I meticulously cut out squares that I measured, from rolls of black and white contact sheets. I couldn't help but think at the time that I was being ordered like my mother. I felt it was the only part of the altar that I had any control of, and it was quite meditative to place these squares into a pattern.



Figure 45. The Altar to Adolescence, photo T. Menzies, 2011

When I looked again at what I had done so far, I noticed that the flesh coloured bust has a

head but she just stares ahead somewhat blankly. Perhaps she is looking uncertain about finding a boyfriend. Maybe she thinks if she wears this garb he will find her. I felt more certain that the black net covering her chest signified her naivety about her sexuality. The black bust, with no head, somehow represents the holding back from any dance of coupling. She is contemplating being a Nun, a bride of Christ, but you cannot see her thinking this because she has no head. Her mind is out of view. There is no one to talk to about this. Or if there is, she does not know whom to trust.

Underneath the adolescent altar I found the place to attach the gilded cage with Barbie dolls and kewpie dolls from the first representations of small altars I had presented in the very first colloquium.



Figure 46. *Trapped by image making*,
Collected objects, collage, Jenny Hill, Dec, 2010

As I attached this under the dressing table I thought of my struggles to accept the body I

lived in as a teenager. I was not and never have been anorexic, and have always loved food, but I was born into a genetically slender family. My perception of my own body has been strongly influenced, throughout my life, by others calling me skinny.

What stood out was the feeling of being trapped and worrying endlessly about my physical presentation. I recognized my own part in keeping myself locked in a cage to protect a little girl image all the while pretending to be grown up. As I write, I think of the teenager I was and re-experience the mix of insecurity, hope, values, confusion and her desire to find love. Making this altar was more challenging than the others and even as I write about it I still feel unfinished. This altar gave me a sense of the precariousness of my preparation for adult relationships.

I did not depth my understandings of my adolescence but resonated with key words, images and phrases that focused on content and process from the story above:-

Content and Process

Apprehension

unveiled the confusion
of not liking
adolescent re-construction.

This time not irritated by order, but perplexed by unknown potentiality, she proceeds tentatively, still trusted the process.

> Uncertainty in coupling naïve in sexual expression she held herself back with no one else to trust.

Could she lose her mind trapped in endless worry, to protect the skinny girl amidst her hope for love?

Confused placement,
The memorabilia of a time
of black versus white
and white versus black.

No satisfaction
in arrangements
except the squares
neatly planted on the table.

During the time I made this altar I had already finished the altar to childhood and had started the bridal and mothering altars which I describe below.

The Bridal Altar

I have experienced the pain of intimate relationships coming to an end when they ceased to be life giving for one or both of us. The pain of ongoing disconnection, coupled with my inability to find my true voice, saw them end. I had learned to live in a family environment where many things were never spoken about. I see that the values I wanted to live from in some relationships, while authentic to me at the time, had aspects which were unrealistic, born of naivety and innocence. Maybe the conditioning of many girls born to post World War 2 parents led to a belief in the fairy tale depiction that "Someday my prince will come". Being of a romantic nature I certainly embraced this notion and developed values which would support this. These values alongside an emphasis on loving others from the Christian message, resulted in a stoic maintenance of images of well-being when underneath there was sorrow, not joy. (Journal entry, 2007).

I am not going to write any details about the lives of the people I have partnered, nor write in

any depth about my experiences in relationship to them, rather, I seek to understand my early formation as a partner. In the process of working on the childhood altar it emerged that my attachment to my parents changed dramatically from early childhood to the beginning of my adolescence. Insecurity and ambivalence became more pronounced. I entered my adolescence still with a fair amount of romantic idealization. By looking through the lens of a perceived 'happily ever after' coupling, I nervously and naively entered the world of attraction to the opposite sex. This was filled with high hopes and tentative steps because, in fact, I had no clue as to what kind of boy I would specifically like to be my boyfriend. I was already a people pleasing person and friendly to just about everyone. So, it seems I left it up to the boys to like me. I did not know that I had taken a very submissive stance and that I gave my power away by doing this.

In preparation for making the bridal altar I collected and washed two Perspex legs I had found in an antique shop many years before. Not really knowing how I would use them I had transported these plastic legs from place to place and already displayed these legs dressed in black stockings in the first colloquium forum.



Figure 47. Perspex legs, photograph, Jenny Hill, 2010.

I happened to have a CD playing "Nellum Fantasie" as I washed the legs in preparation for their inclusion in the bridal altar. The deeply melancholic melody triggered a sudden sense of sadness. I was surprised at the strength of my compassionate feelings for my own legs, and for myself. These feelings spread through my whole body and I realised that my own legs, though strong, were travel weary. Not just because of the upheavals of moving house many times, nor caring for distressed loved ones. I saw in those moments how troubling to me it had been to be so uncertain about finding a suitable mate.

A few days later, as I was putting black stockings back on the Perspex legs and as my hands maneuvered the stockings onto the legs I was aware that maybe my first marriage was an escape from the stress of not choosing to have sex before marriage. At the moment of recognizing this possibility I was totally shocked. The shock dissipated as I continued to stretch the stockings over the Perspex legs and a sense of care for myself took its place. It was as if I had smashed open some hard soil in the earth and the water just below the surface trickled out slowly. I felt compassion for that young and innocent girl. Then I felt the impact of how fraught my journey through adolescence to early adulthood had been. Seeing the connection between the two altars, adolescence and bridal, I felt that making them helped me to negotiate and settle some conflict between my values of needing to be a good person and my need for intimacy in relationship that seemed at odds with each other. I still had some wire from my mother's under skirt from the childhood altar and realized I could use this wire as a skirt for the bridal altar too. I recorded some notes as I cut and shaped the wire for my bridal altar:-

Currently working on the bridal altar after a morning of trying to deal with an over-growth of blackberries in the back yard of my new home. I did not wear gardening gloves and managed to spike my hands a few times. Funnily enough, I now find myself working with the chicken-wire skirt of the Bridal Altar, and, even with

protective gloves on I have drawn blood from a couple more fingers. I am trying to attach the roll of chicken wire to be the skirt of the bridal gown, end to end. I have now pricked my index finger on my right hand, it hurt a lot but I am reminded of the Sleeping Beauty story, where she pricks her finger on the spinning wheel and falls asleep. I see how asleep I have been in my relating with men. I also reflect on the blackberries this morning, as if they represented the brambles the prince had to cut through to reach the princess. As I muse on how young and naive I was when I married I see the fairy story parallel in my approach to my first marriage. (Process notes: 4/01/11)

A few days later, with my CD playing in the background, the sound of violas immediately triggered me crying again. I identified this sadness as connected to my regret about having divorced and the disappointment that my 'happily-ever-after' dreams had not eventuated. The crying was of the kind where my mouth grimaced with the corners sloping down, tears welling in the bottom of my eyelids before spilling over. I felt the tension/sorrow/pain as a heaving in the top of chest and the pit of stomach, tight at first, until the heaving released the tension. All the while I kept cutting with the wire cutters up the right hand side of the bridal skirt, to make way for the Perspex legs to be placed there. I clamped the cutters with force and determination and felt anger mingling with sorrow.

With the wire gown now slit up the side I positioned the legs inside. Next I began to cut up the fabric from my original bridal gown, for placement on the wire bust. A fluttering of emotion arose in my throat, sadness and a sense of regret that "happily ever after" had not transpired. Then I thought: "What a beautiful dress this was". I remembered that I had designed it in collaboration with the dressmaker. Then I recalled a line in Carol O'Connor's one woman show, "Bombshells" (a play written for her by Joanna Murray-Smith, 2002). In her monologue, dressed in a bridal gown, she exclaims in shocked tone and with a shocked expression on her face: "I got married for the Dress." Between feeling both humour and

sorrow, I continued constructing the bridal representation, to put to good use the leftovers of my once upon a time story.



Figs. 48. *Bridal altar with black and white attachments,*Jenny Hill, Photo Trish Menzies, 2011.

Underneath the bridal figure I felt compelled to place another mannequin head, this one I painted black and white. I noticed it echoed the black and white squares on the adolescent altar. At introducing another disembodied head I felt a sense of discomfort. The feelings of disembodiment and disconnection concerned me. I held this on the edge of my awareness trusting my ability to process these thoughts over time.



Figs. 49. *Black and white ambivalence or opposites attract,* Jenny Hill, Photo Trish Menzies, 2011.

In front of the bridal figure I placed an old flower pot stand that I had painted silver, and arranged some of our engagement and wedding cards (with kind permission from my exhusband). This is my version of a wedding cake to represent the hope that marriage would bring me a meaningful life and the opportunity to create a family of my own. To a large degree this actually happened.

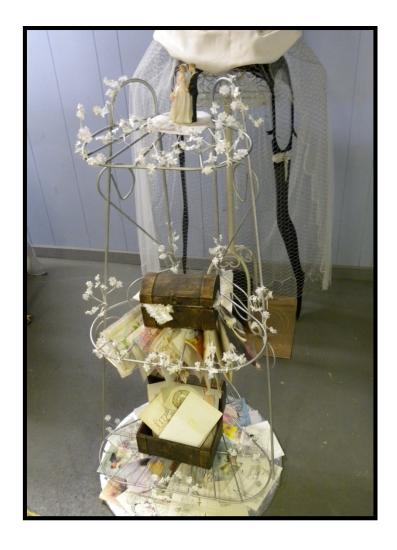


Figure 50. Wedding cake, Jenny Hill, Photo T. Menzies, 2011

Inside the chest cavity of the bridal bust, I placed a medallion with an image I had previously sketched in a visual diary earlier in the doctoral period. When it came to fixing this inside the cavity of the wire torso at the top of the chest, making my disappointment visible, I felt my fingers fumble and I sighed loudly to really 'see' how disappointment eventually took me out of this marriage.



Figure 51. *Disappointment*,
Jenny Hill, Photo T. Menzies, 2011

I stood back to look again at the bridal representation and I noticed beauty and simplicity alongside elements of disconnection and sorrow. I was shocked again, at the exposure of the insides of the wire bust with the black sexy underwear and the bridal gown now cut right back. My impulse was to cover her up to protect her. I saw her standing there no longer a virgin and with a disheveled look which felt disconcerting. The happy wire wedding cake in the foreground belied the fragmented story behind. Looking again at the repetition of black and white had me thinking of duality; right and wrong; good and bad; power and submission; conscious and unconscious; shadows and light. The lack of colour is evident. The dress does not cover the body and I thought of the response to my first presentation at the start of the inquiry period that started with the words: - "When I make myself an object, without choice do I give myself to suffering" (chapter 4) I thought to myself: "Did I disappoint myself by objectifying myself?" in my role as a wife to my first husband.



Figure 52. *Covering up the cover up is now exposed,* Representation, Jenny Hill, 2011

Content and Process.

Reflecting on the altars to my adolescence, my first marriage, and the process of creating them, I found key words and phrases were brought together in this poetic statement.

Wearing the lens
of happily ever after,
she left it to the boys
to realise her romantic notions.

Abdicating her power to choose, delayed the learning of the dance of mutuality, creating perplexing conflicts within.

Waiting until marriage
did not delay her wanting
to be liked, and her dressing
made ambiguous her maturity.

Fraught was the dance
of aligning values with needs,
as cutting wire and brambles
draw blood while she remembers.

The beautiful dress, now cut back, can no longer hide my disappointment.

Wanting to pay homage to,

a marriage that did not last,
reveals the awful truth of disconnection
and sorrow, in black and white.

The Mothering Altar.

A quote from Proverbs in the Bible came to me as inspiration and an access point when I began representing my experience as mother:

"She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her: those who hold her fast will be blessed."

Proverbs 3:18

This altar does not represent my whole journey as a mother but the focus is on when my three children were born. This was a time of 'holding' my children as babies prior to the times they learned how to hold onto me as children and adolescents. I found a peace and fulfillment not previously known before having had children and I enjoyed making a somewhat ordered home for them on the shoe-string salary of a clergy family. My highest priority was for my children to feel secure in their attachments to their parents. They were all born within three and a half years of each other during the years that their father's work required us to move house many times. The unfortunate outcome of that was that they were regularly saying goodbye to the friends they had made. In looking back on my early experiences of mothering I can see that, though I was nervous at times, I was enthralled with the children's individual identities and the experience I had of unconditional love for each of them. This experience seemed to give me a stronger sense of security in the world. Within the role of being a mother I relished the sense of closeness with my children.

The emergence of this altar grew from finding a fabric dressmaker's bust in my collection that I previously thought might be used to represent myself as mother. This and my musings on the words in proverb (above) wanting to represent myself as a "tree of life" for my children led an organic process that had me searching in op shops for old brown and

beige jumpers I could use to represent the bark of a tree on the bust. These jumpers were cut up and glued onto the bust. As I worked I felt the memory of the strength I had found as a young mother who often managed the care of the kids on her own. A representation of a heart, fitted into a gap between the patches of wool representing the bark.



Figure 53. Mother as tree of life, Jenny Hill,

Photo T. Menzies, 2011.

An old wooden bed base I found discarded in a street became the solid base on which I placed this bust next to an upturned bassinet. I enjoyed hammering a wooden top to the bed base, gluing the deep green felt over it and cutting out coloured heart shapes which were glued under the turned up baby's basinet (below). When I glued the tree roots around the base I felt emotion and let my tears flow. I did not know what these tears meant. It felt a primitive

activity, as if I was making an environment in which to nest, a strong foundation for a dwelling on which to hold my babies.



Figure 54. Strong foundation, Jenny Hill,

Photo T. Menzies, 2011.

My children have acknowledged they had relatively secure attachments to their parents when they were children. It was during their late adolescence, just before and after the divorce of their parents that they found themselves in dangerous circumstances emotionally and physically due to their mental health and addictive conditions. In some ways their experience mirrored a pattern of my own in my adolescence. For over a decade my rescuer self was on alert, for fear of losing them to accidental or suicidal death during this time. I went to great lengths in reaching out to help them. It is hard for any mother not to worry, or perhaps, blame herself when the children are unhappy or in danger. The years have passed and we all survived.

Collaborating with My Adult Children.

On a cold winter's day (2011) my three adult children joined me in the studio with the altars still in production and we sat around a big table with art materials. I had three wooden eggs, one for each of them, to paint and/or collage their own significant memories of their childhoods. These were to be placed into the gold painted wire bowl, which had a circular pink covered cushion I had intentionally made to represent the placenta in the womb. An atmosphere of calm came upon us, as we each immersed ourselves into our own thoughts or chatted as we created together.

After this I spent an evening at home sewing buttons from my paternal grandmother's collection onto some white netting. I wanted it to act as a safety net for the eggs placed into a golden wire bowl. I asked myself, did I draw strength from my grandmothers? As I sewed the buttons to the netting I remembered my stays at both grandparents' homes as a child. How peaceful it was when I spent school holidays with them with no siblings around it was so quiet and I did not have to worry about anyone. Perhaps this was one of the antecedents for my security as a child, the beginning of knowing how to be peaceful as the only child in the calm of my grandparents' environments? Maybe these experiences served me well when I sought to provide safety nets for my young adult children when they were in trouble.



Figure 55. *Three eggs from the nest,* J. Hill, Photo P. Iorlano, 2016.



Figure 56. *Representing my love for my children*, J. Hill, Photo T. Menzies, 2011.

When I looked again at these representations I recognized clearly how strong my instinct was to keep them safe, and how awful it is when our children are not safe, whatever their age.

To summarise this section about mothering I wrote a poetic statement from the significant words and images.

Content and Process.

Wanting to be a tree of life For them, I cut and glue My memories of their baby Times, hoping they felt safe, On the solid base of Co-constructing our Attachments with each other. But solid base hammering Did not prevent the chaos that they later fell into. We struggled each of us with darkness and the danger, whilst suffering, holding the candle a candle of hope. Reflecting on their childhoods, as they painted their small stories, I see their gleeful faces, Which wipes away our shame Making distant the fears of the past.

Statements of Relationship Patterns Continued.

Having constructed statements of meaning from the texts in section one I now add statements on the emergent relational patterns from the key words, poetic statements and meaning summaries in section two.

As previously noted my initial learnings regarding relationships as a child included the experiencing of feeling relatively secure attachments to both parents. My initial learnings regarding relationships comprised of the experiences of feeling loved and cared for in a childhood home that was fun, and where I learned to let my curiosity and creativity take me into experiences of 'free flow'.

With a dramatic change in family atmosphere in my early adolescence I felt anxious, unnoticed and insecure. The discord and obvious distance between my parents was more than challenging to live with. I became ambivalent in my relationship with my mother. I began to learn how to manage myself and my feelings by developing some maladaptive behaviours (submerging my feelings or ignoring my feelings) which I see laid the foundation for future relationships.

Primarily I developed a pattern of considering others needs before my own instead of acknowledging my own needs. By doing this I lost the sense of value around my own needs and did not speak up about my discontent. This way of being in the world led to many years of anxiety that manifested as agoraphobia. The development of these patterns often left me fearful as I tried to straddle the division between my needs and wants and consideration for others. This found me in relationships which felt tenuous, leading me to become ambivalent about being in them, and I felt insecure as I expected imminent separation or distance. Thus, I decided to stay in some unstable relationships to ward off disconnection entirely, hoping to prevent feeling loss and grief. In groups I would fear that to align with one person over another would potentially lead to losing connections with valued others. The security I felt as a mother to young children was torn as under by the chaos of their mental health and addiction issues which returned me to the anxiety of perceived and imminent separations.

Re-constructing Meanings of Relational Patterns.

I am more aware now of when I am feeling anxious and insecure in relationships and am able to identify the triggers in the environment that arouse these feelings.

Triggers may be a sense that close others are pre-occupied or unwilling to engage with me.

Being open and honest with myself gives me an inner strength to speak when I feel that something is not going to work well for me.

I understand now that I can be ambivalent about others but still be secure in my own opinions and decisions.

Taking time to try to understand the other person's motives towards me helps me manage my emotions, rather than being taken over by 'old' feelings of insecurity.

I am more able now to articulate my experience of another's behaviours as I let go of my fear of rejection and stand secure in myself and my choices.

Summary of Arts-led Inquiry Processes.

At this point in my inquiry I understand that:

- 1). When I intentionally engage with art materials and objects to represent my experiences I find it easy to stay immersed in present time experience. For example: In the meticulous cutting and pasting of black and white squares on the adolescent altar "this brought order and felt quite meditative".
- 2). I have found that standing back to 'look again' at what I am creating leads to further understanding the meanings in my representations in surprising and unexpected ways. For example: "This side is more tightly tied because I knew that he loved her ... but I didn't know if she

loved him. Blimey. I didn't know that till I just said that. [I saw that] standing from a distance" [excerpt 7, transcript 7].

- 3). Engagement with art materials and art forms has brought embodied ways of knowing into my awareness in the way sensations in different parts of my body carry information for making personal meanings. For example: "I felt a whole embodied sense of a shift in my experience of my dad when hugging the ladder." [process notes]
- 4). I have found that using my hands to hold memorabilia and attaching these in configurations on the altars sometimes access strong emotions. For example: Unexpectedly sobbing when cradling the mannequin's head, as a representative of my mother.
- 5). I have found that using the arts to make sense of my life has brought personal change which has been transformative. For example: Having identified my relationship patterns while using the arts has led me to a greater understanding of how behaving from anxiety is not healthy for me and accepting others decisions is better for them and myself.

I intend to discuss these statements regarding the processes of art making in more detail in my discussion with the literature in chapter eight. Having come to the end of my inquiry into my relationship patterns in this chapter, in chapter six I describe the story of making the underworld and associated altars.

CHAPTER 6

Emergent Knowing Through Construction of Altars: Content and Process (2)



Shadow of death
Threatening
Premature dying
Bandages binding
Mother weeping
One of them died

(Jenny Hill, 2016)

When I was only weeks old my brother was severely burned in an accident, and as a result his bandages needed to be changed night and day at home. Another of my brothers became seriously ill as a newborn and was rushed to hospital not expected to live. I remember standing fearfully in the doorway of my bedroom, age five, watching my mother weep on the shoulder of a neighbor, but not being told exactly what was going on. Another brother fell from a milkman's wagon when he was about thirteen and was dragged along the road on his back for a while before the milkman noticed. On arrival home his clothes were

torn and his back was bleeding. My mother was a chronic asthmatic and on several occasions when the doctor came to our home he told us she might die as we sat in the kitchen dumfounded. Apart from one of my three brothers dying in a car accident years later, at the age of nineteen, the aforementioned situations all resolved. However, later in my life my own offspring who have suffered mental health issues that have been life-threatening, have left me weeping in several doorways trying to keep the shadow of death at bay. My early childhood experiences forewarned me that life can be precarious and bad news can arrive in the secure kitchen at any time.

This chapter like the previous one is in two sections. Section one is the story of my experience of creating the underworld altar inspired by my own painting of an underworld which 'appeared' in my painting of 'The Black Madonna's Wounded Breast''. Section two describes the emergence of three other altars which grew out of making the underworld altar and they represent – firstly, the dissolution of a child's dreams of "happily ever after", then, my experience of divorce and separation and, finally the exhaustion that came from many years of worrying about unwell loved ones. I will once again be attending to the personal material as I write the story of the arts-led inquiry alongside my reflections on the art making processes.

Section One: The Underworld Altar.

I can now imagine my Dad's old workbench with paint splattered on it running over and down it, to be the place on which I will represent the underworld. I remember this workbench as a child, in the shed up the back of our yard. It was dark in there. While I was fascinated by my father's work tools and paint brushes, the place they were stored in was scary.

(Journal notes, February, 2008)

Beginning the Making of the Underworld Altar

From early in my research journey I had looked at my father's old work bench (Fig 3) as the table top for this altar on which to represent the varied, distressing and chaotic events I have experienced when loved ones were in dire straits due to critical health issues, mental health issues and addictive behaviours. As a child dad had kept this workbench in a small tin shed at the back of our home and from time to time I used to peek into this dark and damp floorless shed sensing my bravery because this shed really spooked me. Similarly, as I have already described in my introduction, the underneath section in my Black Madonna painting as the 'underworld' also spooked me but peaked my curiosity too. I wanted to know more about my personal experiences in what I came to call my underworld journeys when companioning my loved ones in their distressing conditions. Particularly relevant to me was my journey with one of my children who suffers with schizophrenia and who gave me permission to include my journal entry below.

Here I sit in what is called the TRANSIT Lounge of our local hospital with one of my sons as he is monitored after his first dose of Clozapine. Clozapine, or Clopine, is the strongest antipsychotic medication available at this time. His attitude is so positive, his face is almost glowing, like an angelic presence. His eyes are full of hope, hope for relief from the 16 year long trauma of 'hearing voices' of a negative kind. My love for this person is felt as fullness in my chest area – my heart bursts with love for him. I am so proud of him, as a person, pleased with him for taking this step; he is a pleasure to be around at any time. And all the while he is haunted by 'hell in his head' how can this be so?

(Journal, 2nd April, 2007)

In October 2010 I carried my father's old workbench table top outside and onto the grass where I had worked on his old ladder. I had taken the workbench top off the original legs and

replaced them with two solid metal bases I had found in a hard rubbish collection. The vice on the workbench top was at one end (see below). I had put drop sheets down under the whole set up, in preparation for paint throwing. I set up the camera on a tripod, collected all the old and new paint pots I had thought to use and began recording.

Days after I filmed this I watched the film back to record the transcript. I was glad that I had spoken out loud as I moved around with the art making tools. Within this same time period I also remembered some details of what was not spoken out loud as I made the transcript. Reading through the transcript several times I selected five parts which interested me strongly. These are the excerpts from the film transcript that are written here, below, followed by my reflections of them. I did this to stay as close to the actual experience as I could.

Excerpt 1

"So now I am going to apply some colours and see if I can somehow first of all spend a few moments reflecting on the purpose of this top, this table top altar which is to represent the difficult struggles that I have faced as a daughter, partner and mother. So, what I am aware of now is that I've, arr, collected some paint, a bottle to squeeze the paint with, reflecting on the difficulties that I've had to face (teary) and umm, just really want to weep actually..... I'm going to take those (these) feelings into the activity now, even with the noise of the cars in the background. Not sure how it's going to turn out, I've (now) got myself caught between a place of trying to get it right somehow for the viewer of this, and aware that I want to face that I could get it all wrong and that things ARE wrong – uhhh – when people are – living in that place between life and death." (Transcript. Oct, 2010)

When I re read this I became aware of two identifiable patterns in my life. One is, that when I am conscious of the viewer (people looking at me to perform) I fear getting things wrong. And two, I remember how Mum would give us art making materials as children and then put them in a cupboard high up so that we could not reach them between the times she

chose for us to paint. Now I am aware that in being able to hold and use the paint tins and to squeeze paint I am struck by the strength of some unidentifiable emotion arising in my throat, chest and stomach that seems to set me free to use the materials any way I wanted.

Excerpt 2

I splash the paint brush with some strength and say:-"I've got a feeling in my guts of the horrors all the horrors of the human condition!!!" (Then squirting blue, vigorously) "I'm aware of the difficulties of letting the feelings out when there are thoughts ... I just want to go out of control and stop talking at all... and I think a controlled 'out of control' doesn't feel right but, umm, I think I'm going to stop talking for a while!!" (Oct, 2010)

I found the combination of moving my whole body around the altar top while painting with brown paint and then squirting blue paint vigorously initially felt frustrating. I was keen but not game to let myself go into the experience of releasing the pent up, sad and angry feelings just below the surface. I was surprised to hear myself say "all the horrors of the human condition". Suddenly I had placed myself with not only my personal experiences but those of the whole human race. I seemed to be on the edge of thinking rationally and feeling the emotions. Being quiet seemed a good choice.

Excerpt 3

"Preparation for grieving seems to take a long time ... I guess there's no preparation for grieving, I just want to be angry actually" (this occurs with the vigorous shaking of paint through a funnel into the plastic bottle... the louder and quicker the shaking, the more the tone of voice alters and the intention towards anger arises) "but there is no-one to be angry at, for half the shit that goes on in the world". Vigorous and random neutral coloured paint applied with full arm action and then I say again, more strongly "Half the shit that goes on in the world." Much effort and groaning goes into this at this point. Then: "It takes energy to be angry!!" Then – tears and "It ain't over yet!!" Crying – applying brown with hasty brush strokes "This is a mess." (Oct, 2010)

I have often felt sadness before recognizing the anger beneath it. On this occasion by giving permission to myself to "rather be angry" happened concurrently with my vigorous shaking of paint through a funnel into a bottle. With the escalation of rapid movement of my hands, I hear the angry tone of voice and remember the attendant frustration. Again the personal had translated into a statement about the world being full of shit and me not being able to do anything about half of the shit. As I tried to express my disgust at my suffering and that of my loved ones, I applied brown paint in fast strokes. This seemed to have given me permission to cry more and to acknowledge the mess I was making to depict the mess in my life.

Excerpt 4

"Well I had to go away and have a really good howl from the bottom of my belly and I've looked again at the Altar table and I need red ... And I don't know why ... so I've found the red paint that I was using on Dad's ladder". Starts to dribble this slowly – from a small brush, the same one used on Dad's ladder too. (Insight- did I feel Dad's pain?) "What's happening is, it feels kind of delicate – I don't know why that should want to make me cry again – (crying quietly as I go) – oh, all around the edges (the red dribbled paint) and on the vice (sprinkled) - it feels like tears of blood, yes, that's what it feels like, tears of blood" - (weeping softly, sniffling loudly) "I'm thinking about my children now – and something calming is happening now. This is very calming." (slowly applying the red paint in dabs & around the edge of the table top, with the small brush). (Oct, 2010)

When I dribbled the red paint with the brush I had already used on my dad's ladder, the movement of my hand and the slower pace seemed to take me into how I had felt making dad's ladder. The felt delicacy of application prompted tears and the feelings of sadness took me to thinking of my children in distress. There seemed to be a process of one thing leading to another in the calmness of my mood in dabbing the red paint around the edges.

Excerpt 5

"I feel like I've moved from a place of expression now to something about an aesthetic about staying at the edges making it, balanced or something. Red dribbles". (Time passes) "I'm thinking now about the people at my Mum's Nursing Home who, (catch in the voice) lying there in their mobile beds, sleep with their mouths open and I'm thinking of the dribbling, the inevitable dribbling when you are no longer able to operate as a fully functioning human being. And how sad and how poignant — and how do you find the beauty in these forms. People preparing for their death. (Sniff) Spreading this further (the red paint) seems to be the right thing to do now." Continues to dribble from the paint tin now around the edges and says: "I'm just thinking about the blood of life, even though it's flowing in our blood streams we are alive but when it flows out, it's when we are dying." ... "I'm going to fill in some gaps with this blue.... just noticed I am walking around and around, and around this underworld top — I'm aware of not being frightened of it ... I am well acquainted with it, it's very pleasing to recognise that. Suddenly I love it." (Oct, 2010)

The experience of throwing and brushing paint onto the old workbench, shifted my mood and emotion as my body moved swiftly around it. I felt myself going in and out of different time zones, past, recent past and present. From slow preparation with some anxiety, to a timeless focus on the past, back to the present with vigorous movements with paint. My heightened emotion seemed to facilitate my body movements around and around the table top and culminated in a rest point where I felt love emerge. At times I was bothered by wondering if I was 'getting it right' but I stopped these thoughts when I realised I needed to be open to whatever was happening. Having done this, I found an experience where feelings of sadness then anger seemed to ebb and flow, as I immersed myself in activity of painting the bench. I became aware of my body-in-action while representing remembered experience alongside strong emotions arising.

As I neared the end of my time working on this altar top I was aware of feeling refreshed.

Attending to this altar seemed to provide me with a solid way to address the impact on me of caring for loved ones in crisis. I was astounded that, as I finished, I felt familiarity with, and even love for, the Underworld Altar.



Figure 57. Underworld altar painted, digital photo, J. Hill, Oct, 2010

When I transcribed the monologue from the film, I was aware of the moments of art making where emotion arose and also noticed pivotal moments when I was aware of how the art making process led me to unexpected clarity and understanding.

Methods

As I had previously done with the childhood altar I read through the transcript and noted words and phrases which seemed to fit together. I included the reflections (above) as I wanted to identify elements in the art making process as I became aware of them. I clustered these words and phrases and titled the clusters to gather linked ideas and tabled them to get a

clearer view of the categories arising. In this table I use, for example "X 2" to denote the number of times some phrases were used.

Table (3). Vital moments of insight, felt & embodied knowing

A sense of self in the here-and-now experiencing

now I am going to (X 2)

see if I can

what I am aware of now (X 3)

just really want (X 4)

I've got a feeling (X 2)

I think I am (X 5)

I guess there's no preparation

Embodied art actions

Apply some colours

Collected some paint a bottle to squeeze the paint with

Into the activity now

Starts with brown strongly slashed with a paint brush

Then squirting the blue, vigorously

Vigorous shaking of paint through a funnel into the bottle

Vigorous and random neutral coloured paint applied with full arm action

Much effort and groaning goes into this

Applying brown with hasty brush strokes

"I've looked again"

I need the red – found the red (X 2)

Starts to dribble this slowly from a small brush

It's all around the edges (dribbled red paint)

moved from a place of expression to something aesthetic

On the vice sprinkled

Slowly applying the red paint in dabs and shakes around the edge of the table top

Fill in some gaps with this blue

Walking around and around, and around this underworld top

Emotions

Teary, want to weep actually

take these feelings (into the activity now)

feeling in my guts, of the horrors, all the horrors of the human condition

difficulties of letting the feelings out when there are thoughts

want to go out of control ...stop talking

grieving (X 2)

angry (X2)

intention to anger rises

crving

a good howl from the bottom of my belly

it feels kind of delicate (dribbling paint slowly)

crying quietly, weeping softly

feels like tears of blood

sniffling loudly (X 2)

something calming happening now (X2)

(Remembering old people) a catch in the voice

how sad and how poignant

I'm aware of not being frightened of it (the underworld)

It's very pleasing to recognize that

Suddenly I love it!

Reflections and perceptions

spend a few moments reflecting on

reflecting on

just noticed I am

I don't know why

Saying strongly "Half the shit that goes on in the world."

reflecting on the purpose of this table top

seems to be the right thing to do now

not sure how it is going to turn out

The old people at my Mum's nursing home –dribbling, (that's) when you are no longer able to operate as a fully functioning human being.

Meaning statements and questions

The realities of the difficulties I've had to face

Caught between a place of trying to get it right somehow (for the viewer of this) – and also

knowing that this (underworld altar) is about getting it, everything, wrong.

things that ARE wrong – when people are – living in that place between life and death

I guess there is no preparation for grieving

grieving seems to take a long time

There is no-one to be angry at, for half the shit that goes on in this world

Did I feel Dad's pain?

Staying at the edges making it balanced or something

How do you find the beauty in these forms? People preparing for their death.

I am well acquainted with it (the underworld altar).

Personal Themes Arising

At this point in the inquiry I was becoming more aware of my intersubjective experience as I worked with the materials and the sense of being fully energized and focused as I worked with the materials. It was as if my thinking (including insight and reflections), feelings (emotions) and embodied knowing (felt sense and actions from the body) were experienced

in a vital way. This gave me an experience of meeting myself differently. I see a woman of action, who is vital and aware. I see a 'me' I would not normally see. This is strange but empowering. I decided to focus on what I was coming to know about my experience of facing difficult things and how I was managing my pain and grief. The lived experience of the art making, with actions and feelings, reflections and meanings embedded in a flow, and also in haphazard ways, was exhilarating and belied the content of my distressing experiences which had led to the making of this altar.

Two main themes related to the making of this altar were developed and show how:-

- (1). I seem to face my life's difficulties by taking my body into action which leads to me feeling empowered.
- (2). In the process of creating representations of pain, I find freedom to express my anger and sadness.

In attending to my experiences of loving and suffering I came to see my ways of managing stress. When I found myself moving around the altar top sorting through the practicalities of applying the paint I recognized how at home I am in my body when acting from my feelings to solve problems. This paralleled how I take action in the face of the difficulties in my life even when distressing emotions could precipitate me closing down, believing everything is too hard to manage. By making representations of my distress in an intentional way for this inquiry, I felt empowered to express emotions.

Embodied Arts Actions

I let myself be drawn to the materials by spontaneously throwing paint and shaking bottles as I moved about the underworld altar top. I followed my body's impulses and stayed with feelings as they arose. While in this flow and thinking of my father's emotional pain, I reached for the red paint without considering that red meant anything in particular. I came to see the red as tears of blood. At other times I reached for colours intentionally like the brown paint to represent the feeling in my guts about the horrors of the human condition. Anger spontaneously arose from my dialogue with my actions with the brown paint and 'half the shit in the world' came unbidden from my mouth.

Actions I took provoked emotional experience and vice-versa. Squeezing the bottle of red paint resulted in my own tears erupting at the same time that I reflected on the reality of the many difficulties I had faced. Squirting blue into a funnel and vigorous shaking of a bottle triggered anger at the 'wrongness' of people being in, or choosing to be in, that place between life and death. Hasty strokes with brown paint brought forth crying, and words "this is a mess" which articulated my personal experience, the state of the world and the look of the actual underworld table top. Near the end of this activity I saw gaps which I felt needed blue paint, it just felt right to end this way. I came to see how complex representing my experience of my life's difficulties was on this occasion. Not just a simple matter of painting a workbench with a few random colours, but with the intention to come to terms with horrible things revealed in a myriad of tangential thoughts and feelings. I came to see that the energy and quality of movement was connected to the various emotions I was experiencing. I either started with feelings that led to actions or actions that led me to feelings.

Painting my access to underworld experiences, helps me deal with deathly mess. Gut groaning and red dribbles, fall like tears of blood. I move to the edges, of myself, where sadness reveals no fear. Spontaneity invites me to look again, To take my feelings into actions. Or is it that my actions make me feel? I cannot make right that which is wrong And, if I stop talking, I can grieve. As I slow down I feel their pain And the balm of blue gap filling, becomes a place of beauty.

Continuation of the Underworld Altar in the Studio

As I have said previously, I was able to continue making my altars in a studio space with all of my collections brought together. It was here that I set up the old workbench, which had been prepared with paint in my back garden in my previous home. I filmed myself smashing glass bottles, empty beer cans and other items outdoors for safety reasons. These were to be

affixed to the bench top to continue my experience of creating the underworld (see Appendix 3, on Disc). I took the smashed things inside, continuing filming to embed/attach them into the altar top using different kinds of glue according to the type of materials. When I began making this altar in the backyard of my previous home, I had been aware of the world's suffering, but in this part of the inquiry I felt more directly connected to dealing with my own suffering. My intention was to use items chosen to express my fears.

Emergent Findings Arising

I let some time pass after the filming of these activities before I felt emotionally able to transcribe the dialogue from this film. Then I trailed through the transcript several times, underlining what stood out for me. I found there were four main elements of my experiencing at the time of the filming. I have created these elements in narrative form below and given each a title which best describes my sense of them. These four elements connected me to both personal meanings embedded in my experience and how using multimodal art forms facilitated these knowings.

Body felt sense of anger. This occurred during the making of this altar on three occasions, the first occurred when I took alcohol bottles and cans outside and smashed the bottles between some towelling with a hammer. I did not speak out loud, as I had when I splashed paint onto the tabletop in the first film, but when I viewed this later film I remembered the emotion I felt in my body in at the time. My body movements in the action of smashing the hammer onto the glass and my accompanying facial expressions were indicative of strong anger not expressed verbally. The second significant moment came just after saying out loud "I am aware of ... something of an aesthetic about it, [but it's] supposed

to be the underworld, a place of chaos." The word chaos prompted me to stamp strongly on another alcohol can and took me away from a concern with how it looked, and I stayed then with the strong emotion which I needed to express. I said the brand name of the can with an angry voice, followed by heavy breathing and a sigh. From a feeling in my guts I remembered that a lot of money gets spent on alcohol. I pressed the can down on the table top really strongly, as if to release the anger into the altar itself. Then I observed that there was not enough glue for me to attach all the broken pieces on the table top. My voice sounds angry when I say: "There's not enough glue ... I often felt that there wasn't enough glue to keep me together." This was a moment of insight that I assume was brought about by a felt sense, experienced as emotion and bodily sensations.

Feeling Good and Taking Care. I began to collect labels of alcohol products to glue onto the table top too. As I said each label out loud I heard the anger and cynical tones in my voice. I became vehement, and released strong and deep tones in my voice, which I rarely do. It felt good. Gluing the broken pieces onto the altar top and pushing them down forcefully with my hands, gave me a place to put my negative feelings, despite the jagged glass that might cut me. At the time I acknowledged that my respect for my loved ones prevented me from saying more because this would be recorded on the film.

A Shift to Compassion. As soon as I finished this negative tirade, and acknowledged my respect for my loved ones, I became aware of their unhappiness and the burden of the addictive and other behaviours which had ruled their lives. Suddenly I felt incredibly sorry for them which resulted in a huge sob followed by tears. As I picked up the small skulls to add to the chaos of the dance with death that I was creating, I could not stay focused as my tears and sorrow were overwhelming. I took a short break. Holding a skull in my hand

brought into focus the real struggle some members of my family have been in, and their suffering came home to me.

Moments of Weariness. I began to feel weary of gluing syringes and shards of broken mirror onto the table top. I recognized that my own wish to be a different kind of mother to my own had been shattered like the shattered mirror. While continuing to place dangerous sharp edged items on the altar, I became aware that I was in a meditative state, and found myself thinking "the hell times are over". I felt a sense of survival and then, deep weariness – as I continued to place the broken things, delicately, upon the altar top.



Figure 58. Anger transformed into compassion, digital photo, J. Hill, 2010.

During the writing phase of this inquiry I spent some more time reflecting on the highlighted words and phrases, drawing from them relational patterns and the multimodal interactions with the materials which were aligned to these patterns and interactions.

Relational Patterns: Content.

Sometimes I do not speak up about my concerns to others and my emotions do not get expressed.

If I speak out my negative feelings, I find relief.

I respect my close others and want to protect them.

I can have compassion when I am aware of the other person's unhappiness.

Trying to be the best I can be, and present a good look, makes me weary.

I have the capacity to face danger.

Reflection assists survival.

Multimodal interactions with the materials: process

Smashing bottles accessed unexpressed emotions.

Speaking out loud prompted actions that brought emotional release.

Pressing & pushing things down forcefully to glue on the altar helped release anger.

Using art materials gave access to unspoken concerns.

Speaking out loud while gluing facilitated me making unfamiliar sounds.

Holding a skull in my hand accessed compassion for those who suffered.

During this phase of adding broken things to the underworld altar I felt very safe to explore the impact of the crises and chaos I had faced in previous years when I worried about my loved ones who were so troubled.

Poetic Summary.

Stamping, smashing, breaking, shattering,
the original image of good mother
now in shards of mirror
delicately placed on the altar
with all the hell things to show

where the children have been
and how the partners and parents
made their journeys too.
It's a mess needing order
It's a mess made with anger
A place to find comfort for grief
Weary as she goes
cynical but compassionate
Weary but respectful
trying to glue herself
back together again.

Collaborative Dialogue with Kerry

During Kerry's visit to the studio in December 2010, I told her about the mannequin doll head with the long neck that I wanted to put in the vice on the underworld altar. This head somehow represented for me the fairly constant state of hypervigilance I had been in for many years, brought about by fear and worry for family members. The expression on the face reminded me of the many times I had felt frozen with fear and unable to speak when those I loved were in dangerous situations. I resonated with the look on this face with my own experience of making no sound when I had willingly soldiered on with practical caring of those in distress. I had developed several trauma symptoms, particularly a startle response when the phone rings. When this happens my body immediately shudders, I become frozen to the spot, and then I hope it is not a call for help in a crisis. I was also aware of a buried scream that had never come out, and I wished to find a way to include this sense on the mannequin head somehow. I told Kerry all of this and I asked her to help me attach this head into the vice. (The audio tape is available on request).



Figure 59. *Trying the mannequin's head in the vice,* photo, Jenny Hill, 2010.

I selected a section from the audio tape which expressed something of a sense of agitation in my voice.

- J: Oh, is she going to hold there? (In the Vice)
- K: Different expression not vacant like the others she is looking out.
- J: Oh looks like how I felt in bed with migraine headaches.
- K: Yeah?
- J: Yeah, it's like will I ever get (better?) looking for she's not getting help.
- K: A hopelessness really.
- J: Hopelessness and a bit of resignation.
- K: Yes, that's the word.
- J: Resignation, this is my lot.
- K: Yes. I just have to lie here and be in it.
- J: Yes.
- K: Well, she feels like the right one (choice of mannequin head).
- J: She does doesn't she? I am so pleased she can actually fit there, in there. (in the vice).
- K: And there (pointing to a place on the neck) you've got space for the Scream a lovely long neck, with all that ropey tension there.
- J: Hmmn.
- K: What sort of scream is it?
- J: [I found that I could not answer this question and I don't know why] (Transcript, 17/12/10)

Kerry spent some time immersing in the experience of the underworld altar with its broken shards and ugly paraphernalia then she wrote a poetic response.

Take one step ... One step toward this place Tread carefully! Shards of broken love, pain and anger Pave your way And death sits heavily on your shoulder You may lose them The ones you love – You must hold them all ALWAYS! In the vice of pick axe pain You must push down All that you scream against You must resign -You must forebear -You must, must, must Be THERE For them, for love ... So that they may hear The intimate lullaby.

Kerry captured here some of the words I had used to describe my experience of these times, adding her own resonances. By weaving in her own intersubjective response, I felt she captured some of the aspects of my re-experiencing of dark times and I felt her attentive attunement. To a degree this eased the burden of my own knowledge of the dangerous circumstances in which those I love had been in. She had seen what I had been through as if she knew that place, without her own detailed descriptions included. I noticed though that I couldn't answer Kerry's question of me at the time: "What kind of scream?"

It was in March the following year that I finally felt that Edvard Munch's "The Scream" could best answer her question of me.



Figure 60. The Scream, digital photo, Jenny Hill, 2010

Before I began pasting the image on the base of the mannequin's head I picked up pen and paper to write down some notes as I pasted the picture on.

I am about to paste "The Scream" on the bottom of my head in the vice on the underworld altar. As I apply and press the image onto the base the weeping begins again, slow tears dropping at first, then big guffaws of deeply sad and stress filled gut sobs. No one is around and so I let this happen. I wonder how it was that I could navigate the traumatic and difficult times throughout my life when loved ones 'danced with the shadow of death'. (Process notes, 27 March, 2011)

In response to Kerry's sense of a ropey neck I attached some strips of rope to the neck to show the tight throat that suppresses the scream. To represent the many migraines I had during those difficult years of worry I wrapped some barbed wire around the head. It wasn't until later that I recognized the comparison to the story of Christ's crucifixion when the crown of thorns was placed on his head.



Figure 61. Head in Vice, digital photo, T. Menzies, 2011.

Reading through my process notes I was drawn most strongly to the sentence: "I wonder how it was that I could navigate the traumatic and difficult times throughout my life." My answer to this was to acknowledge that there were times I was hanging on by my fingertips.



Figure 62. *Hanging on by my fingertips*, collected objects, visual representation,

Jenny Hill, digital photo, 2011.

I had also imagined a thought bubble coming from the mannequin head in the vice, and with my son's permission, I included his digital art representing his experience of hearing voices.



Figure 63. *Hearing voices, seeing voices,*Visual representation, Hill & Hill, photo J. Hill, 2010.

Representing my experience of horror at knowing what my son was going through, this visual representation, gave me and him a way to make visible what he and I in the care of him had been going through. As I neared the end of representing my distressing experiences on the underworld altar I accidently cut my hand on some broken glass. When wrapping it up I looked at the traces of brokenness, blood and mess strewn across the altar top and felt shocked. It reminded me of the sand tray scene that was made by Jenni earlier in the inquiry when she had literally 'dumped' so many things into the sand tray.



Figure 64. *The underworld altar*, Jenny Hill, 2011.

Conclusion of Making the Underworld Altar.

I brought all I was coming to know about my experience of making the underworld altar and Kerry's responses into another poetic summary:-

Here I am in the Underworld,
walking and working through the debris of destruction, where
those things in life too awful to embrace,
like loved ones' death wishes wished for, or endured,
and other people's choices to abuse or use you,
lie screaming at the bottom of the pit.

Am I here by choice?

Or was I abducted by forces unchosen?

Did natural responses to rescue those I love lead me here, to make sense of that which shocks and disturbs?

I handle the left overs from the horrors, like jagged edges and tangles of terror, And split off broken body parts lying strewn, across the landscape of broken dreams and expectations of something better.

I cut myself and bleed - Just another way to cry.

Remembering there is purpose to being here, I look for the treasure though it's hard to see through tears.

Will I find the treasure through touch or sight,
through sound or smell?
Or feeling my way and trying not to trip over obstacles in the dark.
At least there is no fear of the Void, since I am already here.

There are many ways of knowing and through my body felt sense and emotions

I hear the whisper:

"Look over here now."

And when I do,
I see myself in a shard of broken mirror,
and I see myself still intact.

Rather than reduce this summary further, I leave this as an example of how the meanings constructed and the art making processes interact.

Section Two: Emergence of Altars Associated with the Underworld Altar

Several other altars, large and small, emerged during the making of the underworld altar. These all seemed to be associated with what I like to call 'death-dealing' (rather than 'lifegiving') experiences in my life. In this section I briefly describe the making of one of the smaller altars I called, 'Broken dolls, broken dreams', and also, two larger altars – 'Torn asunder' and 'Exhaustion'. I was looking for anything I could find that might be novel or an addition to the findings of my painful experiences represented on the underworld altar.

The Process of Making the Broken Dolls, Torn Asunder and Exhaustion Altars

Broken Dolls, Broken Dreams. The idea of representing my experience of being torn apart emotionally began with a box of my own broken dolls from my childhood which I had presented to the first colloquium meeting earlier in this inquiry. Having found an old piece of a gate on a hard rubbish collection during the time in the studio I wondered how I might use it. When my supervisor Jan arrived to view my progress in the studio, she mentioned that the gate looked like an emergency stretcher. This appealed to me. The word emergency was reminiscent of my experience of being in the emergency wards at several hospitals over the years, tending to family members. In gathering the dolls and some bandages to tape them to the 'stretcher' I realized that I had been caring for ill relatives at the same time as going through the awful period of separation and divorce. This little altar became an expression of my own distress and brokenness at those times and yet as I wrapped this crepe bandage to hold the dolls in place I had a felt sense of security. Like when I had wrapped the crepe bandage around the 'rock encased pain' some years earlier in this inquiry. It has often been difficult to ask for help during times of chaos when I felt I just had to soldier on.



Figure 65. Broken dolls, broken dreams, doll collection, Jenny Hill.

The experience of soldiering on was also enacted during my separation and divorce in the early 1990s. During this time, I had an awful sense of being torn apart and dislocated from the old way of life I had lived in during my first marriage being disappointed and dislocated from a home base was extremely distressing for everyone involved.

The broken body parts of my dolls coupled with the awareness of my confusion in my development as an adolescent seemed somehow connected to my experience of the loss of the dream of "happily ever after" represented in the medallion of disappointment hanging on the inside torso in the bridal altar. I was beginning to see how disparate meanings of experience across the altars were connecting together, confusion, loss, disappointment and dislocation. I brought these reflections into the torn as under altar.

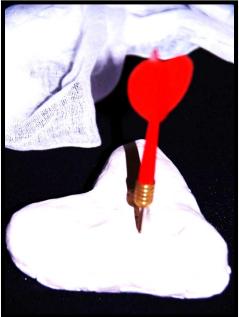
The Torn Asunder Altar. I had an old table and table top board which I imagined being covered in a black cloth on which to amplify and depth my experiences of distress during the loss of my relationship to my children's father. I had some old black cloth which was in two pieces and when I threw each piece across the table top, the place where the two pieces met in the middle created a gap, like a slit. Standing still I gasped at what I perceived to be a wound down the middle of an absent torso. I immediately painted under the cloth in this gap with red paint. It felt like I was painting a bloodied wound. It also looked like a massively big vagina, but my perception of it was a raw and angry wound sliced down my whole torso. I then placed a mannequin's head and four limbs from my collection around the wound in the cloth.

When I painted all of the limbs a pale flesh colour I felt as though I was tending to and soothing a body which had carried stress and fear for many years. There was a quality to this experience that was similar to when I had painted my mother's 'head' for the childhood altar and the Perspex legs for the bride. As I continued to look across at the torn asunder altar over the weeks that followed, while working on the other altars, I became more and more disturbed that these limbs and head were disconnected from each other. I happened to be in a shop looking for fabric for something else one day when I saw a roll of white gauze fabric in a corner. When I went over to touch it, I sensed this could be used as a bandage to bring the body parts together as they lay upon the altar table.









Figures 66: Torn asunder, digital photos, J. Hill & J. Allen, 2011.

I Wrote: I am tearing and ripping the final page from a children's book of the Cinderella story. It says "And they lived happily ever after". I notice I am not ripping with anger, rather, in a mood of "this is how it is". I have not experienced "happily ever after but I have experienced being torn apart by disappointment. My fingers rip the paper almost tenderly.

With courage and compassion I tear the two faces – his and hers – apart from each other. I have done this in my life. I have pulled away. However, on reflection I have only done so when I have felt disappointed, hurt, and have been taken for granted, for too long. (Process notes, 07/03/11).

I placed an arrow in a clay sculptured heart I had previously made and collaged each of the limbs, pasting a torn up fairy story on one of the mannequin's arms, pasting negative words from magazines veiled with cloth on one leg and on another, maps cut from an old street directory to illustrate the many house moves that I have made in the past. My mood fluctuated during these activities but I didn't cry, as I remained focused.

I have re-read what I have written about the two altars above, broken dreams and torn asunder, taking note of the significant key words which stand out for me. I have made a summary of them in poetic form.

Through a wire gateway
lies the land of broken dreams
where no amount of fixative,
or bandages or tape,
can reconnect the black cloth
which now reveals the wound.

The emergency of leaving home leads to landscape strewn with disappointment, which disturbs; an arrow in the heart begs white gauze bandage to re attach disconnected parts.

The happily-ever-after myth now lost, challenges a woman to soldier on, to find new places in which to live, to heal, from the wounds of separation, grief and trauma.

A place within in which to find the strength
to recover herself, and to walk on.

While reflecting on the Torn Asunder altar, which held the grief and trauma of separations from people and places, I felt exceedingly tired.

Altar to Exhaustion. I had imagined an altar, of a body having fallen down exhausted and stretched over a rock, as a representation of the many times I had felt exhausted by loving and caring for others in danger. I found an entry in my personal journal which was written prior to taking all of my materials to work on my altars to the studio space at Mt. Dandenong.

I have awoken with a sense of exhaustion and stress (again) – lying in the bed cozily – but feel I am just lying on top of the bed as if it is a plank of wood. I am wide awake and it is not daylight, but is the middle of the night, black, dark. An incongruence between my state of being and the context of being in a place of rest – I am wired, but this is supposed to be the time and place for rest. My mind is full to overflowing with ideas and plans about how to proceed with another crisis in my life – another forced exit. I have felt this way many times before. It is like I am woken up by something and asked to work-it-out, be creative with solutions to get to a better place, or at least manage this next challenge. These challenges feel relentless- many and often, with pauses between not long enough to recover my strength (like labor!!!) So each time I do manage I am left so depleted that I never want to move again, ever! I am exhausted again! (Journal notes: 3am, 30/10/10)

Once I had moved to the next 'home' I read this journal entry again. I felt inspired to construct a large rock shape from chicken wire and though I had everything in the studio by now I decided to construct a large rock made from chicken wire on the back porch area of the house I had moved to. When I took it to the studio space where all the other altars were in production, I spent a lot of time thinking how to make it look like a rock. At one stage I ripped up some white cloth into long lengths, feeling like a wartime nurse ripping up sheets

for bandages. I soaked these in Paverpal to stiffen them before wrapping them onto the chicken wire. It didn't look right. Next I tried papier Mache, which didn't stick. After further experimentation I settled for covering the wire construction with aluminum foil wrap which I spray painted different shades of brown. The activity of making this large rock felt another way to 'work' with the experience of sorrow earlier in the inquiry with my peers. This time the rock was made externally to me and became a place to rest upon.

The life size calico rag doll (with no face) I had previously thought to use as my mother in the childhood altar, became the insides of a hessian figure to express my feelings of weariness. I have never wanted others to see me as tired, I think I saw tiredness as weakness. In responding to a friend's offer of help at this time, I asked her could she cover the calico figure with hessian that I had purchased, because I just felt too tired to do it myself.



Figure 67. Exhaustion, hessian doll, made by Cath Connelly, 2011.

Looking at the hessian doll lying across the wire rock (below) she reminded me of a sacrificial offering to the gods, as a lamb taken to the slaughter on an altar made of 'roughhewn rock'. The hessian doll's front and middle area were the places where I had clutched the bandaged covered representation of the rock encased pain in front of my peers. The longer I looked at this form across the rock my focus shifted to seeing her as just having a rest. From that perspective I liked how she seemed not to care about what she looks like, she just had to stop and rest, no matter that it was on a hard rock place, nor looking like an altar of sacrifice.





Figures. 68. Rest or sacrifice? Photos T. Menzies, 2011.

Concluding This Section on the Underworld and Associated Altars

I reviewed all that I have presented in this chapter in relationship to my inquiry into my experiences of distress and stress. In making the altars to my experiences of trying to understand chaos in my life, of caring for loved ones in distress, of the impact of dislocation brought about by the ending of relationships and the exhaustion resulting from these experiences, I retraced my journey through this chapter. I noticed in what I had written that making these altars helped me deal with my experience of the loss of significant partners, and

of companioning my loved ones when they were in danger of losing their lives. This seemed to occur through the expression of emotions and feelings such as terror, anger, sadness, grief, cynicism and compassion for myself and those who lived with enormous struggles. These expressions were enabled by the art making processes.

I also noticed through the art making processes that in my companioning of my loved ones I had become hypervigilant, voiceless, fearful, and experienced a heightened sense of agitation, hopelessness, resignation, a sense of brokenness, the fear of losing them, and wanting to hold onto them. Through these trauma responses I had silenced my screams, endured migraines and lived with a sense of urgency and emergency. I had adopted a posture of soldiering on although often lonely, frustrated, disappointed, disconnected and dislocated. A surprising discovery was to acknowledge a sense of resilience as well, as my peers had pointed out. And now as I write, not only was I fearful, I see myself now as fearless.

After clustering key clusters to identify the experience of representing these experiences I reduced this material to form statements of my relational patterns and arts-led processes.

Statements about Anxious Relational Patterns in this Inquiry

When those I love were unwell or abusing themselves, my desire to rescue them was propelled by the fear of losing them.

I chose to put myself in dangerous positions to see them safe.

I wanted to help them so that they would get better and then I would feel better.

When I chose to pull back from loved ones, to protect myself, I felt torn apart in my choices to care for them or to care for myself.

When I chose to separate from relationships which failed to nurture me, I experienced dislocation, disappointment, disconnection and sometimes, a sense of relief with new possibilities to live into.

Continuing to act from my values, and fears, I became exhausted but kept 'soldiering on'.

The impact on me of living with loved ones in this way brought me to understand the complex grief which created states of exhaustion. I came to see how I have 'soldiered on' to get through big messes that I could not clean up. The question of how I kept myself together seems to be answered by the way in which I kept trying to bring about order (when there seemed to be none) and learning to accept what I could not change. I have recognized that the way I have been with materials and used them echoes my experience of my parents, a mum who was ordered in her approach and dad who was more spontaneous in his responses to life. These two aspects of their personalities appear to me as aspects of myself.

Statements about Arts-led Processes

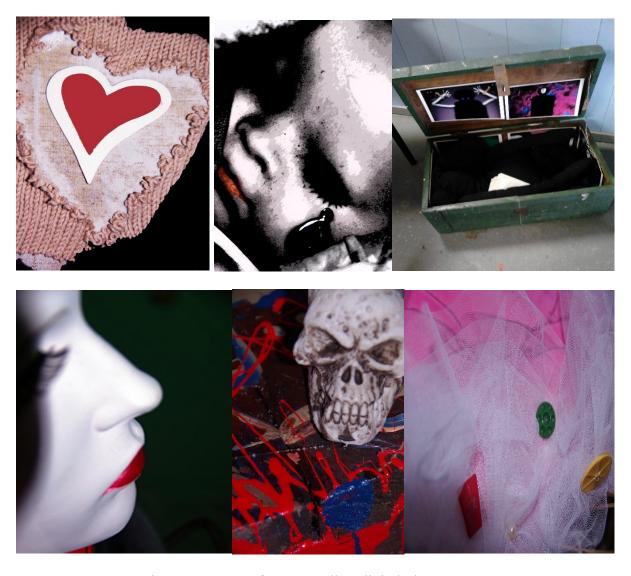
I found that imagery which held meaning repeated itself across my Altars e.g. bandages, broken objects, wire. These appearances connected me to my main topics of the inquiry – loving/caring and suffering/distress bringing clarity to the emergence of personal meanings.

Making decisions about where things are placed in three dimensional art making might come from a felt 'rightness' of its aesthetic value, accidental events or intentional messiness.

Arts-based research experience created a safe forum in which to express emotions and attend to bodily felt senses that supported the reflective process in coming to new understandings.

Arts-based research makes time for reflection on life experiences.

Using arts-making as an inquiry process to explore distressing life events has enabled me to know my experiences in a different and fulfilling way that is unlike just talking about them.



Figures 69. ISR's from Jan Allen, digital Photos, 2010.

In the next chapter I continue the narrative of my emergent findings. When looking across the studio vital moments of insight gave me further perspectives as the altars neared

completion. I also include a section on some final intersubjective dialogues from attendees at my formal viewings of the completed altars. I finish with a dialogue between the mannequin heads from four of the Altars.

CHAPTER 7

Re-creation through Expression, Collaboration, and Insight

The findings in this chapter move on from my representations of experiences of loving (being in relationships of significance) and suffering (caring for loved ones in distress) to describe three more aspects that seemed important to me whilst making the altars in the studio space. Firstly I briefly present the story of making the healing/crying altar that brought together my experiences of making the 'rock encased pain' in the early stages of the inquiry with the experience of crying that featured as a major way to express strong emotion during the construction of the altars. Secondly I present some examples of what happened to amplify my growing awareness of personal meanings in vital moments of insight when looking across the studio at all of my Altars during construction and as they neared completion. Thirdly, I have chosen some examples of intersubjective responses from those who attended three formal viewings of the completed altars that brought my attention to the implicit spiritual narrative that underpinned my inquiry aims. A final word in the form of a dialogue between the mannequin heads I used in the altars brings my findings to a close. My discussion of all research findings in chapters' four to seven will be found in chapter eight and aims at offering contributions to the fields of arts based inquiry, relational patterns, and carer's experience.

Section One: the Healing/Crying Altar

Creating this Altar became a gateway into accepting newness in my life which manifested as a sense of 'healing' of hurts and freedom in having expressed my sorrowful feelings as I made the Altars. I found that I could not settle on the right label for this altar. At times I called it the healing altar but in the writing of the experience of creating it I saw how

much the focus was on the crying I had done throughout this whole inquiry period from the first time I expressed my sadness in the small group supervision when the rain had fallen on the roof of the building we were in at the time, to the tears I shed when making the underworld altar. I placed the rock-encased pain with bandage in a silver wire basket. The open area shows the crunched up newspaper I had used to express my sadness in the first stages of my candidature. I had found a beautiful curved shaped mirror on a hard rubbish collection and imagined it cut into slim pieces to represent winding rivers. In September 2011, as I was nearing the finish of work on the childhood, underworld and other Altars, I gathered all the materials I felt were relevant to use on the healing altar. I set up the camera to film the beginning of making this altar (see Appendix 4, on Disc).

Process and Story: Refining Meanings 3



Figure 70. *Bandaged wound exposed*, Mixed media representation, Jenny Hill, 2011.



Figure 71. *Rivers of tears*, mixed media representation, J. Hill, September, 2011.

I later transcribed the process of dialoguing with the art-making materials and then trailed through the transcript of this session to choose keywords that stood out for me. I put these keywords into clusters and present these here under three different headings:

(1). Aspects of embodied knowing

I have a sense of (when) moving my hand with the cloth, of well-being as I do it

As I move around, I am remembering all the tears that I have cried (said in a gentle voice).

I spread these down, before gluing, feels right.

Always a right way or right feel in my body, the weight of what this reflection is actually about and what it is connected to.

In looking again, I had imagined the (coloured tear drops) moving from blue representing sadness to yellow joyful crying, but the aesthetic (does not feel right to

me)? I like it but it is too ordered. Order for a while suits me, then I get bored, too much the same, want difference.

I have moved the coloured tears now from original position. Gone for clustering.

Something more satisfying about the clustering, feel this in my breathing, something freer about this placement.

Reflections on the cluster. I was aware of my embodied knowing through my senses and through my spontaneous movement around the altar as I solved problems I encountered in placing the chosen objects. I touched objects and felt an accompanying felt sense of well-being as I moved the cloth to clean the river-shaped mirror pieces before placing them in the sand. I moved around the altar as I continued to rub the cloth over the sliver of mirror, and in looking again, I remembered the tears.

Spreading the coloured teardrop shapes around felt satisfying. The action of clustering the tear drops with my fingers gave a sense of general 'rightness' in my body even though I started to feel weighed down.

(2). Recognising emotion and the feelings in my body

[There is] a sense of excitement, there is a sense, as I do this, of celebration.

Now I am so okay with crying. Moving through colours feels joyful.

[There are] differences in the way we (I) process emotions.

[There is] something more satisfying about the clustering (of the tear shapes)

Looking again at the cluster of tears brought a slowing of my breathing, and an accompanying feeling of satisfaction.

I feel a bit weary - Order for a while suits me, (then I get) bored, with too much the same ...

When it comes to application, as in other installations (altars) ... there is a deep sense of serenity and the emotional memory of what it has been like to actually cry seems to not be in the foreground as I put things together [right now] ... I feel removed from the feelings of sadness [but the] placement is like a ritual honouring and respecting myself for passing through the sad times in my life.

Reflections on the cluster. Even though this altar was representing my emotions and my experiences of crying I was calm as I moved about. When gluing the teardrop shapes it was as if I was performing a ritual. After a while doing this I started to feet weary again irked by too much order in the making, an echo of my need for spontaneity and variety in my life, first evidenced in the making of the childhood altar on the back porch.

(3). Resilience

Throughout the whole project, I feel a greater sense of myself accepting what life brings ... life has happened to me, so it becomes a matter of how I adjust.

A lot of my crying has been to help me cope, crying has brought me healing.

There is a sense of gathering up some of my crying and symbolically they become placed on these rivers so that they can flow away.

I have put the teardrops in predictable patterns and then I had an insight into a theme of predictability and unpredictability. This is a healing moment/integration of the theme of difference b/w my parents where I went from one style to another, from 'free flow' to 'symmetry'. I am now more comfortable with unpredictability than (I have) ever been. I think this is who I am. The healing comes from crying as I make sense of it.

There are different ways to cry – sometimes no choice not to, or, just cry; sometimes just happens and takes you over; sometimes walk up to the edge and back away;

sometimes can't wait to have a cry; sadness or joy; So many variables, differences in the way we process our emotions. No right way – whatever the way it is for you.

I think what it is that I am saying in this altar, is that my crying has been a tremendous release through times of trouble, [and in the making of the altars] sometimes alone and sometimes finding that you are in the right company to be able to really let things out!

Reflections on the cluster. When making this part of the Altar I became mesmerized by the activity of gluing the coloured tear drops onto the mirror-rivers. I was unrushed and calm, not in touch with the grief, confusion or trauma re-experienced in previous altars. I was acknowledging a sense of acceptance of what I had been through and the value of crying in bringing about a sense of healing of painful experiences.

Having glued the tear drops onto the mirrors, I saw two familiar thematic patterns:-

- (A). Symmetry and free-flow, reminding me of the differences in my experience of my parents.
- (B). Predictability and unpredictability, reminding me of my experience as a mother when no longer able to predict the choices of her young adult offspring who were in distress.

I went through the transcript of filming the healing altar for a second time, this time to locate the phrases which referred only to crying. I made the following summary statement:-

Crying can help with releasing a build-up of emotion and helps me with the task of coping with difficulties in life. It can function as a way to accept what life brings. I

found crying helped me adjust to things that had brought me grief and trauma. I felt no need to apologise to anyone for crying, as working with the materials to create the altars gave me a sense of self agency and surrender into my own vulnerability. I found that different ways to cry came about, sometimes through no choice as it just happened and took me over, other times it was like walking up to the edge and then backing away. I sometimes could not wait for the opportunity to have a good cry, either through sadness or joy. My crying had provided a tremendous release through times of trouble and was re-experienced in the making of the Altars providing me with company on what became a healing journey.

In conclusion to making this Altar, the making of it became a gate-way to connect my story of the baby who learned not to cry and enabled me a forum for me to express emotion freely. The making of this Altar, with the representation of the rock encased sadness in central position, has given me an opportunity to name, express and represent my experiences of sadness, disappointment, shock and gratitude. A sense of the healing value of expressing and representing experiences of sadness has brought me a deep sense of peace. In chapter eight I will discuss crying with the Literature in more depth.

Section Two: Vital Moments of Insight across the Altars

During Kerry's visit she had shown some concern that I might become overwhelmed by emotion while surrounded by all of the altars. She suggested that I set up a sentinel of some sort, something to look at to ground me a small altar to symbolically oversee the emergence of my experiential and representational processes. I followed through with her suggestion by placing an old bird cage on a small table I had in my collection. I opened the door and on the outside of it I placed a clay sculpture I had made in the early 1980s named "*Thinking*"

Woman". Underneath the tabletop is the clay sculpture of 'the years of my life' that I made around the time I painted the "Black Madonna's Wounded Breast". At the top of the cage above the open door I clipped a golden bird. This sentinel did work well for me, giving me a place to settle my eyes as I needed, as I worked away on the constructions.



Figure 72. *The Sentinel,*Multimodal representation, Jenny Hill, 2010

Whenever I worked on my Altars and looked across to all of them in the studio I was I was surprised by vital moments in which disparate meanings in different Altars now seemed to connect with each other. These moments are difficult to describe but include a sense similar to those "ah-ha" moments that Rogers (1995) and Stern (2004) wrote about that may last only a few seconds. I refer to them as vital moments due to the heightened sense of body, mind and, the awareness of spirit, being aligned at the same time as important insights came

to my mind. Here I have selected five vital moments to show how these experiences deepened my inquiry while I was working in the studio.

Vital Moments (1)

As the Altars neared completion they seemed to take on their own identities and become companions in the space, just as my tears had done. It was here that my perceptions seemed to shift again as I was making final touches to each one. As I stood by the childhood altar one day I glanced across the studio space and momentarily my gaze fell on the almost finished underworld Altar on the opposite side of the studio. In that moment I was struck by a sorrowful feeling and asked myself: "How did I get from the childhood altar to there (the underworld altar) I looked at the mannequin head in the vice. She seemed a long way from my original home of a safe routine and my smiling father. At the start of this inquiry I began with a curiosity about wounds and underworld experiencing. I had wanted to know what was in my childhood experience that helped me cope with my own children's distress. This day I was looking from the perspective of what had been secure and innocent in my childhood, and the underworld altar looked really forbidding and scary. It was not the altar that I had "loved" when I first began making it.

Vital Moments (2)

During the time I had been working on the underworld altar I had once again cut myself on some broken glass that I was attaching to the top of the Underworld Altar. That day, when I had turned to find a cloth for my bloody hand, my eyes rested on the unfinished altar to my

experience of adolescence. In the moment of holding my bleeding hand and looking at the adolescent altar the word danger came to me. I recognized that adolescence was the time where my basic insecurities came to the fore. Fear of the world manifested as agoraphobia; fear of parents not loving each other; and fear of me not finding 'true' love leaving me all alone in the world. At that moment I recognized that my sense of danger and the fear associated with this were core experiences of mine carried over from my adolescence into my late twenties. This sense of danger was also what I lived with during my children's adolescence and early adulthood, represented in the broken glass I had cut my hand on.

Vital Moments (3)

The spaces between the Altars gave me opportunities see things from different perspectives, as I walked around them. I noticed that the x-ray of my mother's spine in my representation of her was echoed in the tall, dried stalks in the bust of me as mother. This seemed also to connect with the rainbow-coloured stalks I had placed in the central representation of my sense of a strong self. I had spent many evenings binding and gluing rainbow-coloured wool over every part of the metal structure of this "standing tall" representation and found this a meditative and soothing activity. Bronwyn, whose studio space I was using, came and stood with me one evening as we both looked at this finished representation from a distance. She spoke of the center of the rainbow-coloured pot stand. She said: "The central spine is what holds all the nerves safe and in place." In that moment I stretched myself tall as her words opened me to recognizing this sense of strength within myself.

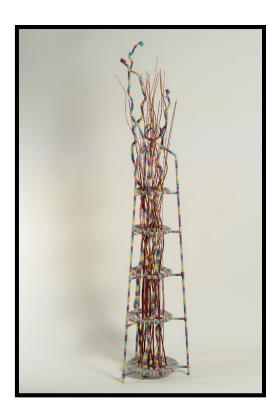


Figure 73. Standing tall, digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2016

Soft pastel rainbows attached to tall strong wire frame; golden coils of energy upright in central tunnel; feeding her the flame of life and passion, growing her into her strength, defining her as hopeful. (Journal entry, July 2011.)

Across the altars I saw how the rainbow colour had repeated. It was threaded around the wire on the pot stand (above), across the cane washing basket holding me as a baby and the coloured tears on the healing altar (below).



Figure 74. Baby's cradle, digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2016.



Figure 75. River of tears, Digital photo, T. Menzies, 2011.

Rainbows are somewhat overdone as a metaphor for hope, but nevertheless speak to me of my own hope.

Vital Moments (4)

While this spontaneous cross-referencing process was one of the most meaningful aspects of the inquiry, it was also one of the most challenging. I continued to be disturbed by the disconnected body parts. My mother's body was in more than one part, my dolls were broken apart, and there were other headless busts and mannequin heads in several altars. The arms and legs not connected on the "Torn Asunder" representation were loosely held together with white gauze like a bandage. On one occasion Bron had offered "Without the gauze the form would just be pieces" and "The gauze is so delicate and yet holds it all together." (9/02/11) In fact I saw that the only body which was intact was the exhausted one lying over the wire rock representation. When looking at her sprawled there, I thought that maybe this was the only time I pulled myself together, when resting or sleeping blocked out the anxious patterns of worry and fear. Only then maybe I could start to recover myself, maybe only then could I integrate the splits within myself.

Vital Moments (5)

Bron dropped into the studio at another time and said: "There are a lot of hard things here, not much softness." I thought about that, trying not to feel that I had got something wrong aesthetically. Reflecting on this later, I came to see that the hardness of the materials was both functional and meaningful for me. They provided structures on which to hold the representations and they spoke to me of my strength. I glanced around the space and saw the upright standing representations of my mother's body with her x-ray spine, my dad as the ladder, the two busts in drawers, the frame supporting the bride, myself as mother with the tall reeds coming out of the torso, the chair with the journeys of love and the central

representation of the upright stand bound in the rainbow-coloured wool. Experiences representative of pain were held in other materials; in the barbed wire as a wreath around the head in the vice, in an emergency gate with wire for the broken dolls, in chicken wire underneath dresses, and in all the hard and broken objects on the underworld altar. The collection of all of these together in one place spoke both of distress and resilience. As I moved about I saw things from different perspectives helping me to name and understand my experiences of distress and my resilience over the whole course of the inquiry.

Section Three: Collaborative Dialogues

In December 2011 and January 2012, I held three open viewings from which I gathered further data in the form of intersubjective responses from those who wished to participate. As part of the preparation for the open viewings I set the altars up in a way that made it easy for the participants to walk around. For those who wished to follow a chronological trail I had help in sticking a very long length of golden ribbon on the floor, like a golden path, an echo from my first visual representation at the beginning of the inquiry.

As I knew from my previous research, intersubjective responses have the power to change perceptions and to contribute both to personal meaning making and to a research inquiry (Hill, 1997). Whether spontaneous, or sought at pre-planned meetings with others, the responses that others gave me carried me forth and informed this inquiry. As a way in which to broaden the personal into a public inquiry I took the opportunity to ascertain whether my Altar installations in their entirety were reflective of others in my social and professional contexts. I invited friends, family, colleagues and others from my psychology, spiritual direction and arts therapy tribes. In this section I will show only a few of the responses, ones

which I felt might contribute to a greater understanding of women's experiences of caring and suffering.

The Viewings

Before each of the formal viewings I placed art materials on a table for the viewers to create responses if they wished, based on what they saw and how they felt about what they saw. I left a box for viewers to place their responses in, and most of them were written responses. After the viewings I read them and I chose five intersubjective responses that resonated with my interest in cultural and spiritual aspects of being a daughter and a mother.

The intersubjective responses (ISRs) are followed by my reflections on them.

- (1) Intersubjective response.
- (2) Personal reflections.

Lyn (Age – late 70s), responded in one sentence:

(1). ISR: to the Sentinel Altar –

"The bird sits outside the cage". (Lyn B., 17/12/2011)

(2). Reflection: I had to smile because Lyn had noticed both the small bird attached to the outside near the top of the cage and the sculptured figure of the woman ("bird" coll.) sitting outside the door of the cage. I had previously only thought of the bird at the top of the cage as the one which had flown out of it. Lyn's response brought my attention to the greater freedom of the sculpted woman. With her acknowledgement of 'a bird' being outside a cage I felt she shared the knowing of the restrictions she and I and perhaps other women have experienced when caged in by others or by their own expectations. Her response took my

gaze to the bottom of the cage where brightly coloured feathers lay. I had made it look like a soft nest, a seductive place to keep me prisoner. The cage of 'don't speak out loud your troubles', with a door now wide open offering an escape into giving voice or choosing not to give voice to myself, as I pleased. I thought of all the cages I had used in the altar constructions, all the wire which held me in or made me stronger.

Rosie (Age- late 60s) wrote the following:

(1). ISR:

"Through rose-coloured glasses we were taught to be positive. Our parents knew that "worse things happen at sea" (so my father used to say). We were children post-war so [we were] not to be reminded of the bad times. 'Always spring, keep everyone positive, look forward to marriage and children', dreams were full. Everyone was home making. Not much on T.V. to tell us things weren't really 'rosy'. Much comedy to keep us happy and one big happy family. When negativity comes – sickness, unexpected tragedies, it is hard to comprehend: how do we react and have we the resources to cope? It wasn't meant to be this hard, can we take any more? But expressing the pain, anxiety, disillusionment, helps to place circumstances and incidents in perspective again!" (R. M., 17/12/11) (2). Reflection: My response when I read this was to feel connected to her experiences of being in a family with similar values and behaviours to my own. She captured the era we were born into and the sentiments of the people who went through 'the war'. Rosie's description of rose-coloured glasses aligned with my own experience of being sheltered from 'bad times' in my childhood. The silence of my parents in managing the 'negativity' of their life's challenges as I approached adolescence became a modelling for myself. Rosie's acknowledgement that the non-expression of negativity prevents perspective reminds me of the despair I have met in my female client's stories over the years. A need to broaden one's perspective and claim that life has good, bad and indifferent experiences in it.

Anon (Age - 40s) said:

(1). ISR:

(2). Reflection: My initial response to hearing her say these words was shock. I realized I was expecting others would only be moved in positive ways. It was when I saw her face so pale and heard her words that I saw her exhaustion. She needed to sit down and asked to be left a while. I did not know her story but I thought I had recognised that look of pale exhaustion. I have seen it in many of my women clients who come for help in understanding themselves in their situations. I have seen that face in the mirror and in the faces of women friends and family members. My collective memory of such faces is the distant gaze that comes with it, as the woman looks outwards to either a secret landscape that no one else can see or nothing much at all. Much like the gazing from the mannequin dolls I had used in my altars.

A.S. (Mid -70s) wrote the following:

(1). ISR:

A. S. wrote in large letters:-

"BIG writing for great courage in allowing a window to look through, for us to reflect on our own journeys... You have expressed through form, the deep inner journey of humanity and the possibility of the crucifixion and resurrection that encourages us all."

(A.S. 17/12/11)

(2). Reflection: It was encouraging to me that A.S. reflected on her own journey through the images with their inherent Christian metaphors embedded in some of my altars. I had not set out to overtly become a theological or spiritual inspiration for others, but was pleased that she read some of the subtexts embedded in the imagery of the altars. The sentence "A window to look through, for us to reflect on our journeys" stood out. I knew some of her story and I

knew she had a spiritual perspective originally influenced by Christianity. That she made mention of the forms I had used to express something of the crucifixion and resurrection — altars, barbed wire around the mannequin's head in the vice and three huge nails hammered into the Underworld altar top — brought home to me that I had not articulated or included these things in my story of making them for this inquiry. Her response encouraged me to continue my own ideas about how the Christian message, which speaks about cycles of living and dying uses the metaphor of resurrection to denote our daily overcoming of our trials and tribulations.

L.D. (Age - 50s) wrote the following:

- (1). ISR: "Who is this 'I' that seeks the sense of life, who watched the piercing of your heart, then sat with you to celebrate the slow return to disappointment ... And later shared your wine. Who is this golden thread that holds its essence through it all, still bright as new, witness to it all, eternal flow of life, loving you?" (L.D. 17/12/11)
- (2). Reflection: I was amazed that L.D. had focused on the gold thread pathway I had placed on the floor, and perhaps she saw gold in some of the other altars too? The gold ribbon holding the utensils to the peg board, the gold piano at the top of Dad's ladder, the golden basket holding fruit on a celebration table. I had used gold to depict the life-giving thread that held me on this journey of reflection in the co-creation to meanings which have brought me a semblance of healing and peace. She accurately named the stations on the journey seeking sense, the pierced heart, disappointment and celebration. I thought, I wonder why I had not named more of the spiritual nature more overtly, in the way she was doing. I think though that I liked to make some things ambiguous to others or to let them put their own perceptions into my art pieces.

One More Dialogue

During the exhibiting I found myself once again feeling unsettled about the number of mannequin heads that were separated from body parts. I later decided to bring these together to create a dialogue between them, to see what would happen. I moved the heads around several times to feel the best fit for them to have their eyes in line with each other until I realized that the scream at the bottom of the underworld head would be hidden. So I lay this head down as it had been in the underworld altar. I then placed the representation of my mother's head, the torn asunder head and the black/white ambivalent head from under the bridal altar, around the 'scream'. I wanted to get a sense of acknowledgement for the scream.



Figure 76. *Listening, looking and hearing her scream,*Digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2016.

Once set up I felt a question arising. "What would I like to hear them say about the scream?" This felt resonant to the female conversations that our small group supervision had had earlier in the inquiry, centered on the objects I had shown to the group.

Voice (1). My mother (short brown hair, earrings, red lipstick & green eyeshadow): Hmmmn, I am glad we did not actually ever hear that scream.

Voice (2). My ambivalence about getting married (black and white head):

Well yes and no Mum. Yes, it is impolite to bring attention to ourselves and for people to know we may not be coping; but, no, she is entitled to scream after suffering in silence.

Voice (3): My experience of divorce and separations (bald headed one):

Suffering in silence is okay, saves the embarrassment of having to answer questions.

Voice (4): My experience of the underworld altar:

 $Ummm \sim I'm$ not enjoying hearing you talk about me I am here, I do exist I've had enough, I want to scream.

Voice (1) Mother: I don't want to hear you scream thank you ...

Voice (3) Divorce: Me either, it will only remind me of my own unexpressed scream ...

Voice (2) Ambivalence: Well yes I would like to hear you scream, but no, would I? Perhaps, maybe ...

Voice (3) Divorce: So Ambivalence are you saying that you could hear the scream? You wouldn't mind?

Voice (2) Ambivalence: *Ummn, not sure, I think so, but maybe I could* ...

Voice (4) Scream: As long as Mum doesn't want to hear it, I think I won't scream after all.

She'll just say "Have you got it off your chest now?"

Voice (3) Divorce: You know what? I've got a lot to scream about too, I'm warming up to the idea myself.

Voice (5) Scream: That would be great, I'm rather sick of this pain in my neck from having lain down so quietly for so long with all this rope around my neck. Mum, you've gone quiet, could you join in with us perhaps? Surely it's time you got things off your chest too?

And just like that they all **SCREAMED** together

Having acknowledged the need to scream a sense of relief went through my body and I moved the head with the scream into an upright position. From this perspective everyone saw that she was taller than they had expected.



Figure 77. *A New Conversation*, Digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2016.

To conclude my findings in this inquiry I present this excerpt which was written at the end of the day after I had filmed the beginning of making the healing/crying altar:-

As I neared the end of what I wanted to do this day the clouds came over and it started to rain heavily. The rain drops crashed onto the corrugated roof of the studio. I was suddenly overwhelmed with emotions of surprise and joy. I remembered another day, in another studio, when I had turned up in a sad mood to small group

supervision with my doctoral peers. That day it rained so heavily onto that corrugated roof we could hardly hear each other speak. On this day I was amazed to hear the rain falling so heavily on the tin roof of the studio. I felt this event connected me back to the start of my inquiry. On this occasion though, I was in a more celebratory mode with no need to cry. It was as if I was walking through a landscape I was no longer afraid of, and recognizing the beauty that was embedded there.

(Journal entry, September, 2011 and Film in appendix 5, on Disc).

The YouTube link for the Montage is here: - https://youtu.be/ASbNVDIf9zQ

It is hoped that these personal findings, while important learning for myself, may shed light on how arts based inquiry can help others to identify patterns of relating to oneself and to others as a way to understand the complexity of caring for significant others in circumstances filled with the fear of losing them.

In the next chapter I introduce the literature that has informed my understanding of my relational patterns, caring for unwell loved ones and the importance of process in this arts-led and multi-modal inquiry.

CHAPTER 8

Relational Patterns Emerging in 3D Art Making

This image below represents the period of time between finishing the Altars and writing the thesis. It was a dry time of losing the excitement of making the Altars and wondering how to manage and report my findings for this discussion. The brown steps go down to the river before turning right into the yellow pathway to the little house that was viewed at a distance from the golden path at the start of the doctoral journey.



Figure 78. *Getting there, but via the river,*Visual representation, J. Hill

This chapter discusses findings reported in the four previous chapters that resulted from my reflexive analysis of this arts-led inquiry itself. I am now going to explore my

experience here in the light of the literature offering it as a case study to deepen understanding of the experience and nature of this form of inquiry. My aim is to further articulate the movement from experiential knowing into presentational knowing, and for consideration of arts-led inquiries as vehicles towards practical knowing, in both research and creative arts therapies. It was not easy to settle on a specific name for this form of art making that I called 3D and arts-led inquiry having begun with an urge to collect objects and to create altars to express my experiences. The method though evolved during the inquiry, guided by my felt sense and spontaneous impulses in my movements, actions, and dialogues with self, others and objects.

In developing my findings I have revealed connections between art and embodied self-knowing that has created meaning and a renewed sense of well-being. This arts-based inquiry aligns with therapeutic gains similar to art therapy. Stuckey and Nobel (2010) in their review of the research in the area of art and healing, explored the relationship between engagement with the creative arts and health outcomes summarising the connection between art and health in order to see "how to generate further interest in researching the complexities of art and health" (p. 254). Malchiodi (2018) in her brief history of arts based research (ABS) suggested that "possibly the strongest, yet to be formally acknowledged voice for ABR comes from creative arts therapists themselves" (p.77). She suggests this is due to reports of firsthand personal experience of healing through the arts that are "rich territory for deepening the understanding of the practice of, and methodologies of ABR" (p.77). I found as McNiff (2014) had that "Art heals by transforming difficulties into creative expressions" (p.40) occuring in arts-based research as a "systematic use of the artistic process ... as a primary way of understanding and examining experience" (McNiff, 2008, p.29). Alongside my personal findings this research offers a detailed focus on what happens in the process of

making art to make meaning of one's life resulting in knowings pertinent to both research and art therapy.

Preamble

In this discussion chapter I chose to focus on findings related to - myself as a daughter in my relational experience with my parents, my experience of care for loved ones in crises, and my experience of being in the process of art making as the vehicle for expression of emotions in embodied self-awareness that enabled me to make sense of my lived experience of the content that emerged. I will discuss these findings with reference to the relevant literature. The statements below identify a deep connection between my processes of making and understanding with greater clarity the nuances of my relational patterns as a child, a mother, a carer and as an arts maker/collaborative researcher.

Knowing came from the content in the process: Specifically, my relational experience with my parents.

Knowing came from the content in the process: Specifically, my experience of the burden of care of unwell loved ones.

Knowing was generated in the process of the intra-action of finding, holding and dialoguing with found and made objects before they were incorporated into the altars.

Knowing occurred in the process of making 3D altars via the entanglement of embodied self- awareness, emotions expressed, bodily movement, and in significant moments in present time experience.

More information about my relational experiences came through the intersubjective companioning of collaborators.

Knowing came from the environments which I inhabited during the inquiry.

As an arts based inquiry this research has been driven by embodied prompting towards expression of experience from which understandings emerged in the process of making altars. Gerber and Myers-Coffman (2018) wrote that: "Ultimately, ABR is a powerful and challenging approach to investigating, revealing, representing, and disseminating forms of knowledge not immediately apparent or readily utterable, but essential to understanding multiple dimensions of the human condition" (p. 587). Cypher (2017) acknowledged that practice-based research within the visual art scholarship has made important inroads into understanding how knowledge is produced in practice. What began as a mostly unknown journey, over time became held in an increasingly systematic way as I developed my own form of 'practice-based research' that grew from my recognition of an urge to make altars. This developed into an embodied quest to learn more about my relational experiences with loved ones via reflection and returning to iterative cycles of constructing the altars, looking at how I was forming the images, describing my actions through voice and writing, noticing what was happening in my embodied felt senses and emotions, collaborating with peers, contemplating what I was doing and what was arising by following hunches in the flow of being in the process.

Being in the rhythm of reflecting and returning to iterate cycles of action and writing became my contemplative experience in this inquiry. McNiff (2014) and Franklin (2012, 2017) describe that arts therapy and research is a contemplative activity. McNiff (2014) wrote: "I increasingly realize how the micro-actions of artistic processes as well as the

witnessing of them are the most reliable base for enhancing experience and change" (p. 41). Franklin (2012) claimed that by "Focusing attention inward and consciously exploring the diversity of our inner landscape would awaken awareness of human consciousness" (p. 87). The discipline of disciplined turning of awareness is the foundation of contemplative knowledge such as the focused attention of religious mystics, shamans, yogis and artists "in order to observe embodied phenomenon" (2012, p. 88).

The activity of making Altars and the input from collaborators and witnesses enabled me to facilitate positive change in my life. Changes such as being more able to be decisive with big decisions, a greater sense of well-being and a sense of appreciation of myself as a strong woman developed from this process. This happened as the inquiry progressed when I found an integration of my disparate thoughts and feelings about myself as a daughter, partner and mother, and when I engaged with unexpressed emotions as I assembled the altars. Integration is defined as the linkage of different parts so that a system moves towards a harmonious flow according to Siegel (1999) who describes that "integration is how the mind creates a coherent self-assembly of information and energy flow across time and context ... [that] ... "creates the subjective experience of the self" (p. 316). In this inquiry, by choosing myself as the subject, I was able to 'continuously interact with my actions' by making Altars to my relational experience, thus bringing together a more cohesive story of my childhood experiences with my parents, and to my later experience of caring for unwell family than I had previously.

In this discussion I have undertaken the challenging task of finding a coherent manner in which to articulate both the content and the process from this arts based research as they

are deeply interwoven. I cannot discuss the arts-based processes without mentioning the personal content that became my data, nor can I mention the personal content without referring to how the arts-based processes informed this. I am hoping my research findings will expand knowledge about what happens in the process of making art to make sense of things. I hope to inspire others who, as therapeutic arts practitioners might wish to undertake inquiries into human experience (others or their own). Those who companion others in their roles as psychotherapists, art therapists who work from a relational perspective, and/or arts-based researchers might be interested in the overlap of content and process when art making to make meanings of life. This chapter is large and is presented in three sections.

Section One: Content in the Process of Art Making – a dialogue with literature

Knowing came from the content in the process: Specifically, my relational experience with my parents

What stays with me as a major finding from making the childhood and adolescent Altars was that both my early childhood and adolescent relationships with my parents were found to be still full of feeling and meaning, powerfully influencing me in the present as evidenced by the frequency and intensity of emotions I expressed when in the process of making them. The story of my attachment to them ranged from a basically secure childhood that became more insecure during my adolescence. I realised that the term "attachment" became a metaphor for me early in the inquiry.

I had presented a small assemblage with threaded objects that belonged to my aunt, grandmother, father, mother and children, into a wire torso, and was impacted by an

intersubjective response from Lett at the time: "attachments are the feelings which wrap the emotional memories of the objects of our memorabilia" (chapter 5). On reflection this brought me to understand that in attaching and connecting items with objects of memorabilia, I was "enacting" my attachment to close others. Subsequently my Altars became a collection of attached objects and I discovered there were many different ways to experience 'attaching' metaphorically.

The way I touched, handled and placed the utensils and cake tins in an orderly fashion on the childhood Altar gave me a sense of remembering my mother. In my childhood she was ordered in her housekeeping and in her dressing of her children, in neat, clean and tidy ways. The utensils and tin felt hard and looked shiny but in the shiny hardness I felt a sensorial security as I glued and threaded these items together, suggestive to me of the safe boundaries of my ordinary household living. I knew what to expect from my mother. Before the family grew larger I had enjoyed the routine of these boundaries with her reading me stories at bedtime and her cooking. By touching and handling the objects and materials as I connected them to the table tops with glue and gold ribbon I felt soothed, until the experience of endlessly tying the ribbon through the holes in the pegboard became boring and the symmetry of upright utensils no longer satisfied. I think at that point in the construction of this first Altar, I 'woke up' in a way, the reverie of past memories broken by a need for my father. A messy dad, a strong man, a creative person who came to life for me when I picked up and carried his ladder into the kitchen scene. These bodily activities became the ways I could reattach (metaphorically) myself to my parents from times past into present moment reexperiencing. The fact that my adolescent difficulties emerged when I tried to put the wooden spoon in a different formation and felt bored astonished me. However, in the process of using glues and other substances to weld things together I became more and more curious about the

ways in which I had sought my attachments to both parents in the past as I sought my attachment to them in this inquiry.

The term 'attachment' continues to be used within psychology since Bowlby's ground breaking work (1969, 1973 & 1981). The PsychInfo database cited 651 articles on attachment in scholarly peer reviewed journals for the years 2010-2012 which grew to 2079 articles from 2012 to 2019. I did not come across any research into the disruption of a secure attachment with caregivers between childhood and adolescence at the time I was in the process of researching the literature. I did though discover that Bowlby (1969) as well as understanding that infants and young children seek proximity with their caregiver(s) for their security and survival, also believed that it is possible to not live out of insecure attachment behaviours for the whole of life if we come to understand the meaning of our disturbed feelings or behaviours in relationships. Then it becomes possible to form secure attachments with others over the life span dependent on the 'the other' and their equal commitment to forge new pathways of trust. I found no research into the impact of the disruption of secure attachment in early adolescence when there is due to family adversity (Hughes, et al 2016). In my remembered security with proximity to both parents for safety the dramatic change to anxiety in my adolescence resulted in fear for my safety.

Attachment theory continues to focus on the early years of a child's life beyond the research and writing of developmental psychologist Ainsworth (1979, 1985) who introduced the concepts of infants as secure, insecure - anxious, avoidant/ambivalent and disorganized. In the decades that have followed, neurobiology has extended the notion of attachment theory into what I would call 'practical applications'. Concepts such as 'intersubjectivity',

'attunement', 'sensitivity', 'mentalising' and 'mind-mindedness' have been used to open up discussions on how the caregiver(s) relate to the infant and child in ways that create healthy relationships (Fonagy, et al 1991; Meins, 1997, 1999, 2013; Fonagy, 2001; Mein et al, 2001; Siegal, 2001; Allen et al 2008; Ammanti & Trentini, 2009; Freeman, 2016; Baczkowski & Cierpialkowska, 2015; Camoirano, 2017; Hughes et al, 2017; Leerkes and Zhou, 2018; Bakermans-Kranenburg, & van IJzendoorn, 2017; van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2019; Badenoch, 2018; Kobak & Bosman, 2019; Ch'Ng, 2019; Fisher, 2011/2017/2019; Branjerdporn et al, 2019; Schore, 2001; Schore, 2008; Schore, 2011 and Schore, 2021).

If it is true that my remembering of my early childhood was secure because of the order and predictability of my mother and with the warmth, humour and the musicality of my father I think I can claim that how my parent's thought, felt, acted and interpreted me as an infant and child impacted me in the laying down of what Bowlby (1969, 1973 & 1981) first referred to as, internal working models of a positive kind. IWMs denote the mental representations that are formed through a child's early experiences with their caregiver(s). Similar to Bowlby's concept of IWM, Fonagy's (2001) description of 'Mentalising' is equally cognitive. He wrote that Mentalising comes from "the early relationship environment ... it serves to equip the individual with a mental processing system that will subsequently generate mental representations, including relationship representations" 2001, p. 31).

Cortina and Liotti (2010) disagree though with Fonagy because it intimates that attachment theory is "serving a primary function of being able to read the minds of others" (2010, p. 412). In contrast to the idea of 'reading the minds of others' the research and terminology of Meins (2013), Hughes (2016) and Ch'Ng (2019) cite Mind-Mindedness as the

caregiver being attuned with their infants. By attuning to the infant or child Freeman (2016) explores how this this develops the capacity to regulate their emotions. Being in the studio environment gave me an environment in which I was able to attune to my own experiences of my parents as I clutched onto things then attached them to the childhood Altar commensurate with my assessment of what fixatives would hold things together best. Some glues did not hold and the rope between my 'parents' was frayed. In the activity of wanting things to 'stick' together I was able to express my emotions through my own sensory experience.

Branjerdporn et al, (2019) have explored sensory sensitivity, where the caregiver tracks the environment to locate any sensory impacts on the infant that may cause distress. My actions to hold, place and attach became the ways in which I could regulate my emotions.

It was Ainsworth (2016) who wrote about the mother's ability to interpret accurately her baby's communication through her awareness, freedom from distortion, and her empathy, raising the challenges parents face when a mother who is highly aware and accessible may still though "misinterpret signals because her perception [could] be distorted by projection, denial, or other defences" (cited in Bailey et al, 2016, p. 50). In my own experience of mothering I began with seeing my infants as being 'persons' dependent on but independent of me (Hill, 1984) although I may have misinterpreted their signals sometimes. Maybe attunement and the willingness to understand infants, or anyone for that matter, is commensurate with Mind-Mindedness that is defined as "the propensity to view one's child [the other] as an agent with independent thoughts and feelings" (Meins et al, 2013; Hughes et al, 2016). Research into the phenomena of Mind-Mindedness (MM) though has usually focused on infants and toddlers (Ch'Ng, 2019) requiring parent's sensitivity to their children's psychological rather than physical needs (Meins, 1997, 1999, 2013; Hughes, Aldercotte & Foley, 2017) which requires interpretation from the perspective of the caregiver(s).

Sensitivity towards the needs of the infant vary as Branjerdporn et al, (2019) found in their cross-sectional study that investigates the links between parenting style and parental sensory sensitivity aimed to raise awareness of parent's levels of sensory sensitivity. For example: when a child is having a tantrum, the parent is receiving auditory stimuli such as the child is shouting in a high-pitched voice, crying uncontrollably, and calls upon the parent to notice and accurately identify the child's behavioural cues to empathise with her emotions. This can be "challenging for people with high sensory sensitivity" (2019, p. 4). In Leerkes and Zhou's (2018) research into maternal sensitivity they observed infants at age 6 months and again at 12 months and found that if the mother is more sensitive more often to distress cues the infant learns they will be attended to more often when distressed. On the other hand if infants encounters a mother's preference to be sensitive to their non-distress calls infants "may learn they cannot count on their mothers to help them when they are distressed" and may develop higher insecure, avoidant behaviour (p. 7). When I brought together the materials to make myself as "the baby who learned not to cry" I sensed the joy of my hands caressing the porcelain head and hands, and the softness of the pink fabric suit that I used to connect the head and hands to. I held 'her' as if she was a real baby, rocking her, holding her, and a sense of giving her permission to cry if she wanted to.

As I seemed to have adopted the story of the "good baby who learned not to cry" I turn to Freeman (2016) who pointed out that "the more we trust the person implanting the memory, such as is usually the case with a parent, the more likely we are to assume the memory is our own" (p.139). On a bodily level though, I remember not liking the story of my goodness when I heard it as a child and felt sorry for myself as a baby left to cry. Stevanovic and Koski (2018) claimed that "Human babies are socially oriented already at birth ... and display preference for faces, animate objects and familiar voices ... [and are] also susceptible

to emotional contagion" (2018, p. 43). Without my parents attention due to their anxiety to treat my brother's burns I was left without their presence to soothe me. Emotional regulation for infants is the need to hear their carers' voices and to see their expressions. Freeman (2016) describes a parent's facial and vocal mirroring as central to parental affect-regulative interactions giving the child an experience of the parent "holding her infant's mind in mind" (2016, p. 194). Holding my own story of being a baby, as I held the 'baby-doll' I put together with my hands, gave me a way to keep myself in my own mind. It was through my body felt sense that I felt a reparation of sorts, non-verbally. Fisher (2011, 2019) brought attention to what might have been my earliest memories as an infant in the form of "body memories which reflect an adaptation to a particular environment and to a given care-taker, where body memories are held in the non-verbal memory system as actions and responses" (2011, p.99).

Badenoch (2018) pointed out:

For all of us, no matter how securely we are parented, at some moments our mothering people aren't able to repair the inevitable ruptures. All parents have implicit blind spots that make them unable to read the experience that is written on our face when they have hurt or scared us. Left in this sphere of pain, our young embodied brains do not have the neural circuitry to sweep these experiences into the ongoing flow of our developing brains (p.22).

Near the end of making the childhood Altar I did not know where to place the baby doll in the basket as I had not factored somewhere to put it. I wanted to position the basket so that the baby-doll could capture the gaze of the mother's face on top of the cake tins. There was no room on the table top of the altar and there was no way to position the baby to have

the eye gaze from my mother. I tried the basket on the floor at the edge of the kitchen table but it bothered me that no matter where I placed it, the baby couldn't capture the mother's gaze. This prevented me having the satisfaction of a secure link to my mother in which, as Stern (2004) proposed, that "in the intersubjective matrix people make a special kind of mental contact that leads to a shared sense of 'I know that you know that I know" (p. 75). I found it alarming that I had not made provision for our eyes to meet because at the start of the inquiry I had hoped to tell the story of my secure childhood with many stories that included my vivid memories of how my mother and I often conversed when I was a child and we did look into each other's eyes when we were talking. This inquiry alerted me to what might be called unresolved issues of my past – the baby who learned not to cry and the disruption of my security in my home environment as an adolescent. Thus, these became my central findings rather than my secure experiences of my mother during childhood, from infancy to adolescence.

What I did find when moving through various different perceptions of how I had viewed both my parents, and how they viewed me in this inquiry was the strength of my feelings for them. Holding the ladder and kissing it seemed to act as if I was (belatedly) addressing the central role of what Schore (2021) called "the interpersonal synchrony in intersubjectivity [that is] expressed in a mutual alignment or coupling between minds and bodies of the mother [father] and in infant face-to-face (communication at its most basic) protoconversations" (2021, p.1). Though my objects and materials were not human they afforded me a sense of Trevarthen's (1993) model of face-to-face communication (in Schore, 2021) which at its best is "synchronised intersubjective eye-to-eye orientations, vocalisations, hand gestures, and movements of the arms and head, all acting in coordination to express

interpersonal awareness and emotions" (2021, p. 3). As my imagination aided the felt senses in my body I sculpted forms that felt relatable as my actual parents.

Seeing and walking across the physical divide between my parents that emerged at the site of the childhood Altar powerfully helped me re-story my relational experiences with them. I returned again and again to the art making, moving things around, bending and stretching, and attaching rope between them as if to heal their rift. The scratchy rope in my hands felt old and useless. However, working further with my father (as ladder) gave me a solitary time with my thoughts of and feelings for him in an uncomplicated way in the backyard (chapter 5). Separating my dialogue with him from my mother enabled me to express emotions as I worked out how to paint the ladder. Grief could be expressed helped me work out how I felt about him in present time experience. In recognising these things I felt re-attached to him through the paint and its application with the brush connecting me to my emotions and finding a new way to understand him, and myself. Siegel (1999) suggested that the "ability to reflect on one's own childhood history, to conceptualise the mental states of one's parents, and to describe the impact of these on personal development are the essential elements of coherent adult attachment narratives" (p. 312). Likewise the feel of the utensils my mother would have used and my arrangement of them gave me a structured environment that enabled me to re-experience the calmness of order in my life.

Having 'sided' with my dad in present time experience in the first stage of making the childhood Altar with Edwina present I had looked across to the place where I had begun to express my relationship with my mother and had suddenly felt disloyal to her. This was troubling to me as my poetic summary expressed: - "Uncertainty shakes my body, seeing the

divide between two very different people, my loyalties challenged." (Chapter 6). Jiang et al, (2017) reminds us that the parent-child relationship normally experiences significant change during the transition from adolescence into adulthood (2017, p. 425). The feelings of disloyalty I felt when looking back at the kitchen table that day reminds me that my task to transit my separation-individuation tasks were thrown into chaos as I lost the sense of both parents being able to 'keep me in mind'.

I think I carried the burden of taking responsibility to keep them in my mind and I sensed that the avenue for them to receive any self-disclosures from me were lost. Self-disclosure involves strategic management of personal information along the dimensions such as valence (the social desirability of the information disclosed), honesty (the extent of accurate and unconcealed self-revelation), amount (the extent of personal information exchanged), and control of depth (the intimacy or privacy level of personal disclosed) (Jiang, Yang and Wang, 2017, p. 426). For me I felt that they were not available to their offspring, and therefore I sought other avenues (the Church) to find solace in disclosing my sense of loss and anxiety. Badenoch (2018) claims that necessary conditions may provide a "sanctuary for change" (p, 22) usually a trustworthy, sustained interpersonal connection.

Badenoch (2018) also suggests that by tucking away long term painful memories they are "held out of the stream of time" (p. 22). Therefore these memories are not able to be integrated into the organisation of our neural pathways unless the embodied memory can be touched and awakened by internal or external events so that we are physically or emotionally coloured with the felt sense of the experience again, as though no time has passed at all.

Walking across the divide I saw between my parents at the site of the childhood Altar with Edwina as witness helped me try out different ways to be with them, within myself.

Recalling the agoraphobia I suffered for a decade from late adolescence to my late twenties, the intentional way I marched across the divide on the back porch between Dad's ladder and the pegboard with my mother's utensils, filled me with a sense of accomplishment and self-agency. In making the childhood altar I enabled the creation of my own version of initiating physical proximity to my experience of my parents, rather than staying with previous verbal stories that had not changed over time. Making an opportunity to examine my previous thoughts and to express my feelings about my parents revealed to me stories hidden in my body and my emotions. In doing so I could see the stories of my parents differently therefore giving myself a way to rejig my internal working models of them in the past and reverse the confusion about how I felt about their relationship. In the process of my embodied self-awareness I moved from a story of "ambivalence between them that became ambivalence within me" (Chapter 6) so that I could come to a new appreciation with the joy and relief in finding a somewhat more cohesive story of my (now) adult attachment to my parents.

My Experience of the Burden of Care

The most significant thematic statement arising from my analyses of the narrative of making the Underworld Altar, helped me make sense of my experiencing of the burdens I have felt I had carried during the troubling times when my loved ones were ill.

"When those I love were unwell or abusing themselves, my desire to rescue them was propelled by the fear of losing them. I chose to put myself in dangerous positions in

order to see them safe. I wanted to help them so that they would get better and then I would feel better." (Chapter 7).

Making the underworld altar expanded my "limits of language and [gave me a] voice to that which cannot be communicated or completely known through words or logic" (Malchiodi, 2018, p. 68). Reflecting on my personal experience of my caregiving, during this inquiry, gave me time to deeply reflect on and express my emotions regarding the felt burden I knew I was holding in my body. My arts-led inquiry has been a way to make visible the experience of being an 'informal' carer though I was not the only person caring for my loved ones suffering with mental health and other issues. What I did find though was that acted as a go-between for them with medical, law and other health service providers in intense situations, similar but different to service providers who deliver caregiving as the 'task' to be performed in aged care, hospitals, hospices, disability services, and so on.

Palli et al, (2015) claimed that with recent deinstitutionalization, relatives caring for people with serious mental illness [have] become an "invisible health care system" (p.278). Within this invisible cohort many caregivers face the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual burden of care of them and for them. In the first Australian study to examine the mental health of informal carers, Morrison and Stomski (2019) state that "the burden associated with assuming (these) responsibilities, coupled with the impact of witnessing their relative's experience of mental illness, means that carers often report significant levels of distress" (p. 1). It is pertinent to note that caregivers informally care for 20% of Australians who suffer with mental illness in any one year, in their homes (Black Dog Institute, 2021). The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (July, 2021) reported an increase in the

proportion of people over the age of 18 years experiencing high very high levels of psychological distress, from 11.7% in 2016 to 14.00% in 2019, were likely factors for a rise in the trends and patterns in alcohol and other drug [ab]use.

It wasn't until I held the hammer and smashed alcohol containers for the underworld altar that I faced the stress and strain of suffering my own pain about my loved one's pain. I found a way to express unexpressed emotions such as anger, and speaking out loud that prompted actions that "brought emotional release" (chapter six). This progressed to "pressing and pushing things down forcefully to glue them on the altar that helped [the] release of anger" and to give me "access to unspoken concerns". "Speaking out loud while gluing facilitated unfamiliar sounds from my voice". When I held a plastic skull in my hand I accessed compassion for those who suffered (chapter seven). In these ways I made the invisible, visible to myself the emotional impact on me of caregiving loved ones beyond the diagnoses of their illnesses and conditions. In taking these actions I felt a reversal of the strain and tensions I had lived with. Huang, Sun, Yen, and Fu (2008) focused their research on the coping experiences of carers who live with someone who has schizophrenia, in this inquiry I found the use of art making became an antidote for the anxieties I had experienced.

Orford et al (2010) compiled a summary of two decades of qualitative research, in several countries, where "family members are affected by the problem drinking or drug use of a close relative" (p.44). Eight hundred family members were interviewed, and stress and worry were the key findings. "Family members are not only subject to personal stress or abuse, but they are also worried and concerned about their relatives whom they see as having become victims of the drink or drugs" (2010, p. 49). Orford et al, (2012) offered a conceptual

overview of the pain and suffering of adult family members living under the same roof with relatives with addiction problems. Their model focusses on the "stress-strain-coping-support (SSCS) model" (2012, p.21).

In his later paper Orford (2017) took an international perspective on the harm to close family members caused by addiction citing relational, social and cultural factors. The 'harm' to families Orford (2017) claimed "is variable depending on relationship, social and cultural factors" (p. 9). In this inquiry it became clearer to me that I had straddled both need to 'protect' my loved ones in distress emotionally, at the same time trying to manage the impact on me of frantically racing about to manage crises. When searching the literature on caregiving I discovered the terminology "caregiver's burden". (Dillehay & Sandys, 2006; Liu, Heffernan & Tan, 2020). Dillehay and Sandys (2006) defined caregiver burden as "a psychological state that ensues from the combination of the physical work, emotional and social pressure and a reduced quality of life with significant impacts on the health and functioning of caregivers" (p. 719). There have been differing opinions since then regarding the concept of 'caregiver's burden' but Liu, Heffernan and Tan (2020) in their review of 33 articles on caregiving set out to find a clearer concept of caregiver burden. They noted that family members are key to the delivery of long-term care for patients and loved ones, noting that "family caregivers experience a significant burden providing care to patients with specific illness such as mental health illness, Parkinsons disease, dementia, and terminal cancer" (Liu et al, 2020, p. 438).

Liu et al (2020, p. 439) defined the key attributes of the burden of care that appear repeatedly in the literature. The three key attributes are: - self-perception, multifaceted strain,

and over time. "Self-perception is perceived by an individual and is about reflecting on [one's] personal experience during the caregiving process" (2020, p.439). Multifaceted strain was extensively demonstrated in the literature they reviewed, and was about the focus on the family member taking precedence over the caregiver's fatigue, health problems, emotional distress and alienation from other family relationships. Further to this, providing long term care can disrupt the caregiver's social life, activities, schedule, and lifestyle which can lead to isolation and difficulties with economic problems (2020, p. 440). I found solace in the words of a help-line person who advised me not to give up my work after I said that maybe I should.

The provision of 'long term care' of loved ones with mental and addiction problems is a choice that is made, a choice to be involved as an informal carer which is different to the formal titles that health professionals work from. Duah (2020) utilized van Manen's (2014) phenomenology of practice to explore the main challenges that caregivers face in the context of family life. The purpose of his study was to explore the lived experience of ten caregivers of relatives with alcohol and opiate dependence using the method of in-depth interviews. Duah's (2020) findings match my own experience of a process that began with me noticing that something was 'not right'. In summary, Duah found four main themes (2020, p. 51) emerging from participants' interviews. These are: 1). Being in the moment: the extension of the self; 2). the dawn of reality: the beginning of acceptance; 3). deciding in the moment: the healthcare experience, and 4), uncertainties and struggle: a lifelong process.

The first theme includes the experience of noticing that something is not right and begins with suspicion that moves to disbelief/denial, and keeping secrets due to shame; the second theme includes the challenge to accept the reality of a family member's conditions,

dealing with 'stigma' and 'guilt', leading to wanting to 'protect' the loved one. If psychoeducation is accessed then 'insight' may empower the caregiver to stay on the journey with the loved one; the third theme includes the healthcare system experience which may be positive or not, and alternative supports, such as spirituality, reading, Al Anon and/or peer group attendance may build resilience; the fourth theme includes the greater burden of uncertainty of relapse and often the financial strain on the caregivers who continue to support young adult children who are not working. Having already worked in the field of mental health, this did not prepare me for the reality of my family members' conditions but I did seek psychoeducation for myself, engaged with Al Anon and attended group support with other caregivers suffering with similar challenges.

I firstly wondered if my fatigue was due to burnout. Heinemann and Heinemann (2017) wrote about the burnout syndrome that had been widely disputed as a mental health problem. They conducted an extensive literature analysis and identified shortcomings that leave the concept vague and blurry. They state that a consensus about burnout as a mental state has been "socially and scientifically constructed over the last 40 years" (p. 10) and not been raised to the status of a mental health diagnosis. This may be because the research has been focused more on work-related stress than on the psychological and physiological foundations of burnout. By the time I began making the exhaustion altar to represent my fatigue I assumed that my exhaustion was due to the fatigue that had accumulated over the years. Making the wire structure for the exhaustion altar was an arduous task in many ways, mirroring my sense of the pain of negotiating how to be for my loved ones, as the edges of wire pricked my fingertips as I negotiated the shape I wanted it to be. When it came to making the human figure I wanted to place across the wire construction which was made into a rock like form, I found I lost the motivation to complete it. This resulted in me asking my

friend Cath if she could help sew the hessian fabric around the calico figure that I had not used to represent my mother in the childhood altar. It was one of the most difficult altars to complete, denoting the lessening of my energy and imagination, mirroring the times I had felt depleted in my efforts to 'rescue' my loved ones.

I came to identify that my ongoing agitation around my unwell loved ones might be commensurate with vicarious and/or post-traumatic stress. Branson (2018) researched the terminologies used to signify the term vicarious trauma, noting that closely related terms were used to describe this phenomena such as secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, burnout, countertransference, post-traumatic stress disorder, emotional cogitation, and shared trauma. Whilst I did not relate to my loved ones in the role of a mental health provider I did find similarities with my caring for my loved ones that I had encountered in my clinical practice. Downs (2019) in her thesis review of the literature on the benefits of art therapy for mental health clinicians who have experienced vicarious trauma found that, "clinicians' engagement with traumatized clients could influence the ongoing cumulative effects of their exposure to clients' stories and emotional expression of their traumatic experiences" (p.2).

The art-making and presentation to peers in the early stages of the inquiry brought into my awareness that I had assumed the role of caregiver for my early adult offspring in particular whereas prior to this I had merely thought of myself as a caring and worried mother. During my literature search I have looked at the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (2013) for the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder PTSD and identified only two of the five criterion (B) intrusion symptoms: "emotional distress after exposure to traumatic reminders" and "physical reactivity after exposure to traumatic reminders" (DSM-5, 2013).

Criteria (E) denotes "alterations in arousal and reactivity" and I identified two categories that I still experience, but understand the antecedents of - hypervigilance and heightened startle reaction.

When I made the sand tray scene representing 'overwhelm' and Jenni had thrown a number of objects into the tray until it was overflowing, and, subsequently, when I held the small figurine that represented my burdens that Jean had noticed I was handling gently (chapter five) I realised that I had been managing chaos resulting from living with the conditions of my loved ones – hearing voices, psychotic episodes, inability to organize, choosing to ingest alcohol and drugs. However it wasn't until I began the construction of the underworld altar, in my (then) backyard that I intentionally focused on my experiences of caregiving, and became more deeply in touch with my emotions. Having wondered what I could do to help my loved ones, I doubted that they would ultimately be safe if I did not act in ways to 'rescue' them. So involved was I in doing that I hardly gave myself the time to express these deep seated anxieties. I believe the performance of my movements around the altars and engagement with the materials gave my body and emotional memories a way to express emotions and problem solve my way through the trauma, stress, grief and felt burden of care. I found there were various stages to pass through before coming to any kind of acceptance of the calamities that had occurred to my loved ones. It was only when I was in the present time experience of making the underworld altar that I could start to make a coherent narrative for myself about living through these difficult times.

This awareness became stronger when I had fixed a mannequin's hand by its fingertips onto the end of the underworld altar to express my experience of hanging on

precariously by my fingertips; it brought home to me how often I had held my breath when my phone rang during the worst times of worry. In attaching this to the table top I meticulously applied glue and held the hand gently so it would not fall. In her book Deveson (1998) wrote of her journey with her son Jonathan who had been diagnosed with schizophrenia. People would say to her: "But I don't know how you stood it". The answer she gave is that you stand it because you have no option: "You do hang on, precariously, to any small ledge of hope. You cling with your finger-nails, with your breath tightly held, and you cling, you bloody well cling." (p.246). Thirty-five years ago Anne was instrumental in launching SANE Australia with another mental health worker, Dr Margaret Leggatt. SANE Australia along with many other mental health organisations offer resources these days to support carers in their daily lives. I found though that whilst the hand hanging on by the fingertips in the underworld altar mirrored back to me the stress of staying in relationship with those who were unwell, that reaching into the depths of my emotional experiences when using my body to throw paint and smash things was felt as relief and satisfied me.

As Badenoch (2018) pointed out, when embodied memory can be touched and awakened, as happened when I threw paint, smashed things, and then gently glued 'ugly' things on the Underworld Altar, I came to see for myself how I had truly been traumatized. "Any experience", she says, "of fear/or pain that doesn't have the support that it needs to be digested and integrated into the flow of our developing brains defines trauma" (2018, p.22, 23). Making the altar to the underworld gave me a way to process my trauma of witnessing my loved one's traumas. By staying in touch with what was 'happening' in the process of placing and gluing all of the things on this altar, the plastic skulls, the cigarette butts, the shards of a broken mirror, I experienced a sense of coherence with my experiences which had been chaotic and terrifying, allowing me a sense of movement from 'chaotic' to 'coherence'.

I recognize that my tendencies to care are not unique to me. Earlier in this inquiry, when the art evoked insight into my experiences of anxiety in relation to my parents' division in my adolescence, it gave me pause to consider how much my anxiety to protect my loved ones in distress was connected to previous anxious attachment to my parents during the adolescent period. However, I believe I struggled with the very real notion that I would lose my secure attachments with offspring should they die prematurely. This inquiry gave me ways to not only express sadness, shock, distress, grief and the burden of care for them, but I also recognized that I had been active in being available to them throughout the many years they were in crises, whether it be with them in a psychiatric ward, a rehabilitation centre or a detox Centre. I recognise now that I felt connected to the deep primitive drive to 'see my children' safe, as any parent would.

Through the howling and the crying and the moving about as I constructed the underworld altar I felt both my vulnerability and my strength. The involvement of body, movement, emotion and thinking seemed to 'come together' giving me a sense of being fully alive and in control, in contrast to the sense of being unable to control the conditions or the choices of others who were struggling. The expression of emotions held deep down were able to have their say and have their way with me during re- experiencing the memories of the 'horrors' I had been through. According to Fogel (2009) I seem to have replaced my somatic memory of fearful events with new somatic memories as I re-created my experiences on the underworld and associated Altars. This has led me to "a sense of my somatic memory moving into my personal history" (Fogel, 2009, p. 150) taking my embodied memory to new embodied experience.

My future interest would be in providing the safety of environments such as I created in the studio space to resource others to accept trauma they have been through when loved ones are or have been in traumatic situations. Like McLean (2015) I believe it is critical to address quality of life issues for caregivers. Her involvement in a research project using writing as ethno drama, aimed at reducing caregiver burden. She demonstrated how the arts and research contribute toward a more caring and empathic approach from a phenomenological view of the lived experience of caregivers. My inquiry has brought into my awareness most strongly, the differences between caregiving from service providers and caregiving as a member of a family living in the home with those who have distressing health challenges.

Section Two: Being in the Process of Art Making – A Dialogue with literature

Knowing came from the process: Specifically, when finding, holding and dialoguing with found and made objects

In choosing to take a similar pathway to inquire into personal experience making 3D presentations I gained a great deal of insight during the phase of gathering and collecting objects that held memories and meaning. Hafeli (2011) who explored material culture and the process of art making found meanings and relationships were "made possible in the conversational and relational space that emerges as objects are deliberately juxtaposed, positioned and re-positioned" (25). I found dialoguing with each item was useful to acquaint myself with how I would express myself, a kind of 'warm up' to how they might be incorporated into my installations. Cypher (2017) explored non-human agency in the ebb and

flow of practice-based visual art research. He argues that "if artists are to reveal the full nature of practice-based research, then we need to delve deeper into these relations with non-human actors in practice" (p. 120). In choosing objects as one of my ways to visualise my relational experiences in this inquiry they became collaborators beginning with the very first object I collected, the wire torso from an antique shop in Fitzroy. The look of it appealed to me and in the handling of it, I began to shape it into a living torso that came to 'house' my memories of my relationships to loved ones. Some objects I collected 'became' other people. As I described previously the ladder became my father, a baby doll became me as a baby, and a mannequin's head became my mother's head.

Along with the pleasure of choosing things in line with my inquiry questions and interests and being open to a process that has no clear destination, this process became significant and contributed to my data. In the embodied experience of holding things implicit memories were triggered as I strolled, looked for, and found objects over time. As Badenoch (2018, p.164) suggested, embodied memories are stored and can be retrieved revealing behavioural impulses, bodily sensations, surges of emotion, and perceptions. I was very careful to record these experiences as my subjective thoughts and feelings emerged with materials, tools and ideas that generated actions in my creative practice.

The materials I chose for making my altars was important and I suspect these would not be found in the gathered materials of most arts therapists. Like Hafeli (2011) I asked: "How do [my] materials speak [to me] and what do they say?" (p. 25). My objects and materials, spoke to me of my distant and more recent past as well as speaking to me in the moment of making. As I worked, the forms put together enabled my personal stories to be

both revealed and reformed. My dialogues with the meat-mincer revealed not just a story of me in childhood, but evoked feelings of happiness and calm as I was working thus shifting my focus from the narrative to how I felt in present time. Some of the items used were sought intentionally in an active way, like the meat-mincer, and others were collected randomly such as seeing an old dressing table on a roadside recycling collection, in a passive way, that I eventually used for the adolescent altar. Sometimes 'accidents' would occur such as when a small porcelain bride doll to be included in the bridal altar fell, broke and ended up in pieces glued to the underworld table top. This became an expression of my disappointment at the loss of my childhood dream of 'someday my prince will come'. These active and passive processes enabled me many access points to understanding my own stories.

McNiff (2004) suggested that when painting, the act of "personifying enables us to dialogue with feelings and concerns that are not easily acceptable to conventional thought" (p. 91). Thus, in holding of a ladder I said things to my 'father' that I had never said. In holding the mannequin's head I showed my 'mother' my compassion for her, and in gluing squashed alcohol cans to the underworld altar I could express how sad and angry I had been when loved ones had been inebriated. Some objects not imagined 'appeared' in my consciousness as important when I saw them. The curved mirror I found on another roadside collection had 'spoken' to me as if it was a river and something inside me saw it becoming rivers (of tears) if I could find someone to carefully cut it up in sections My process of collecting objects and materials was both similar, but different to the (unnamed) friend of McNiff' (2004) who found inspiration when working with her collection of objects for art making. "When I come across something new and exciting it feels like the world has given me a gift, a small piece of treasure. My art responds to what I find. I never start out with a plan or a theme. I go looking for stuff and bring it back to my studio, where I play around

with different ways of arranging things. The materials suggest what I should do with them. They have their own way of speaking to me about what needs to be done." (2004, p. 141). This was partly the case as I collected things, but I had already imagined and intentionally sought particular items that seemed significant at the outset of this inquiry.

My collection of objects and materials grew and grew before and during the construction of the altars. Seeing and holding each item gave me a sense of 'waking up' to 'something' I wanted to know more about. This was very different to Allen's (1995) experience of a 'critic' (within) who might wake us up to knowing something we perhaps don't want to face, or possibly are not ready to face. Allen warns that the critic can work to stop us from following through with our inquiries. As she put it: "Don't know, you might find out something awful about yourself ... knowing is dangerous because it leads to change" (1995, p. 48). For me, I was eager to know and pursued the quest with hunger, I wanted to know much more about my relational experiences, and wanted to face the 'dark' times I had lived through.

In the phase of collecting I also experienced a sense of relationship when 'playing around with different ways to arrange things' similar to how children in therapy use the sand box with small figurines, or use clay and other materials to express themselves when making scenes of their lived experience (Klein et al, 1937; O'Conner et al, 1997; Hill, 2013; Malchiodi & Crenshaw, 2014; and Levine, 2015). These arrangements sometimes became small assemblages that I could present to my supervision group and from which more information was generated via intersubjective responses from my peers. This kind of 'play time' is described by Levine (2015) as "decentring, meaning that we are no longer focused on

the literal problem or difficulty but rather are moving into the alternative world of imagination" (p.65).

The overall experience of collecting objects, dialoguing with them and writing narratives about them gave me an experience of what Hilt (2014) referred to as "being entangled" in my own history. She made a distinction between being entangled into histories and the narrative grounds of multiple realities. As I reflected on the meanings of the objects when I held them, both old ideas and possible new narratives arose. When making a body for the baby that represented me as a baby my embodied action of holding 'her' created a new reality – I could soothe myself. Objects became symbols that conveyed stories of my emotional and attachment experiences. "Symbol" coming from the Greek word 'symbolin' means, a token of identity based on a ritual between friends who would halve a coin or a plate when parting company, each taking a piece to prove that they were connected. This then described that something visible "became a sign of an invisible reality" (Kast, 1992, p.10). Similarly, in this inquiry I gave myself an opportunity to reconstruct, or put back together parts of myself and my experience as if I was claiming back or trying to resolve something about who I was earlier life.

Dreher (2003) in his essay presented a phenomenological analysis of the functioning of symbols as elements of the life-world with the purpose of demonstrating the interrelationship of individual and society. Coming from a basis of Shultz's theory of the lifeworld, signs and symbols Dreher (2003) wrote that symbols "stand for experiences originating in the different spheres of the life-world, within the world of everyday life, such

as time, space, the world of the Other, and multiple realities which confront him, her or they" (p. 142).

In the gathering of kitchen utensils for example, I was using objects from a previous era as symbols that others of my age group and gender could identify with. The altars as symbols speak immediately to how social entities such as religious groups connect with the concepts of their faith beliefs. In the first stages of the inquiry, whilst gathering 'things' and meeting with my peer group, my emotional attachment to my collections was paramount. I wondered if my objects, materials and memorabilia acted, not only as 'symbols' but also as transitional objects in some way. Winnicott (1953) claimed that, for the very young "this early stage of development is made possible by the mother's special ability for making adaptation to the needs of her infant, thus allowing the infant the illusion that what the infant creates really exists" (p. 96). As I interacted with the materials and objects these became symbols of my remembered experiences of my relationships with loved ones. In doing this I gave myself an opportunity to transition into resolving emotional and relational wounding born in troubling times.

LaMothe (1998) argued that an expanded depiction of Winnicott's concept of the transitional object provides an understanding of the vital role or functions of sacred objects in everyday existence and in interpersonal relations. LaMothe (1998) suggested "that sacred objects and practices in adult life may be conceptualized as vital objects or phenomena when they (a) furnish believers with an unconscious belief in omnipotence for the sake of the construction and organization of subjective and intersubjective experiences and reality; (b) provide a subjective and intersubjective sense of identity, continuity, and cohesion; (e) serve

as opportunities for spontaneity and creativity; (d) supply comfort and security for persons and communities during periods of anxiety" (p. 167).

In later writings Winnocott (1971) claimed that the arrival of the transitional object in the child's emotional life is highly significant because it is a sign of personal growth and creative living. In particular the object is regarded by the child as both ordinary and something special, almost magical. At times my relationship with the objects, materials and memorabilia used in this inquiry helped me to shift from what I thought I knew about parts of my earlier life, as if I was claiming back parts of myself on an emotional level, shown in my dialogue with the meat-mincer when I felt gladdened to recognise that "things were simpler then" (Chapter 5).

Weintraub (2016) wrote: "Imagine the state of the physical environment if the relationship humans have with sacred objects applied to bees, forests, reefs, streams, cell phones, shoes, cars, plastic containers, soils, and so forth. It would be assumed that such materials are invested with mighty powers or guided by the constant interventions of a deity, spirit or ancestor" (2016, p. 5). The powers I first invested in my collection of objects was in response to their capacity to prompt recall of past experiences and to inspire my imagination to create sites to honour and revere my loved ones. I had already imbued the altars with a 'mighty' power in holding my experiences of loving and suffering. In the process of collecting and gathering these items I did not consider them as "aspects of the divine in material form" (Gabel, 2019 p. 178) such as a statue or an icon in a church might be. The configuration of some objects/materials such as the golden ribbon that was attached to the floor of the studio, became symbolically a pathway between the altars secretly connecting me

to my faith and becoming a sacred text to only me. However this was seen by L.D. when she wrote her response to viewing all of the altars ""Who is this golden thread that holds its essence through it all, still bright as new, witness to it all, eternal flow of life, loving you?"

I became intimately acquainted with materials made of different textures and shapes, hard, smooth, sharp, rough and soft surfaces that, once held in my hands became alive to me through the sensations of cold, warm, light and heavy. These sensate and haptic experiences took me to a state of feeling connected to my relational experience with myself. The holding and handling of my collection of things, later connected to the altars, created in me a sense of 'joining with' experiences from the past in present time experience alongside the emotions embedded within those experiences. I came to know the function of arts-based methods as leading me to an integration of my whole body. As Heimer (2016) a ceramicist describes it: "When modelling an object with my hands, I sense the interrelation between form and body through clay. Every movement is connected directly to my body and, gradually my experiences of form develop into embodied knowing" (2016, p.3).

I imbued most of the items I collected with specific meanings, through the ways I felt about them when seeing, touching and holding them. I was aware that my starting point of choosing items is contradictory to the first step in the phenomenological method - 'the rule of epoch' – that had been of great interest to me in my post graduate studies. This rule urges us to set aside our initial biases and prejudices of things, to suspend our expectations and assumptions' (Spinelli, 1989). My approach to the objects was open to developing a new, different and more nuanced relationship with them as I entered the work. I tried to stay open to the emergence of 'what might happen' spontaneously but I could not suspend the meaning

of the kitchen table that I found for the childhood altar. Though I was unexpectedly surprised by my embodied engagement with it when I found it in a second hand shop and immediately felt that I was re-meeting someone from the past. Having identified the table by sight across the shop floor I then walked towards it, heart in mouth, then placed my hand on its surface, as if patting it 'hello'. With my hand still placed on the green laminex tabletop and with no thought to move my body I suddenly and spontaneously found myself moving downwards into a squatting position to see the underneath of the table. While in that position I realised that I had become the size I would have been when I lived with that table as a child. This and all the objects, materials, memorabilia and table tops that I gathered seemed to come to life for me as I looked at them, touched them and anticipated their inclusion on the Altars I wanted to make.

Knowing came from the process of making Altars: Specifically from embodied selfawareness, expressing emotion, movement and moments of insight

I am feeling very happy to be finally clearing a space to bring the 1950's kitchen table and all of the related objects to reside in the one place. It feels like a coming home as I carry the table and boxes with memorabilia up the stairs. I have a happy, singing, thrumming feeling within my chest and throat. (J. Hill, Journal, 2010).

In this section of Part Two I focus on embodied self-awareness when art-making, specifically looking at how art-making and body movements tap into emotional experience. I will do this by engaging with the literature on embodied self-awareness, emotion, body movement and how arts-based research (and therapy) can facilitate conceptual knowing

through significant moments of insight. I will refer to some relevant neuroscientific findings briefly as this is a huge topic on its own, beyond the scope of this discussion. I will glean from the research of the last two decades that which describes how my experience of art-making connected bodily felt experience and emotions with actions to create meanings of significance.

This inquiry acknowledges the embodied nature of therapeutic arts practice. In Byrne's (2016) qualitative research she put it like this:-

As an arts maker I have trusted and relied upon my direct experience with the physicality of materials to form the basis of my primary knowing. My sensory encounters with the world involve the coordination of my body and the intricate execution of gross and fine motor skills, tacitly deployed in shaping and forming an image. When working with materials I have become adept at integrating the physicality of my tacit knowing with my conceptual knowing (p.52).

Embodied self-awareness. Overall I have found that embodied self-awareness is heightened when making 3D art to inquire into the experience of our relational patterns. Making three dimensional altars I unveiled a deeper understanding of my body felt senses. Barbour (2004) argued that embodied ways of knowing could be an alternative epistemology in its own right (p. 227). The gathering of my objects and materials prior to the phase of constructing the altars had 'primed' my awareness to the importance of noticing the connection between art-making, my bodily senses and how the arts tap into emotional experience. Banfield and Burgess (2013) found that embodied physicality when creators moved about the spaces as they constructed three dimensional artworks combines desire,

imagination and attunement with emotional and other embodied experiences, bringing a sense of vitality.

My energy shifted significantly when I began the altars on the back porch, in the backyard and more significantly when in the studio I had acquired. The energetic shift from strolling, looking for and finding objects to form into the smaller assemblages presented in group supervision and colloquium meetings, to the construction phase of the altars was marked. My energy became more upbeat and dynamic as the movements of lifting, carrying large tables around then constructing structures with nails, glues, wire and wood, painting table tops, a ladder, and chairs required more of my body movements. Van Laar (2020) described her experience of setting up to paint: "I engage in many gross and motor movements gathering materials, canvas, paints, brushes, and arranging them in the space in relation to what I wish to see and paint" (p.157).

Each time I 'set up' to continue making my altars I used many different kinds of kinaesthetic movements depending on what objects and materials I engaged with on the day. I quickly became aware that these movements coincided with my embodied self-awareness, which is described by Fogel (2009) as "perceiving our movements in relation to other people and our surroundings, registering the textures and depths of the senses, and, exploring the intricacies of our emotions in relation to others and the world" (p. 10). He continues "To be embodied means that experiences are felt directly arising from within the body without intervening thought" (Fogel, 2020). It was being in these kind of experiences of making altars that I became "more aware of my intersubjective experience as I worked with the materials and the sense of being fully energised and focused as I worked with them" (Chapter seven).

Fogel (2009) delineates three main abilities within our experience of embodied self-awareness:

- 1). *Interoceptivity* is the ability to feel one's own body states and emotions, including our awareness of our breathing, heart rate, digestion, hunger, arousal, pain, fatigue, touch and other sensations that are interpreted as coming from the body.
- 2). *Exteroceptivity* is the ability to interpret sensations coming from outside of the body, such as through sight, sound, touch, smell and taste. These abilities are brought into conscious awareness by neural networks, such as in sight, the retina of the eye that is linked to specific brain areas (the visual cortex) via specific neural pathways (the optic nerve).
- 3). *Proprioception* is the felt sense in the muscles of the location and relative position of different parts of the body in relation to objects and to individuals. Badenoch (2018) explains this further: "When our muscles let us know about our position in time and space our movement is due to a combination of our muscle tension, tendons, and joints, and is the ability to feel one's own body states and emotions through our muscles from the inside out" (p. 58).

Placing objects and materials onto, into, around and under the altar tops became an intersubjective conversation with my embodied self-awareness as I sensed the various kinds of abilities that Fogel (2009) describes that led me to make meanings. At the site of the childhood altar, the feel of rope in my hands (emphasis on interoceptive), I say emphasis as I suspect these overlay and intertwine each other, scratchy but pliable (exteroceptive), became part of a conversation with my actions of tying the rope between my father and mother (proprioception). When this did not work for me the conversation continued as I tied myself to my dad. Similarly when I saw and held a large piece of gauze fabric in my hands and felt a

sense of softness and calm, I saw it as ideal for attaching and connecting the mannequin body parts on the Torn Asunder Altar to depict my trauma of loss and disconnection (meanings) (Chapter 7).

To extrapolate further, my experience of several sensations seeming to co-exist together with only seconds between them, I give the example of the placement of the wooden spoon on two different occasions. When attaching the wooden spoon on the pegboard when Edwina was filming on the back porch, the spoon fell downwards and I had gasped (breathing, felt sense of something not immediately named). I was aware that I had expelled breath spontaneously from my mouth as I articulated to Edwina that "my mother dropped the baton" (p. 113). I did not explicitly explain this perception of my mother to Edwina at the time, as my body and thinking were still processing what had happened. All I knew then was that it related to the division between my parents. My breathing out propelled me into collecting my father's ladder alerting me to my need of him. When I later continued working on this altar in the studio, to my surprise the wooden spoon fell for a second time from the pegboard I was re-threading it to. Once again I gasped, this time much more loudly – maybe because I was on my own and I felt freer to express myself? (Chapter, 6). This gasp seemed to echo against my ribcage and I also heard an echo around the walls of the studio. The feelings of shock made me wonder "Did I drop the baton?" This perspective connected me to my own guilt about divorcing my children's father, which in turn connected me to an understanding that there was a parallel theme to my own story with my mother's story.

Seeing, touching and moving around were primary ways through which I came to understand how my emotions and movements were directing me towards understanding the

content arising in the process of making. Betensky (2001) promoted looking intentionally at the product of art so as to return to the things themselves. In my process my looking was often ad hoc and spontaneous just as things caught my peripheral vision. I found myself though in a cyclical process of making, looking, making additions or adjustments, in a mostly busy way. Betensky (2001) described cultivating her capacity for stillness in order to intentionally look at the art, to make sense of the imagery. Rather than pause in this way I found that when my emotions were triggered in the process of making the Altars, I somehow was able to remain engaged in a steady mindful approach to what I was doing over all, noting emotions as they arose but staying focused on the objects and their placement as I handled them or wove things together, forging a sense of intimacy with them.

Fenner (2012) suggested that "Looking ties us to objects in a reciprocal process; by looking at something it looks back in a vision exchange" (p. 11). Looking at the faceless calico figure that I thought to use as my mother's body in the childhood altar I had a sense that it was 'not' exactly right to use it for that purpose. Instead I made a wire skirt for her with the wire torso that had previously been used (Chapter 5). That I preferred to paint and place a mannequin head on top of cake tins on the kitchen table (instead of manoeuvring the head onto the body that I had made for my mother), my body felt sense of needing my mother to have a face seemed to override my doubt that it was strange to have made a headless mother. It was as if the calico figure 'convinced me' not to use it and the mannequin head 'invited' me to use it, and my hands seemed to accept this.

Of interest to me is the double function of the sense of touch being something we feel interoceptively from within our bodies, such as the emotional response to wet or gooey

substances, and also the sensation that comes from without our body exteroceptively that relays sensory input to the brain that might register the danger of sharp objects. In the experience of placement and connecting these things with each other, my hands became like 'living tools' as I joined them with actual tools, such as a hammer smashing bottles and cans. Heimer (2016) described this as "giving hands a certain role" (p.3) enabling different perspectives to what and where I wanted to place things on the altars, giving me a close up view of the forming of my altars. Heimer calls this "studying form as action" (p. 3).

In their tutorial on the sense of touch Lederman and Klatzy (2009) wrote: "The haptic system is especially effective at processing the material aspects characteristic of surfaces and objects" (2009, p. 1439). Haptic experience is viewed as a perceptual system, mediated by two afferent subsystems, cutaneous and kinesthetic, that most typically involves active manual exploration. Lederman and Klatzy (2009) state that the haptic perception of object and surfaces properties "is tightly bound to the nature of the contact, whether felt for a short time or over time" (p. 1446). When I felt the roughness of the wood of Dad's ladder on my skin it immediately "brought my attention to my bodily sensations" propelling me to hold and carry him (as ladder) to the kitchen site that then "brought my attention to properties of the external environment" (Lederman & Katzky, 2009, p. 1439). What I felt through my skin cutaneously gave me a sense of being close to my father kinesthetically when holding and carrying the ladder put me in touch with my action in taking the ladder to where I wanted to place it, in the kitchen scene. This was similar to the way my hands took me to place my mother's head on top of the cake tins.

As Hafeli (2011) whose objects were "deliberately juxtaposed, positioned and repositioned" (p. 25), the objects that came to life for me in the gathering stages became repositories for my emotions and bodily felt connections to others in and on the Altars as they were made. The revitalising of my relational experiences by making Altars in present time experience is similar to how Ingold (2010) described his experience of a tree, not as an object but as a "gathering together of the threads of life" (p. 4). The gathering together of the threads of my life became a place where several 'goings on' become entwined. Ingold (2010) gives the example of stripping back the bark on a tree and seeing a myriad of life forms such as small insects, spiders and micro-organisms habituating there, behind the layers of bark. My Altars became living 'things' for me as I incorporated my objects, materials and memorabilia into them, and as I did so I became more and more acquainted with my own embodied self-awareness.

Emotions and feelings. Despite the critical importance of emotions in our lives Gu, Wang, Cao, Wu, Tang and Huang (2019) claim that "there is currently no scientific consensus on a definition about what emotion is" (p.1) despite everyone knowing what it sense of awareness increased and I noticed how my bodily sensations were connecting me to my feelings and emotions in surprising ways. In researching the literature I found a way to articulate my experience of the connection between emotions and my bodily sensations when making art. Several researchers and authors inform this section of my discussion with the literature – Gendlin, 1996; Greenberg & Pavio's 1997; Damasio, 1999; Elliott et al 2004; Greenberg (2004); Lieberman et al, 2007; Greenberg, 2011; Fogel, 2009, 2020; Lederman & Klatzy, (2009); Labanyi, (2010); Pichon and Vuilleumier (2011); Linquist et al (2012); Lindquist (2013); Ainley et al, 2013; Miller-McLemore (2014); Fusch & Koch (2014);

Bylsma et al, 2017; Greenberg (2017); Henriques (2017); Malchiodi, (2018); Torre and Lieberman (2018); Badenoch, (2018); Harte, (2019); and, Davis, 2021.

In the experience of my emotions in this inquiry the conduit of my embodied self-awareness, interoceptively (with emotions arising) and exteroceptively (with the touch and sight of the art materials I used), connected me with my experience of my bodily actions operating in a dynamic circular interaction. As Fusch and Koch (2014) suggest in their model of embodied affectivity, emotion arises in "the circular interaction between affective qualities or affordances in the environment and the subjects bodily resonance (be it) in the form of sensations, postures, expressive movements or movement tendencies" (p. 1).

Very early on James (1890) (cited in Lindquist et al, 2012) regarded the emotion-body-brain correspondence, when he wrote, "... of two things concerning the emotions, one must be true. Either separate and special centres, affected to them alone, are the brain-seat, or else they correspond to processes occurring in the motor and sensory centres already assigned ..." (2012, p. 122). There have been varying interpretations and misreading of James' theories according to Reisenzein et al (1995) and Barbalet (2001). However James' ideas that emotions correspond with motor and sensory centres are now found in current neurological findings. Pichon and Vuilleumier (2011) mention the rise of functional neuroimaging techniques that have made it possible to study the cerebral organisation of functions in the study of emotions (p.764) as do Schore (2011, 2021), Siegel (2012), Ogden et al (2012), Badenoch (2018), and Fisher (2019).

The focus on our emotions in our inter-relational experience with others, and in my case, the memory of others, is summarised in process-experiential theory (PE) by Elliot et al (2004) who offer a definition of what emotions are:

Emotions are part of a rich texture of people's lives, and people are made up of multiple, often contradictory, emotions that emerge out of the interaction between situations and themselves (2004, p.19).

Damasio (1999) stated that "the mention of the word 'emotion' usually calls to mind one of six so-called primary or universal emotions: happiness, sadness, fear, anger, surprise or disgust" (p. 50). Others cite seven basic or universal emotions such as happiness, anger, sadness, fear, disgust, interest, surprise, or curiosity, and shame (Ekman & Friesen, 1971, 1972; Izard, 1977; Harte, 2019). In a 2017 self-report study in the USA, researchers identified 27 different categories of emotion (Cowan and Keltner, 2017). Greenberg (2004) found it "important to make distinctions between different types of emotional experiences and expression that require different types of in-session intervention" (2004, p.7) in one on one therapy. Emotion Focused Therapy (EFT), (previously called PE 'above') emphasizes the importance of differentiating between both primary and secondary emotions, and between emotional experience that is adaptive or maladaptive. One of the predominant emotions I experienced during this inquiry was sadness due to loss or emotional pain. In my case I found that sometimes underneath my feelings of sadness was anger. This was evident in the second session of working on my underworld altar when 'smashing various alcohol containers with a hammer.

Recently Harte (2019) provided a way through resolving emotional pain by describing how emotions "play an important role in how we feel in our environment. They tell us

whether important goals, values and needs are being hindered or advanced by a situation" (p. 19). Harte goes on to explain that adaptive primary emotions are immediate when experienced or felt, quick to arrive and fast to leave, and have a clear value to survival and well-being, giving people critical information about their physical and social environment. With these adaptive experiences comes an action tendency such that anger, when used adaptively and appropriately, "provides assertiveness and fosters empowerment when the individual is threatened" (2019, p. 22-23). Sadness, Harte points out, is required for adaptive grieving when there has been loss. Maladaptive emotional experience on the other hand presents itself when "primary emotions become exaggerated or do not dissipate or is a result of suppressing, ignoring, dismissing our emotions or when re-experiencing trauma or neglect" (Harte, 2019, (p. 24). The trauma I had felt knowing that family members were abusing alcohol or hearing voices could no longer be dismissed once I chose to make the Underworld Altar. The feelings evoked connected me to my primary emotion of anger, and the actions I made whilst feeling the anger, seemed to empower me without having to direct my anger onto others.

When cutting the fabric from my original bridal gown to make the Bridal Altar I felt "a fluttering of emotion in my throat, sadness and a sense of regret" (Chapter 6). The action of cutting the beautiful fabric with the feel of the scissors in my hands combined to create a mood of sorrow and the naming of my sadness. Another kind of cutting, old jumpers to make the bark of a tree, was expressive of my mothering experience, and as I "glued the woolen fabric to the bust" with my hands and the smell of the glue in my nostrils I felt "the strength of myself as a young mother" (Chapter 6). As Fogel (2009, 2020) has established: "Emotions are coupled with feelings in the body such as heart racing when we are afraid or cheeks hot when we are ashamed [and] the embodied evaluation of those feelings[that] reflect ... how

'good' or 'bad' something feels, and from that evaluation arises the motivation or urge to act in a particular manner in relation to that sensation, thing, or being that seems to be causing the emotion (Fogel, 2009, p. 39).

While I named several emotions in this inquiry, such as, *satisfied, pleased, bored, needy, sad, angry, comforted, confused,* what stays with me is the full body experience of them. On the day that I began to make the underworld Altar I was not immediately in touch with any feelings of *anger*. However as I began the activity of splashing paint over the old work bench with some strength I found myself saying out loud through gritted teeth: "I've got a feeling in my guts of the horrors of the human condition" (chapter 7). The sensations I felt in my body whilst throwing and dabbing paint on the altar engaged me with feelings in my body before I named the anger. Through gritting my teeth and employing my muscles to throw the paint I became aware of "the horrors in the world" experiencing a range of internal and external cues whilst in the action of painting.

Linquist et al (2012) found that there was little evidence that discreet emotion categories can be consistently and specifically localised to distinct brain regions but in their meta-analytic review of the brain basis of emotion they found evidence of "a set of interacting brain regions commonly involved in basic psychological operations on both an emotional and non-emotional nature [that] are active during emotional experience and perception across a range of discrete emotion categories" (pp. 121-122). Badenoch (2018) cites some of the neuroscientific explanations that the midbrain is the place where there is a confluence of some of the senses plus the full range of primary emotions and the movements that correlate with them. "Because so many streams gather here, encoding our body's

behavioural impulses and emotional experience, the midbrain is likely the area where there is sufficient integration between multiple circuits" (2018, p.113).

In my experience of using 3D art-making I sensed how this method of inquiry enabled me to bring my emotions to the surface, empowering me to not just grieve but acknowledge my anger etc. Unlike being in a one on one therapeutic context such that Greenberg and Pavio (1997) describe as focusing on 'bad' feelings [only]' I was open to any and all emotional feelings whether good or bad, and was comfortable with expressing these during the Altar making period. Assigning myself as the 'subject' in this inquiry afforded me the opportunity to trust myself to navigate my relationship with myself through the objects and items I used to create my Altars. In so doing I became open to allow primary emotions make themselves known, and able to forego any maladaptive ways (eg. subverting expression) through an acute awareness of what was happening in my embodied experience. Fogel (2009) explains the delay between interoceptive and exteroceptive sensations before emotions are named as taking several seconds to minutes to feel, due to the differences in interoceptive sensory input that relays sensation that originates within the body to the brain, whereas in exteroception sensory input is relayed from impingement (the feel of something) from the outside world (sight, sound etc). "Interoception conducts nerve signals more slowly than in exteroception, along neural pathways that are small and unmyelinated whereas exteroception relays sensory input relying on different sets of receptors and different neural pathways to and through the brain, being larger and myelinated, thus faster" (Fogel, 2009, p.46). The combination of working patiently and intently over time revealed for me how the integration of inner body reactions (slow) combined with outer body sensations (fast) enabled my recognition of emotions, though was unaware at the time of how these operate on a neuroscientific level.

Labanyi's (2010) notion is that emotions are named after the bodily 'feeling' of something. I sometimes began creating with emotion already named as I did in the small group session the day the rain fell loudly on the tin roof. I already felt empty and sad before I began a dialogue with Jean, and before I moved my body to create a fountain of water with bowls and a jug to represent the experience of feeling sad when the rain fell. During the Altar making period I often took feelings I already felt into my constructions, such as feeling exhausted before making the exhaustion Altar, or disappointed when I made the bridal Altar, or regretful feelings as I made the Torn Asunder Altar. Neurological research on precognitive and pre-linguistic shows that it only takes half a second from initial arousal to a conscious response. Brain scientist Taylor (2021) describes a neurological process where if one becomes conscious of their arousal quickly then, what she calls as the 90-second rule may in fact lead to regulating difficult emotions. She speaks about how a person has a 90-second window of reaction to something in the environment when a particular chemical process happens in the body, after which any remaining emotional response is just the person choosing to stay in that emotional loop. As I was already immersed in the process of making my Altars, my openness to my emotional responses became steady, keeping me open to embrace any emotional surprises along the way. By doing this I found that I was able to stay with sadness, anger and/or insight that strengthened my ability to process the internal and external sensations in my body that I might have been unprepared for. Examples being when getting my father's ladder feeling unexpected joy, or holding the mannequin head that became my mother's face and feeling empathy for her, staying with these emotions was a way to come to a place of pause and reflection.

In emerging evidence reviewed by Torre and Leiberman (2018), they claim a surprising kind of emotion regulation that, simply put, is: "putting feelings into words - affect

labelling – [that] can itself be a form of implicit emotion regulation" (p. 116). Previous research by Lieberman et al (2007) studied the mechanisms by which this works using functional magnetic resonance imaging. They found that affect labelling diminished the response of the amygdala in the limbic system in a "clear demonstration that affect labelling disrupts the affective responses in the limbic system that would otherwise occur in the presence of negative emotional images" (p. 426). In other words, to name a feeling is to diminish the impact of negative emotional events that occur in recent experience. They also found similarity between their research and emotion-reappraisal studies, a technique in which individuals reframe the meaning of an event and thereby change its emotional significance and impact (2007, p. 427).

Lieberman et al (2007) describe a parallel with their and other studies on reappraisal-related increases in prefrontal activity along with corresponding reductions in limbic activity and emotional distress. "It is possible that re-appraisal and affect labelling rely on some of the same neural machinery, as reappraisal typically engages propositional thought about emotional stimuli" (Lieberman et al, 2007, p. 427). In my re-appraisal of my heart-felt sense for my mother there remained an ache that I had not resolved my issues with her when she was alive. Badenoch (2018) writes that "there are many neural structures involved in storing relational experience, not just in the brain, but also in the intrinsic cardiac neurons that reside within the heart itself" (p. 96). She explains that "Together with the extra cardiac neural groups that inhabit the thoracic cavity, interacting with our autonomic nervous system, insula, limbic circuits and neocortex, they hold the truth of our ongoing experience of connection and disconnection from others" (2018, p. 96).

My art-making made effortless the transfer of negative emotion to positive emotion towards my mother, effectively regulating my mixed emotions about her, and possibly returning me to the earlier internal models I had of her when trust in her directives set down the patterns of emotional regulation. In their research into emotion regulation Torre and Lieberman (2018) suggest that when we think about emotion regulation (a term generally used to describe a person's ability to effectively manage and respond to emotional experience to cope with difficult situations) "we likely think of a process that requires effort, whether physical or mental, that removes us in some way from the cause of the emotion" (p.116). They describe that putting feelings into words may seem like lessening our emotional experiences (2018, p. 116). However reinterpretations reduce the relevance of an evocative stimulus, producing a pattern of effects like those seen during explicit emotion regulation suggesting that affect labeling is a form of implicit emotion regulation (2018, p. 116).

Movement and Body Awareness. My emotional experiences connected me to my body impulses such as when I moved to use the materials to make the Altars in certain ways. By staying with feelings of anger I had thrown brown paint, made hasty strokes on the altar top, and movement accessed crying and verbalising "this is a mess". I came to see that the energy and quality of movement was connected to the various emotions I was experiencing, either starting with feelings that led to action or actions that led me to feel (Chapter 7). Labanyi (2010) considers not what emotions are, but what they do. When in the rhythm of artsmaking, my embodied experience became more and more heightened bringing into focus my emotions and the way I felt about what to 'do' next. This seemed a parallel process to how I had acted for loved ones in distress in the past when heightened emotions compelled me to rush to hospitals, attend court houses, or visit drug and alcohol rehabs and psychiatric wards. Labanyi raises the question about what it might mean "to think of emotions as practices" and

"viewing feelings/affect, not as properties of the self, but as produced through interaction between self and world" (2010, p. 223).

When walking backwards, forwards, across and around the place of the studio I felt my body rising, sinking, spreading, retreating and advancing as I responded to inner and outer stimuli that I saw, and I became aware of my capacity to manipulate my body into various positions as I placed things on and around my 3D constructions. I used my muscles and bodily strength when carrying things forward, and other-times I walked around the Altars looking for something to fix or appraise what else I wanted to do. I did not count the steps I took nor did I have the APP on my mobile phone to do that for me, but the physical journey of many steps denoted the emotional input I was using to find mini-destinations each time I was in the studio. Ingold (2011) bought my attention to the concepts of wayfaring versus transporting. For the Inuit, "as soon as a person moves he becomes a line" (p. 149). In their way of living the Inuit lay lines when hunting, or looking for someone who is lost, the end result being that "the entire country is perceived as a mesh of lines rather than a continuous surface" (p. 149). However, with transport the movement is always dependent on time lines and known destinations. I liken my movement around the studio to the wayfarer, described in Ingold's terms:-

The wayfarer has to sustain himself [herself] both perceptually and materially, through an active engagement with the country that opens up along his [her] path" (p.150)

My time lines were fairly open and the destination was unknown until I finished.

Although movement has long been recognised as expressing emotion, and as an agent of

change for emotional states, Tsachor and Sharif (2017) claimed that there was a dearth of scientific evidence specifying which aspects of movement influence specific emotions (p.1). In their perspective paper they endeavoured to lay further groundwork into the recent identification of clusters of Laban components which elicit and enhance the basic emotions of anger, sadness, fear, and happiness. Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) is a method and language for describing, visualising, interpreting and documenting all varieties of movement, originating from the work of Rudolph Laban. LMA classifies movement components in four main categories: Body, Effort, Space, and Shape (2017, p. 3). The concept of expressing emotions through body language dates back to Aristotle and subsequent theories postulate that bodily responses to stimuli are necessary for emotional experience, and therefore feelings are not causes of autonomic system activation and emotional behavior, but rather are the consequences of them. In other words sensory feedback from [others] facial and postural movements contributes significantly to emotional experience. Though my movements were not made in any structured sense in order to 'change' my emotional expressions when making the Altars, my emotional expressions nevertheless were often aroused by my movements. In a poetic summary (Chapter 7) I wrote: "spontaneity invites me to look again, to take my feelings into actions. Or is it that my actions make me feel?"

It was interesting to watch the videos taken at different stages of the construction of the Underworld Altar. The first video showed me splashing paint all over the altar and the other video shows me smashing alcohol tins and bottles with a hammer before attaching the broken pieces to the top of the Altar. I noticed that I made different sounds and postures in each video. In the first I saw myself groaning and weeping when splashing and squirting paint. My pain and grief were obvious to me as my face grimaced and tears were shed. The vigorous shaking of bottles of paint and throwing paint with full arm action aroused "a

feeling in my guts, of the horrors, all the horrors of the human condition" (Chapter 6, p. 171) enabling both my anger and my shock to be revealed to me as I watched the video alone. In the second video I noticed that my hammering of alcohol bottles and jumping on cans, whilst at the time it provoked anger within me, it was not obvious outwardly when I viewed the film. What surprised me about the hammering actions and then affixing these broken things onto the underworld tabletop was how gently I did this. It seemed incongruous to me that these things reminding me of 'horror' could be so graciously handled. I wasn't sure what to make of this at the time but on reflection I remember getting feedback from others, that I was a gentle person. Or perhaps the action of smashing and splashing gave me release and calmed me down.

In their study on how to recognise emotion from movement, Melzer et al, (2019, p. 4) used a Laban approach to study if movements composed from Laban sets would be recognised as expressing those emotions. Laban Movement Analysts were filmed performing short improvised (unscripted) movement sequences based on anger: body movements that are Strong, Sudden, Advance, and based on sadness: body movements that are Passive Weight, Arms to Upper Body, Sink, and Head Drop. The results of participants seeing bodily movement without knowing what emotion was portrayed, were recognised as expressing those emotions, even when the mover did not intend to express emotion (p. 12).

Fusch and Koch (2014) prefer that "we regard emotions as resulting from the circular interaction between affective qualities or affordances in the environment <u>and</u> the subject's bodily resonance, be it in the form of sensations, postures, and expressive movements of movement tendencies" (p.1). Their extended model concept of 'emotions as embodied'

implies that there are two components of bodily resonance, an affective component which is being moved or touched by an event through various forms of bodily sensations; and, an 'emotive' component, which means a bodily action readiness, implying specific tendencies of movement and directedness (2014,p. 4). That is to say, bodily sensations affect us and make ready our tendency to move in a certain direction. This best describes my experience when in making the underworld Altar it became the site where I could express my emotions more freely than any of the other Altars. I used more vigorous and increased body movement as I worked with my father's old workbench to reform it into the altar that held my fear of losing loved ones in crises. "At this point in the inquiry I was becoming more aware of being fully energized and focused as I worked with the materials" (Chapter 6, P. 176). The expression of my emotions – anger and sadness - that had been held deep down came into focus as I moved my body around the altar splashing paint and speaking out loud or crying. In this process I was able to see the 'awful truths' of my loved ones' conditions differently, less about my sense of burden and more in acknowledgement that my problems were similar to others all around the world who care for loved ones. In expressing my anger and my sadness I realized the reality of what I had been through, and these actions and feelings somehow made me 'wake up' to those realities in their fullness. Action tendency suggest Fuchs and Koch (2014) comes from bodily resonance of emotions and is not restricted to autonomic nervous system activity or facial expression, which they claim is the focus of most empirical studies, but includes the whole body as being moved and moving. Emotion, they claim, may be regarded as a bodily felt transformation of the subject's world, "which solicits the lived body into action" (p. 3).

Another way to describe how our action tendencies arise is in the engagement on the level of 'bottom-up' activity. The bottom-up processes come via bodily experience though

when processed, they become conscious thought. Summaries of the bottom-up and top-down processes as a way to understand information processing is explained by several authors over the last two decades (Ogden & Minton, 2000; Ogden et al, 2011; Flanders, 2011; Ogden & Fisher, 2015; and, Masero, 2017). An example from Ogden and Minton (2000) summarises the bottom-up and top-down processes as a way to understand information processing in the body: -

The bottom—up and top-down processing represent two general directions of information processing. Top-down is initiated by the cortex, and often involves cognition. The higher level observes, monitors, regulates, and often directs the lower levels; at the same time, the effective functioning of the higher level is partly dependent on the effective functioning of the lower levels. Bottom-up processing on the other hand, is initiated at the sensorimotor and emotional realms. These lower levels of processing are more fundamental, in terms of evolution, development and function: these capacities are found in earlier species and are already intact within the earlier stages of human life. They precede thought and form a foundation for the higher modes of processing.

(2000, p.4).

Masero (2017) describes the role of the sensorimotor psychotherapist as listening to the client's somatic narrative (bottom up-processing) along with the verbal narrative (top-down processing). Whilst I was not specifically focusing "to interrupt the automaticity of both verbal and physical reactions to assist non-verbal memory and its accompanying affect to be felt, regulated and explored" (2017, p. 661), I was aware that without talking (as I

would in a psychotherapy session) that I became more and more mindful of tracking the sequence of physical sensations and impulses as they progressed through my body.

In his research into body psychotherapy Davis (2021) reveals another less known strand of the body, a previously unknown communication network among the nervous systems, and how the body shows the role that connective tissue (CT) has in its ability to adapt and readapt to changing conditions, including physically and emotionally. Previously, connective tissue was ignored as a lifeless, inert, packing material around the organs. In recent research, Davis (2021) has revealed nervous systems that are connected to the connective tissue - the central nervous systems (brain and spinal cord), and the peripheral system. A part of the peripheral nervous system is called the autonomic nervous system and controls the body processes we almost never to need to think about, such as breathing, digestion, sweating - the parasympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system prepares the body for sudden stress when something frightening is happening, activating the adrenal glands at the top of the kidneys to release adrenaline to prime the muscles for a quick getaway.

When working on my father's ladder to re-create my sense of him, I needed to twist and turn my body to access the various paint splashes he had made, to cover some of them and then make paint splashes of my own. When in the production phase I was aware of using muscles at the same time as thinking my way through 'how' to put things together, not realising that my connective tissue would have been at play as well. Davis (2021) proposes that research into connective tissue gives more credence regarding an integrated body/mind model describing that:-

Research now shows that connective tissue plays a major role in all of life's functions: disease control, movement, creating shape/form, thermal regulation, creating spaces within the body for tissues and organs to function, insulating nerves by producing myelin sheaths, protecting the body from stress and impact, healing and tissue regeneration, erectness, producing collagen and elastin fibres, plasma, blood cells, lymph cells, and antibodies ... and is involved in the sensory activities informing the nervous system of stress that is 'held' in our muscles (Davis, 2021, p. 24).

On my wayfaring journey in the studio I came to recognize that the art making connected my body to my perceptions of what to 'do' in the art making, where and how to connect materials together in a way that could reveal my narratives of relational experience with close others. Working with all of the materials and tools to integrate my experiences produced in me a vital sense of self-agency as I incorporated bodily engagement with movement. Not just by walking around the underworld altar but also when throwing paint or applying it in different ways onto surfaces, wrapping wool around smaller 3D forms or manoeuvring chicken wire into shapes like skirts and a large rock. These activities afforded me opportunities to feel 'alive' and 'involved' with something important, giving me a sense of purpose. Stern (1985) suggests that self-agency is a sense of "authorship of one's own actions" (p.71), in particular for me I saw that a direct way of recognizing my self-agency occurred when I was 'gripping' things and holding them with force as I attached and placed materials directly onto surfaces. Heimer (2016) writes about 'the grip' when making hand sketches in clay and describes this as a double directed action. The grip is charged with a force of action and the "charge is then released" into the plasticity of the clay she works with (p.12). Whilst most of my materials were already formed, the charge for me was in the incorporation of them within the constructions I was making. To 'grip' things and hold them

firmly as I glued and attached them to surfaces gave me that sense of self-agency. My grip in attaching 'things' together, on reflection seems to parallel the grip I used to hold onto those I love when in dire straits.

By connecting things together, I also came to know that I was 'up to' the tasks I had set myself in making the Altars, giving me a sense of body ownership. Body ownership refers to a special perceptual status of one's own body, the feeling that "my body belongs to me" (Tsakiris, 2017, p. 1). In the activity of making 3D installations from following urges to following hunches on 'what to do next' I became aware of the multiple sensations that seemed to be integrated together as I employed my self-agency during the making of my Altars. I now see that in some ways these actions revealed the way I had mastered my proactive handling of the difficult situations my loved ones had been in.

Perceptions changed over time and in moments of insight.

"Whenever I looked across, or walked around the studio I had often been surprised by vital moments in which disparate meanings in different altars now seemed to connect with each other" (Chapter 7).

As I have described making art to inquire into lived experience, content and process are deeply intertwined and it is important for art therapists to attend to the making process and inquire into what is happening in the moment to moment engagement with materials as a way to open up the possibilities of understanding. By staying in the process of making Altars

over time I became adept at acknowledging surprising moments when my embodied self-awareness seemed to align with the expression of my emotions, altering my perceptions of my relational experiences or confirming them. The alteration of perceptions dawned on me slowly or in surprising moments of insight. The most surprising changes were in realising that my love for my father had been derailed in my adolescence experience of the rupture in my parents relationship, and in the slow dawning of my ambivalence about my mother that I had never faced until the emergence of creating the kitchen scene when I found it difficult to make find ways to attach her utensils on the peg board. In straddling time spans between the memories of the past and the recent past whilst in the present time experience of art-making, I was able to re-story some relational experiences and access alternative narratives. Centonze et al, (2020) suggest that "rescripting within imagery is somewhat different from restorative storytelling" as the former does not just ask for recall of the autobiographical story but to "reinhabit in a body felt sense way 'as if' the event was happening for real" in present time exploration (p.4).

There were several qualities to the way time unfolded in the studio context either 'over time' in a slow dawning way, or on quiet reflection, or in moments where insight occurred in unexpected and vital ways. It was like looking into a crystal when light moves around it and finding another aspect of the crystal come into focus. Richardson (2005) describes these changes in perceptions (or perspectives) as "an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multi-dimensionalities, and angles of approaches" coming into view (2005, p. 1416). In following my internal cues, felt senses and emotions, the feel of the materials and noting my bodily movements, my moods fluctuated when I saw that the things that I thought I knew previously could change, sometimes in a moment.

I found that there were four distinct present moment to moment experiences in which I 'inhabited' embodied self-awareness in my engagement with materials in this arts-led inquiry. I adopted a mindfulness approach to making my Altars each time I engaged in the making of them. Mindfulness refers to the psychological process of attending to experiences happening in the present moment; originally devised from ancient eastern roots (Beerse et al 2020). "Using art to express and represent experience in creative arts therapy and research is to enter a present-moment experience of self in the action of using art materials" (p. 124). Each of the following ways gave me more information about what happens in the process of making art to make meanings of my relational experiences. These were: (1) accumulating moments of knowing over time with a sense of 'going somewhere'; (2) moment to moment experience of reverie when in a flow of constructing altars over time or just being still and staring; (3) moments when challenged to problem solve when 'stuck'; and, (4) when touched by moments in which bodily feelings aroused strong emotions that revealed a change in perceptions that had a quality of healing about them.

As a compass for starting this part of my discussion, I note that Stern (2004) explored some important questions about the present moment, or *nowness*, primarily by asking "how do we conceive a present moment?" (p. 4). He writes about the problem of the subjective now, making a distinction between the objective view of time (Chronos) that is in the present instant a "moving point in time headed only toward a future", and Kairos time, occupying the subjective now, that is, the passing moment in which something happens as time unfolds. I understand then, that the focus on Chronos time is about 'moving towards' and Kairos time focuses on something that happens in awareness over several seconds that unfolds in present time experience bringing about the opportunity to come into "a new state of being" immediately (Stern, 2004, pp.5-7).

Moments of reverie

I also found many moments of reverie during the creative processes that seemed to me based in neither chronos time nor Kairos as I experienced reverie to be a state where I am 'out of time' or 'above time'. Ogden's view of reverie is "a dynamic process of going in and out of mental states: the point of entry and exit blurred" (as cited in Pinkas, 2016, p.4).

Bachelard (1971) wrote that in contrast to a dream a reverie cannot be recounted but helps us inhabit the world. Furthermore reverie helps us escape time as it possesses a sort of stability or tranquility. "Reverie" claims Soloman (2014) is "the experience of finding a space in oneself to float between consciousness and unconsciousness, where one allows sensations from the body to come into awareness, where thoughts and feelings arise like balloons floating in the sky having been released from the need to make sense" (2014, p. 15).

Reverie mostly happened as I engaged with the making of altars when I was on my own. I found myself in a 'day dreaming' state when lost in time and creating something that involved repetitive movements, for example when I was in the process of threading and weaving coloured wool across the basket that became the cradle for 'me as baby', or when I wound coloured wool around the pot holder stand to turn it into an abstract representation of myself standing tall, or when I sat and sewed my Gran's buttons on the netting to include it in the mothering altar. Using the co-ordination of my eyes and my hands in tandem generally took me into a rhythm, like a lullaby that takes one into a dreamlike state with no conscious agenda. In this state I found myself lost in thoughts, feelings, fantasies, private ruminations, imaginings, anxieties and fears, all occurring on the edges of my awareness. Reverie seemed to fuel my state of being in the flow of creativity.

Byrne (2016) reminds me that: "The practice of art-making does not consist of an inexhaustible and uninterrupted flow of doing something. Within a sustained reflexive art-making practice one can expect to encounter periods of stillness that are sometimes marked by not knowing what to do next in the stillness of this encounter the practice of art-making is akin to the nature of contemplative spiritual practice" (p. 64).

Moments of challenge

Sometimes being in the flow of making I was sometimes 'stopped in my tracks' by a challenge of some kind. This would jolt me into a sense of being in a 'now' moment. Feeling stuck or challenged, my awareness turned to problem solving. Stern (2004) claims that Kairos is a moment of opportunity when events demand action. "If events have come together in this moment and the meeting enters awareness one must act" (Stern, 2004, p.7). For example, in the case of making the exhaustion altar (chapter 7) I was confounded for many weeks trying to find a solution for an encasement to put onto the chicken wire 'rock' to make it look more like a rock. I wanted the chicken wire form to be covered with clay or some other earth looking substance. Each time I failed I experienced a kind of moment in which I would stop abruptly, with frustration and the feeling of helplessness. Similarly, this happened when finding no space to place the baby in the basket so she could see my representation of my mother's face at the kitchen table. I looked from every angle around the kitchen table to see how this could work. Within the emergent process of making this altar I had made no provision for my gaze and my mother's gaze to meet. These mishaps or 'missteps' as Stern (2004) calls them, not only challenged me into negotiating repairs and re-arrangements, but also pointed to the deeper issue of me wanting my mother to see me. In retrospect I see that

these actions of repair often led to a sense of trying to 'make things right' emotionally. As my friend Kathleen had said when she finished her viewing of all the altars in the studio space:

"Look at all the tools. It makes me think they are there to try to fix everything up."

Vital moments of insight

My experience of 'now moments' (Stern, 2004) were as if I had been standing on a darkened stage when suddenly an overhead light has been switched on shining down on me from head to toe, revealing something important about myself – my strength, my guilt about the divorce, the fact that I had rejected my father. Stern claimed that "present moments are unbelievably rich. Much happens, even though they only last a short time. The moment is a whole happening, a gestalt" (p. 14). I found though that the passing of these moments seemed a bit longer than a short time, perhaps because I was willing to stay with my emotions longer than I might in ordinary life with others. This seems commensurate with the neurological research noted in the emotions and feelings section above similar to Taylor's (2009) 90 second rule to process what has happened in the environment to cause a re-action.

In my Table (3) I describe these 'now moments' as vital moments of "insight, felt and embodied knowing" (Chapter 6, pp. 176, 177). There were several times during the inquiry when a vital moment occurred starting with an insight that began to dawn on me, seemingly at the same time that I felt sensations in my body (breathe, heartbeat, movement) that evoked strong emotions. This occurred in a re-appraisal of my relationship with my mother when holding the mannequin head to tenderly paint 'her' face. In the moment of starting to paint I had unexpectedly sobbed loudly feeling sympathy for her. The action of painting her face

took no effort as the paint brush glided smoothly across the brain area where she had suffered Strokes that had altered her personality. In these moments starting with the surprise of sobbing I felt a seismic shift of a renewal in how I saw and felt about her unfolding in present time experience. This makes me think about Bowlby's (1969, 1973 & 1981) term 'internal working models' that denote the mental representations that are formed through a child's early experiences with their caregiver(s) (see above in *Relational experience with my parents*, p. 235). The art making gave me a way to experiment with the differing perspectives I had of her – loving, caring, absent, distracted – and brought about a settling into a broader picture of her and my ambivalences about her.

My experience of being in these vital moments seemed to occur in many ways like the waves roll outwards and inwards the flurry in between when they collide. Thus did my previous perceptions collide bringing new meanings as they began to arise somehow resulting in a sense of "a whole happening, a gestalt" as Stern described (2004, p. 14).

When I watched the films (Appendix 1) seeing my movements and hearing the dialogue being spoken out loud for the camera, was another way to capture the multidimensional experience of my embodied art actions and became another avenue to elicit new insights quickly aiding my quest to face "the realities of the difficulties I've had to face" (Chapter 6). Likewise my vocalisations seemed to bring forth the insights that came spontaneously, such as, "there is no one to be angry at for half the shit that goes on in the world." At that point in the inquiry I was becoming more aware of my intersubjective experience as I worked with the materials, and the sense of being fully energized and focused as I worked with the materials. It was as if my thinking (including insight and reflections),

feelings (emotions) and embodied knowing (felt sense and actions from the body) were experienced in a vital way.

Bohart (1999) claims that "people often get insights, intuitions, or inspirations which seem to hit them and do not feel like they are a product of deliberate, thoughtful analysis (p. 288). Lett (2011, p.14) claims that insight "may come as dramatic flashes" (p. 14). This was so when I hurriedly moved to get my father's ladder into the childhood site: "I was suddenly energized to go find my father (as ladder) when bored with the symmetry at the site of the kitchen table" (Chapter 6). This completely surprising moment propelled me into another vital moment of wanting to collect the ladder, holding it and carrying it with feelings of happiness. Immediately after bringing the ladder into the area where Edwina was filming, another moment of insight occurred when I hung onto the ladder and I heard myself say that I was "struck by the strength of my body-felt sensation of wanting to hang on [to him]." In the next moment I looked back at the peg board, and recognized that I had sided with my Mum, but then when I walked towards her and stopped half way, in that moment I extended my arms and legs apart to demonstrate the split between them. Then I went back again to hug and smile at the ladder. During the whole of this time it was as if a series of insights erupted each time I looked, and then moved towards, away or between the ladder and the peg board holding the kitchen utensils. The combination of the series of now moments all seemed strung together highlighting my new perspective on the difficulties I had had with my parents.

Other vital present moment experiences occurred when I had music playing in the studio as a background accompaniment. I did not deliberately use music as a therapeutic

adjunct however, there were several significant occasions when music, combined with my actions, elicited emotions that led to crying. Washing the Perspex legs for the bridal Altar when listening to the Nellum Fantasie triggered a sudden sense of sadness. A few days later the sound of violas on another track immediately triggered my crying, revealing the sadness and regret of not having experienced 'happily ever after' with the father of my children. Music as therapy is a very broad topic, one which I will merely skim over but glean from, in my attempt to highlight how music in the studio worked for me as a catalyst for moments of transformation through emotional expressions.

The field of "music therapy" was introduced in about 1950 (Dobrznska, Cesarz, Rymaszewska & Kiejna, 2006, p. 49). In his study focused on a review of the current state of investigating music-evoked emotions, Schaefer (2017) re-iterates that there is mounting evidence that making music or listening to music activates a multitude of brain structures involved in cognitive, sensorimotor, and emotional processing. He describes four musical parameters for the activation of emotions: musical tempo, which influences cardiovascular dynamics; consonance (the impression of stability and repose), associated with the activation of the paralimbic and cortical brain areas (compared to dissonance giving rise to a sense of roughness); and timbre and loudness, which can activate physical pressure relevant to responses to music from the relationship between the endocrine system, the nervous system and psychology. Budoiu-Balan (2019) describes that the first neuronal field touched by musical stimuli is the *amygdala*, the centre within the brain responsible for fear and pain, which processes exterior information and makes sense of stressful circumstances. In his article Budoiu-Balan brings together two theories, the concept of catharsis and selfmanagement, in order to focus on the therapeutic effect that music can have on our lives (p. 1219). He claims that "music ... teaches us to think and act differently, enhances minds, and

makes us realise the important values of life" (p. 1217). The outburst of sobbing, whilst holding the mannequin head to paint my mother's face, occurred immediately I heard the first note of Ave Maria music. I sensed a cohesion of my grief and compassion when enveloped by the sounds as my hand painted her head.

Hearing music sometimes triggered insight with crying as did making the Altars. Sometimes the trigger for crying was intentionally looking at what was before me. Elkins (2001) wrote of the experiences people have had when looking at paintings that have evoked crying: "Crying is hard to think about ... there is pain in it but also pleasure ... [tears] can hurt, as if they were little stones caught in the eye, and they can also leak out silently without our noting" (p. 25). Vingerhoets and Bylsma (2016) describe emotional crying from a biological point of view - "the shedding of tears [comes] from the lacrimal apparatus, in the absence of any irritation of the eyes, often accompanied by alterations in some facial muscles, vocalisations, and sobbing" (p. 207). Adults having "a good cry" according to Fogel (2009, p. 111) is connected deeply to the interoceptive sensations of warm tears, blurry vision, a sense of vulnerability, feelings of relief, and the emotions that resonate in sound and feeling that "restore optimal function." I felt that my story of myself as the baby "who learned not to cry" became a springboard from which to I could trust myself to stay open to my vulnerability throughout the inquiry. Most of my crying in this inquiry was when I was alone. Bylsma et al, (2008) suggest that "crying may be beneficial because it helps the individual understand their feelings better, or come to a resolution of the situation that triggered the crying (p.1171). Crying for me was beneficial in discovering feelings, expressing grief, and in vital moments of insight when my perceptions were altered, bringing relief or joy.

Sometimes I found anger beneath my crying such as when I painted some brown paint in fast strokes on the Underworld Altar. The rhythm of my hand movements – fast and furious - seemed to give me permission to then cry from an angry place in my trunk and in the muscles in my right arm moving the brush. Hendriks et al. (2008) write about 'protest' crying, whether for "the baby left alone in the crib or the adult hearing of an unexpected loss of a loved one" the purpose of the crying being to bring about a reunion. There is a lot of energy in this kind of crying and is directed at "re-establishing the threatened connection and at fighting any sign that the loss is permanent" (p. 89). For me it was a cry for 'the loss of what might have been' if my loved ones had not been so unwell. With my teeth clenched I was aware of the desire to be angry and as I shook paint through a funnel into a plastic bottle the louder and the faster I shook the bottle, and the more "my tone of voice altered the more intention I felt towards anger" increasing its intensity (Chapter, 7). Holz et al, (2021) in their research into the role of emotional intensity in the perception of vocal affect, state that: "vocalisations including laughter, cries, moans, or screams constitute a potent source of information about the affective states of others". It wasn't until I put the four mannequin heads together for a conversation (end of Chapter 7) that, without witnesses, I screamed very loudly, signalling the full stop to my work on my Altars.

Section Three: Relational Experience with Collaborators and Environments.

Discussion of Intersubjective collaborations.

My peers became witnesses, companions and collaborators who added substantially to my understandings of myself and my inquiry. They helped me stay on the path of finding new ways of looking at my life. Just as Ingold (2010) had described what lived behind the bark of a tree, my personal unveiling was supported by them in my "gathering together ... the threads of [my] life" (p. 4). Maintaining the rigor, authenticity, credibility, and resonance of my arts-based inquiry was further enhanced by the information gleaned from intersubjective dialogues with peers. This was a way to affirm "the commitment to communicating to an audience, rendering art making and research a social act and not a singular investigation" (Gerber & Myers-Coffman, 2018, p. 603).

The companioning of others occurred during the planning of the altars, in small group supervision meetings and during the making of them. Though not formally recruited as coresearchers these people became informally, and sometimes spontaneously, invited to be research peers who checked, challenged and enriched my findings. Conversations with these peers and colleagues became one way in which I began to broaden the personal inquiry, in seeing what resonated with other women and other researchers. Each person collaborated with me, providing me with "opportunities for expressing complex inner feelings" (page no) that furthered my understandings of the content within the art-making processes. Jean, Jenni, Ailish, Jan and Vivienne were my first collaborators over a 5 year period in small group meetings.

In our group the interchange of empathy and challenge, description and giving and receiving creative arts intersubjective responses supported each other's processes, building trust which created a sense of openness to each other to tell our personal stories and to express our feelings contributed to the refinement of our understandings. During this time and later when making the altars in other environments, my research peers and other peer companions offered descriptions that resonated with them rather than interpreting what I had offered to them. The importance here is that the lack of interpretation opens the way for descriptive offerings and how these may or may not resonate with the other. Looking at the early attachment of a two-three month old and mother during intimate and playful spontaneous face-to-face protoconversations (communication in its most basic form) Schore (2021) notes that the emotions of both are non-verbally communicated, perceived, mutually regulated, and intersubjectively shared. Similarly the acts of my peers as co-creators to find meanings within the intersubjective matrix we shared consisted of spontaneous reciprocal nonverbal emotional communications of face, prosody (patterns of rhythm and sound, or patterns of stress and intonation in language) and gestures within the emerging relational alliances we made together.

In this inquiry the different personalities and energies of each collaborator served to enable my expression of different emotions and also facilitated different ways of seeing. In the early group session (Chapter four) Jean listened carefully and seemed to 'feel' with me when I merely said "I am sad". Her style of staying present to the minutia of my experience of feeling sad and staying with simple and gentle questions tapped into the "worst of it" and opened up the floodgates of tears that revealed a place within my middle body of a 'rock encased wound' (Chapter 5). Jean's style of 'being with' through eye gaze, gestures and open questions delivered with a gentle lilt to her voice had a quality of Maternal Sensitivity, found

in the literature of Meins et al, (2011); Leerkes and Zhou (2018), van Izendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg (2019); and, Ch'ng (2019).

This seemingly small event became a central focus of my inquiry enabling me to become curious about what I was 'wounded by'. Eventually the expression of the 'wound' resulted in the placement of objects and materials that became embedded on the torn asunder and underworld altars denoting my pain at loss and dislocation. The experience of the wound expressed in the clay-encased newspapers on the healing altar and the red 'gash' down the torso of the woman on the torn asunder altar expresses my pain of being divorced. The experience of the wounding of loved ones in their distress is expressed as the chaos of broken things on the underworld altar. These insights revealed to me the nature of the wounded researcher that Romanyshyn (2020) writes about.

In contrast to Jean's companionship was the session when Jenni responded to my story of 'overwhelm'. Jenni used non-verbal action as the vehicle of response by quietly placing some of the symbols from her collection into the scene, then amped up her actions by dumping a heap of objects commensurate to the content of my story of chaos and having 'no time', creating loud sounds as they crashed together in the sandbox I had set up. Seeing the strength of her bodily actions as she did seemed to mirror for me what I felt I was missing within myself at that time, the strength to carry on my care for others in distress, and the absence of peace in my life. In 2004 Stern wrote that the discovery of mirror neurons had provided possible neurobiological mechanisms for understanding other people's states of mind, especially their intentions (2004, p. 78). According to Fogel (2009) the existence of mirror neurons, which fire when we "observe other people doing actions similar to ones we

ourselves can do, helps us understand the findings on infant imitation and how infants and adults learn about their own body schema from watching others" (p. 207).

However, in their review of the research into mirror neurons Heyes and Catmur (2022) cite the ongoing debate of the role mirror neurons have in visual-motor learning. Although these cells are intriguing, because like a mirror they match observed and executed actions, and are coded as both "my action" and "your action" Heyes and Catmur concluded that action understanding, fMRI (neural imaging), patient studies, and research using TMS (Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation) now suggest that mirror neurons contribute to complex control systems rather than dominating such systems or acting alone. This indicates that the brain areas suggestive of mirror neurons only contribute to low-level processing of observed actions (eg. distinguishing types of grip) but not directly to high level action interpretation (eg. inferring actors' intentions) (2020, p. 20). In watching Jenni move the way she did whilst collecting and gripping and tipping the symbols into the tray I none-the-less felt she had seen me and heard me and validated my sense of overwhelm.

When Edwina filmed me at the beginning the first phase of making the childhood altar, she brought an energy and style that followed me in my movements and checked in with my facial expressions. It was as if by looking through the lens of the camera she had a sharp focus on my body movements, emotional expressions, bodily responses and the tempo of my movement (fast/slow) up close and personal. Her vital presence was sustained for the entire 45 minutes of filming. It was as if our experience together was "continually and mutually shaped" (Stolorow et al, 1994), like dancing together in harmony with occasional dissonant moves when I felt dissonance. Edwina spontaneously managed the dialogue

between us and, as Lett (2011) wrote: "the dialogue that takes place is always a complexity of inner feelings in both participants, a sense of what can and can't be said just now, the feeling of what is alive in the moment, and the resonances connected to bracketing in or out" (p. 278). I was not privy to Edwina's internal choices about what to ask and what not to ask but she was adept at using small sharp open questions at a pace that seemed consonant to what I was experiencing as I moved things around and moved myself around as I did that. Questions such as: "And what are you putting on your altar now?", "What are you thinking?", "How does that feel?', "What happens", "How is it now, being with him now?", and "where exactly is your gaze, what are you looking at?"

These questions were felt as a poultice drawing to the surface an awareness of two sides of my experience of my mother's sense of order. One was a felt sense of security, the other a sense of boredom. This was news for me. I had not thought of my mother's ways as boring before and yet it made sense somehow. I was aware that the sound of Edwina's voice seemed to deepen my ability to be 'honest' with myself about how I felt about this new idea. Something in her tone of voice and her intentional presence gave me a sense of safety to 'own' an unacknowledged experience of not wanting to do things Mum's way. The sensory experience of sound is not often noted in writings of embodied self-awareness, though Badenoch (2018) pays attention to our ears as receptive instruments. She writes: "We may notice that at times we are able to listen more closely to the meaning of what another is saying, while at other moments we feel distracted by sounds in the environment. Similarly, we may find certain qualities of voice to be soothing while others act as an irritant to our nervous systems" (p. 81). These shifts in how we listen and how we respond to what we hear seem to unfold without our consciously choosing them. They are part of a system of

indications of the state of our autonomous nervous system (ANS) that link us with each other to communicate safety or danger through speaking and listening (Badenoch, 2018).

By staying close to my embodied processes Edwina was able to form her own intersubjective responses to me in the form of statements that resonated with me and extended my understandings of my relational experiences with my parents. For example: "Symmetry doesn't seem to work in this case" and "That makes it sound much harder to make a decision from a place like that" and "He is going to come into this Altar" and "You're feeling sad as you look at the divide between your dad and your mum."

In contrast to the collaboration with Edwina which was high in energy Kerry and I stood and walked slowly alongside each other as we ambled through the studio space with me sharing with her some of my reflections on my altars. Kerry gave me a sense of being seen and heard in a different way, as two companions strolling, looking at things together quietly. I spoke of insecurity, the tenuous link between my parents, the baby who learned not to cry and the tangled wool dream, a lot to take in in a few minutes and yet I sensed her 'feeling the feelings' I was having as I collapsed several stories into one (Stern, 2004, p. 75). Just as Siegel (1999) had suggested I felt an alignment that "permits a nonverbal form of communication to the [other] that she is understood in the deepest sense." (p. 68). Despite my words I felt she connected to my feelings when she listened at length without speaking. Schore (2008) brought attention to the role of non-verbal right brain communications in the psychotherapy relationship. He suggests these implicit non-verbal communications establish a safe and healing environment (O'Neill, 2011). Even though I was mainly talking and Kerry was mainly listening, we looked at each other's faces in the pauses between looking at the art

work and hearing her responses. Whilst we were not in direct eye to eye gaze as a mother and infant might be, I sensed a maternal quality to our engagement. Through her attentiveness as she watched and waited, anticipating my "expressions intuitively, and sympathetically ... [and] replying with emotional face expression" we co-created "an intersubjective reciprocal system of ... communication" (Shore, 2021, p.2).

Whilst aware that I was telling Kerry about what had happened previous to her visit, suddenly in present time experience "I noticed that the calico rag doll I was using as my mother, had no face" (chapter 6). In Kerry's verbal response to me (see Transcript excerpt chapter 6) she merged two of my key stories – "mum has no face" and "all this tangled ambivalence". I didn't know why but I cut Kerry off preferring to focus on my urge to tangle wool. In the mix of feeling heard and seen by Kerry I also had an experience of dissonance connected to hearing the word 'ambivalence'. Kerry's intuitive and spontaneous response opened a doorway into my further inquiry into the experiences or styles of my attachment to my parents. When Kerry wrote a poetic response for me about my expressive work on the ladder she incorporated my words with her felt sense and wrote: "Feet of Clay, take these steps and meet me here at this ladder of your lived history. I lovingly mark all the parts I wish to keep and join my paint with yours" (chapter 6). This reading touched me deeply giving me a sense that Kerry's responses were very close to the essence of my experience of re-ordering my mind towards my father in present time experience.

Carla van Laar (2020) describes her meeting with Warren Lett in which they shared talking about, and being in the presence of, an art work of hers. She tells us that "this simple dialogue, in subtle and powerful ways, was a significant catalyst for the explorations that

were yet to unfold, an enabler of as yet unimagined possibilities, experiences, and knowings. Warren's presence to my image and his description of it changed my own experience of how I saw the image" (2020, p.144). Thus it was with Kerry when I later wrote a poem to consolidate a new insight co-created from the collaboration with Kerry. "It is not right to have no face, to face ambivalence between my feelings for both Dad and Mum. It is a terrible fear to need security and not to learn how to speak of it." (Poem, J. Hill, chapter 6).

Kerry companioned me in looking at the underworld altar with a similar stance. Her body posture, tilt of head, gaze and intense listening once again assured me of my trust in her. It was as if she could bear not only hearing my underworld stories, but seemed to be thinking about how she would respond. This engaged me on a non-verbal level as I anticipated what she might say next. Ch'ng (2019) writes that "mutual responsiveness shown in studies provides evidence for a self and other awareness in early infancy" (p. 3) and Rochat & Passos-Fereira, (2008) state that in human intersubjectivity reciprocation between others allows for the "co-construction of meanings" (p. 191). In response, or reciprocation, Kerry pointed to the throat area of the mannequin's head in the vice on this altar and said: "And there – you've got a space for a Scream – a lovely long neck with all that ropey tension there." (Chapter 7). "Ropey tension" as a phrase stayed with me. I had already used rope in some of the altar installations and I found some more of it to cut into four neat lengths to glue onto the throat of the mannequin. The intuitive or implicit felt sense of Kerry's words resonated with me.

As I reflected on the quality of Kerry's presence I found neurobiological research from over the last decade that throws further light on what is happening when right-brain-to-

right brain emotional transmissions occur in face-to-face nonverbal communications (O'Neill, 2011; Schore, 2011; Ogden et al, 2012; Badenoch, 2018; and, Schore, 2021). Badenoch (2018) explains that the right-hemisphere perspective involves "attending to relationship, embodiment, and what is unfolding in the unique moment in the space between" and from this viewpoint the central metaphor she uses to describe this is "living beings in relationship with each other in the moment" (p. 197). The left hemisphere perspective steps out of the relational moment to focus on "division, fixity, disembodiment, and step-by-step solutions" (p. 197). The central metaphor Badenoch uses here is: "with our bodies and our brains, and our very selves, [we are] viewed as machines to be analysed and shaped" (p. 197) Ogden et al (2012) in their perspectives and applications in a neurobiology paper write that "the experience dependent implicit self develops through right-brain-to-right-brain affect laden interactions with attachment figures at birth" (p.1). It was at this level that I believe the collaborations with my peers in this inquiry impacted my inquiry, that while we were all adults, the art-making and responses from others engaged us all with right-brain-to-rightbrain encounters. Schore (2011) expanded his work on the centrality of the right brain structures and supported the proposition that the early developing right brain generates the implicit self. He explains that "A large number of interdisciplinary studies are now converging upon the centrality of these implicit right brain motivational and emotional processes that are essential to adaptive functioning" (2011, p. 77).

Whilst we all received each other's stories by thinking about what was said (left brain activity), the art-making for us all, as data for the inquirer and as intersubjective responses from collaborators, employed right-brain activity. During art-making and giving creative responses, non-verbal right brain communications that included body posture, movement patterns, facial expressions, tone and volume of voice and eye contact could all be perceived

as protoconversations between adults. Whilst there were words spoken between myself and my collaborators, they revolved around deep feelings and creativity, from which creative intersubjective responding emerged, giving us all an experience of connecting with right-brain-to-right-brain activity. Similar to wordless play between the caregiving adult and the baby which helps the baby to thrive, collaborators used mirroring and play with the use of looking, seeing, body, sounds, gestures, improvisations and art- making materials to respond, thus facilitating the ongoing process of my inquiry. This is similar to what Schore (2021) reminds us when he writes of the long tradition in psychoanalytic psychotherapy that conceptualises intersubjectivity as an unconscious interaction between the minds of the clinician with their patients. "With an emphasis on the patients' [clients, researchers] subjective experience, the focus is on changes in the emotional and relational functions expressed in the therapeutic relationship, the product of the interaction with patient's mind/body and the therapist's mind/body (2021, p.14).

Discussing Relational experience with the studio place.

The studio is where old works, works in progress, and the fruits of the artist's research activities and collected material from outside the studio mingle in controlled chaos. The studio space of discovery, where collected and selected objects, and research materials and experiences, relate to each other and provoke reflection and thinking. Through self-reflexive practices and through construction of instructions, prototypes, sketches and scribbles, next steps are often identified; they are being made intellectual, intelligible for the artist and therein eventually communicable to a wider world (Sjoholm, 2014, p. 510).

Whilst Sjoholm (2014) wrote about artists doing research in their studios, 'my' studio was a temporary place that became a home for me to return to over and over again at any time of the day or week. As Wix (2010) described, this place became a "location of fruitful interdependency inviting the reason of the heart to integrate with the reason of the mind and to foster engagement with self, materials and others" (2010, p. 182) for me. Being in this place I attended to the images in production and collaborated with them in iterative cycles of perceiving what they were saying to me, in a sense listening to them through my gazing at them. Being on my own in the studio for most of the construction time with these activities, Wix refers to this as the "unfolding of the images [to be] understood through [their] own language" (2010, p. 182).

The studio as 'space' became 'a place' to me, the structures of the walls, floor and ceiling acting as a safe container for everything that transpired in it, holding me and my memories, actions, emotions, and shifts in my perceptions as I inhabited it as my temporary dwelling place. Ingold (2011) argues against the notion of space as this word implies "the most empty, the most detached from the realities of life and experience" (p. 145). He prefers that say we live in, or inhabit, environments. "When we are at home we are indoors, not in space, and when we go outdoors we are in the open, not in space" (p. 145). The drive to the studio from my home on a road through mountain ash and ferns, gave me time to let go thinking of mundane things, and prepare my mind for being in the environment of the studio and the view of large garden with eucalypt trees and garden beds filled with flowers. The environment of the studio and garden opened up an expansive inside of me making it very easy to pick up where I left off from the last time I was there.

Fenner (2011) considers where art therapy takes place and how these environments might play a role in the "nature, tone and content of those intimate encounters" (p. 851). Her study found that deep attachments to place, to objects and zones in the room provided support and stabilising influences on the therapy process and had "a holding capacity, beyond that derived interpersonally, a sense of located-ness and stability" (p. 854). As the researcher and participant when making my Altars, I was grateful for Kerry's suggestion to have something in the studio that I could refer to as a stabilising influence when I needed to rest my gaze or when strong emotion had taken me over. The small installation of the Sentinel that I put together with my clay sculpture of a woman thinking, sitting outside a cage, was to remind me that my inquiry enabled me to give voice and expression to things that mattered to me, keeping me focused on the quest I had committed myself to. I projected me as observer into the gaze of this sculptured woman, and the way I had created her arm under her chin gave me a sense of connecting to my own thoughtfulness, which was calming.

In Sjoholm's (2014) study on how artists come to perceive and construct their work in the studio environment, she writes: "The studio is a space where ... things originate or are reinvented – it is a space where things begin (2014, p.505). In the studio space I felt I went to 'another place' similar to how children might when play invokes the creation of other worlds revealing the deeper levels of their lived stories, such as in free play anywhere, or in play therapy contexts (Axline, 1964; O'Connor & Braverman, 1997; Malchiodi & Crenshaw, 2014). My studio 'playground' afforded me a time and place to deepen my knowing of my experiences of loving and suffering, and to re-create a sense of well-being on my own, and in the collaborations with others. As I found myself moving around the Altars, sorting through the practicalities of applying paint, attaching things, carrying things, I recognized how at home I am in my body when sorting things out for myself in the private place of the studio. I

also recognized a parallel to the ways I had cared for loved ones when I had lived on my own, and was focused on how to 'fix' things and make decisions in my responses to trying to help them.

In her paper Kreshak (2020) writes of a collage she made to represent her personal conceptualisation of a 'good-enough' therapeutic space and identified three broad categories in her images: nature, arts and hospitality therefore "being in a comforting space" (p. 7). The studio I used was instantly a comforting place due to the hospitality of my friends who let me use it, and because of the abundance of nature that surrounded it. Once I was able to set up with all of my things, objects, memorabilia, art-making tools such as paint, scissors, glues, a saw, a glue gun and table tops stacked up against a wall, I felt settled in. Bit by bit other items appeared, chairs, a CD player, food and drink, photographs, skeins of wool, chicken wire, mannequin doll parts. Whilst it was not an open studio for other artists, it was a studio that was open – to nature, to those who welcomed me there and to those I welcomed in, my collaborators and viewers. Van Laar, (2020) did not have a studio when she began her project but it was created and developed along the way. She came to see the context her studio provided as a place where she puts her values into practice "It has been a place to meet and discuss the seeing of her stories ... to host regular exhibitions ... to work[ed] individually with art therapy clients ... and ... my heightened awareness of the impact of context during this investigation has had ripple effects that have flowed into my creating a place of my own, my studio, to work in and share with others" (2020, 191).

The width and length and height of the studio afforded me the movements and awareness that came from my body despite the number of installations accumulating in there.

I could walk around, look under and reach up, down and across everything with relative ease, as if embodying poetry in motion as things came together. I had time to allow everything I had imagined and everything that subsequently arrived in my imagination to guide, inspire and coalesce into manageable patterns that led me to insights, changes in perception and meanings that consoled, enlightened and soothed me. Wix (2010) describes how the studio as a place and the making that occurs there supports "Understanding patterns and meanings other than those of symbolic representation [and] involves more than intellectual knowing. Such insight requires knowing embedded in the heart, the hand, and the head" (p. 182). It is not hard she claims, to "remember what we know by heart when we work in studios: the ways we engage the allure of materials or how, with practice, we know instinctively what materials do and how they work in their multiple ways of intersecting." And so it was for me.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion



Figure 79. I have almost finished writing, Pastel drawing, Jenny Hill, 2016.

See the bridge between the cave and the small house? To cross the river to go into the cave to write this dissertation I had to build it. There is the hope, on the table, that my inquiry will be well received. The way out of this cave, on the side of the hill underneath the place above where I began this journey following a golden path leads straight ahead to the small house. On the walls of the cave I leave symbols of my love, my tears and the art-making tools of my parents. I will remember this place when I arrive to sit in front of the fire place in the cottage ahead of me.

(12/12/16, Jenny Hill).

Drawing it all Together

An arts-led and emergent project such as this inquiry can access relationship patterns and the impact on the self of high levels of stress and anxiety over long periods of time in relationship to caring for others. I found it heartening to read Fogel's claim (2009, pp.277-278), that "The ability to become normally absorbed in our own experience is an act of love."

Through living the experience of creating altars and reflecting on these experiences, the personal has now become public. In summary, the findings from my research include: that making personal meanings from both body-knowing and insight (cognitive processing) leads to emotional transformation and behaviour change; that attachment patterns can shift and change over the lifespan; and that therapeutic arts-based inquiry may restore well-being for those exhausted from critical and/or ongoing care of loved ones in all kinds of health crises. An arts-led project such as this has facilitated understanding and emotional expression, accessing awareness of the triggers that lead to body-felt sensations through reflection on these experiences, enabling access to one's resilience and capacity to cope in hard times. Creating the Altars took me to these understandings and gave meaning to my experiences.

Exploring my suffering has driven me to a more intimate knowledge of who I am and from where I find my strength. This inquiry brought into clearer focus how I have loved close others and yet how my values have been challenged by them. What overrides the challenges though is that I was able to put my love for them into action, both literally in actions in life and figuratively in the forms of the Altars I made.

Making my Altars provided me with a way to transition from one state of being (anxious and tired) to another which helped me master the difficult things I had been through. As Levine (2015) suggested, my Altar making became "a ritual to pass from sets of perceptions which held [me] in the past" (p.98). Immersing in the methodological processes in this inquiry I located a new experience of my embodied self and more authentic voice from which to speak. As Graham (1999) suggested "the telling of one's story is crucial to the construction of a more authentic self" (p. 111) and as one of my preliminary editors had said:

"You have born so many secrets and had no voice. You edited yourself out. Now you have edited yourself back in." (Lyn B., June 21, 2016)

With reference to the four ways of knowing as articulated by Heron (as cited in 2008) and Heron and Reason (as cited in 2008) I highlighted the nexus between experiential knowing and presentational knowing. I came to see that in that place between experiencing and presenting artistic representations of selected experience is a fertile place where the art maker is engaged with their whole selves - body, mind and spirit. I am now more aware of this nexus when working with others in therapeutic and in educational settings where art-making is used to make sense of peoples' lives and learnings. I realise more fully the importance of attending to the process of making and allowing time and space for others to dwell within their inner knowing when using creative methods to bring forth both old and new perspectives.

I have now been able to identify how some of my internalised dialogues about primary relationships have been constructed. Moving through the layers of my attachment experiences I can now report that I am able to discriminate and identify secure, anxious and

ambivalent attachment behaviours within myself. This then gives me the opportunity to 'pause' in the space between a 'trigger' and a 'reaction' to other people's behaviours towards me. Likewise I can also report that I say 'no' more often, as a way to care for myself and not become overtired. It seems I have 'absorbed the good' from earlier security and this seems to operate well now as I learn to trust myself more.

Strengths and Challenges of This Study

The strengths of this inquiry are that in undertaking a single subject and subjective inquiry I have been able to provide a rich descriptive account of what can be experienced in the process of making in a multimodal arts based inquiry. It goes without saying that this inquiry was particular in its form and I never aimed to offer an inquiry that replicable. Instead this study may join a jigsaw of similar studies that together may well paint a broader picture of the value of therapeutic arts making.

The main challenge in undertaking this study was the longevity of it as I juggled ill-health, ongoing caregiving of loved ones, and continued working my private practice, resulting in the writing of a thesis that has had to be rewritten several times as the literature I used initially became superseded over time. Even though I may have or could have done things differently the strength of the research paradoxically lies in its longevity, as an example of finely tracing the detail of moment by moment descriptions present in my experience. Of course this research holds all of my particular biases – that it is important to care for family, that emotions need to be expressed to nurture one's own wellbeing, that religion sustains me, and a belief that art-making provides different ways to understand our

relational experiences, bringing a sense of healing and wholeness. Another inquirer attempting a similar 3 dimensional arts installation will likely have different values that drive the inquiry, which I believe is a good thing. What is critical is that like this research, the actions and values are consonant and transparent.

I enjoyed the time in the studio place but there were consequences to being in a state of flow as some of my data was attended to often after a considerable period of time and what could have been valuable may have slipped away. I did deal with some of my data bit-by-bit, particularly after the first sessions when working on the Altars on the back porch and in the backyard was quite different in the studio. Here hours would go by in solitary immersion in the process of making. My preference was to embrace the process and to rely on the images made to speak both for me and to me, even at a much later date.

Overall, regardless of the strength and the challenges of this inquiry, it does I believe have the potential to add to the "incremental and cumulative journey" of other women towards transformative change through the "challenge to reflect on the social construction of identity, contexts of relationships and the validation of knowing through the body" (Ettling & Guilian, 2001, p.5). The longevity of this research is testimony itself to the perseverance of many women (of a certain age) who have dedicated themselves to balancing out their care of others with their care for themselves.

Recommendations

It wasn't necessary for me to have someone with me the whole time, indicating that there is value for practitioners to use this kind of making as a self-supervision or self-care process. Not everyone would embark on a longitudinal path such as mine, however, as a longitudinal "case study" there are processes and procedures made transparent here that can be transferred to therapy in small groups, undertaking community projects, in educational settings and other research projects. Important though is the capacity to stay with the 'not' known when making art in an emergent process and in research. The capacity to accept whatever comes up may not suit some. For me the art-making was extremely enjoyable and being in a flow state became nurturing and life-giving as I 'stayed with' whatever did come up for me coaching my perseverance and trusting my goals.

This search was supported by peers and mentors, formally and informally. The role of the intersubjective discourses with others enabled a rigor or robustness to my perspectives, and on the way I collected, and dialogued with my data. Self-reflection, as a method in arts-based practice, in tandem with collaborative dialogues and multimodal methods enabled me to confront my previously preferred discourses which subsequently led to a change in long held beliefs that were not life-giving. Combining the personal while also needing to 'step back' and carefully reconsider what I am coming to know and how my actions can change in light of this knowing is the reflexive turn that is critical in arts based inquiry.

Another consideration is that of the ethics of a self- revealing inquiry. I have learnt that we cannot tell the stories of our lives without others being implicated. Obtaining

permission from others to mention them by name, or not, is essential, for their privacy and for one's own integrity. Being prepared and open to put ones' values before ones' needs is required. Due consideration and collaboration with others who have gone before you is essential. Self-care and belief in the original impetus to pursue such research needs to be discussed often with supervisors and peers.

Another recommendation is to understand that the nexus between the personal and the professional is undefined, when in the process of an inquiry such as this. While I hoped and trusted that my findings would probably add to the field of arts-based practice I could not be certain it would. As Springgay et al (2008) write, "practitioner-based research is necessarily about self but it is also about communities of practice. Individuals committed to inquiry are situated in communities of practice" (p. xxiv). What I am hoping is that I have made transparent (enough) what can come about by using arts-based methods of inquiry to encourage others to 'know themselves' more, in order to refine and define their own identities for the good of the communities that they belong to.

Suggestions for Further Research

I think this approach to inquiry would appeal not only to practitioners in arts therapy who are looking for a steady and ongoing way to self-supervise their own practices, but for people in the personal and professional fields of caring for people with mental and addiction issues such as psychologists, psychiatrists, neuroscientists and anyone interested in attachment experience and multi-modal ways of knowing.

Other qualitative researchers might inquire in more depth about what happens in the significant moments of insight and felt knowing, particularly being mindful in their focus on the minutia of sensorimotor experiences of those affected by trauma. This could help with identifying, in finer detail, the antecedents of the triggers experienced that people may not recognise as the causes of their anxiety; the body-felt sense experience and flashbacks which threaten take them over.

And finally, at the end point of this journey, and my relationship with you, my reader, I take forward a changed attitude towards the hardships I have been through, a resolution of what disturbed me about my relational patterns, and an acceptance of the struggles I had been in when my loved ones were in distress. I have a new enthusiasm to provide more and different art based inquiry opportunities for others, particularly those struggling with care of loved ones where high levels of anxiety are present. And, for myself, I celebrate finding within me a renewed spirit.



Figure 80. Celebration Altar, J. Hill, 2011.

Reference List

- Agree, E. M. (2017). Social changes in women's roles, families, and generational ties.

 *Generations Journal of the American Society on Aging, 41(2), 63-70. Retrieved from https://jhu.pure.elsevier.com/en/publications/social-changes-in-womens-roles-families-and-generational-ties
- Ainley, V., Maister, L., Brokfeld, J., Farmer, H., & Tsakiris, M., (2013). More of myself:

 Manipulating interoceptive awareness by heightened attention to bodily and narrative aspects of the self. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 22(4), 1231–1238.

 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.concog.2013.08.004
- Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1979). Infant-mother attachment. *American Psychologist*, *34*(10), 932-937. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.34.10.932
- Ainsworth, M. D. (1985). Attachments across the life span. *Bulletin of Academic Medicine*, 61(9), 792-812.
- Allen, J. & Rumbold, J. (2004). Postcard conversations: A dialogue about methodology.

 *Association of Qualitative Research, 4(4), 100-142.
- Allen, J. G., Fonagy, P., & Bateman, A. W. (2008). *Mentalizing in clinical practice*.

 American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc.
- Allen, P. B. (1995). Art is a way of knowing. A guide to self-knowledge and spiritual fulfillment through creativity. Boston, Mass: Shambhala Publications, Inc.
- Allen, P. (2005). Art is a spiritual path. Shambhala Publications.
- Ammaniti, M., & Trentini, C. (2009). How new knowledge about parenting reveals the neurobiological implications of intersubjectivity: A conceptual synthesis of recent

research. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, *19*(5), 537-555. https://doi.org/10.1080/10481880903231951

- Andrew, S. D. (2017). Searching for an autoethnographic ethic. New York: Routledge.
- Ansdell, G. & Pavlicevic, M. (2001). *Beginning Research in Arts Therapies. A Practical Guide*. London, England: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Atkins, S. (2012). Where are the five chapters: Challenges and opportunities in mentoring students with arts-based dissertations. *Journal of Applied Arts and Health*, *3*(1), pp.59-66. https://doi.org/10.1386/jaah.3.1.59 1
- Attia, M., & Edge, J. (2017). Be (com) ing a reflexive researcher: A developmental approach to research methodology. *Open Review of Educational Research*, *4*(1), 33-45. https://doi.org/10.1080/23265507.2017.1300068
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021). Alcohol, tobacco & other drugs in Australia. Web Report. Cat. no: PHE221.

 https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol/alcohol-tobacco-other-drugs-australia/contents/about
- Axline, V. M. (1964). Dibs in search of self. Ballatine Books.
- Bączkowski, B. M. & Cierpialkowska, L. (2015). Mentalization within close relationships:

 The role of specific attachment style. *Polish Psychological Bulletin*. *46*(2), 285-299.

 http://doi.org/10.1515/ppb-2015-0035
- Bachelard, G. (1971). *The Poetics of Reverie: Childhood, Language, and the Cosmos*.

 Beacon Press.

- Badenoch, B. (2018). The heart of trauma: Healing the embodied brain in the context of relationships. NY, W. W. Norton Company.
- Bailey, H. N., Redden, E., Pederson, D. R., & Moran, G. (2016). Parental disavowal of relationship difficulties fosters the development of insecure attachment. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*. 48(1), 49-59. http://doi.org/10.1037/cbs00000033
- Bakermans-Kranenburg, M. J. & van IJzendoorn, M. H. (2017). Protective parenting:

 Neurobiological and behavioural dimensions. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *15*, 45-49. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2017.02.001
- Banfield, J. & Burgess, M. (2013). A phenomenology of artistic doing: Flow as embodied knowing in 2D and 3D professional artists. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 44(1), 60-91. http://doi.org/10.1163/15691624-12341245.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Duke University Press: Duram and London.
- Barbalet, J. M. (2001). *Emotion, social theory, and social structure: A macrosociological approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Barbour, K. (2004). Embodied ways of knowing. *Waikato Journal of Education, 10*(1), 227-238. http://dx.doi.org/10.15663/wje.v10i1.342
- Barone, T., & Eisner, E. W. (2012). Arts Based Research. SAGE: Thousand Oaks, California.
- Beerse, M. E., Lith, T. V., Picket, S. M., & Stanwood, G. D. (2020). Biobehavioral utility of mindfulness-based art therapy: Neurobiological underpinnings and mental health impacts. *Experimental Biology and Medicine*, 245(2), 122-130. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1535370219883634

- Betensky, M. (1987). Phenomenology of therapeutic art expression and art therapy. In J. Rubin (Ed.), *Approaches to art therapy: Theory and technique* (pp. 149-165). New York: Brunner/Mazel, Inc.
- Betensky, M. (1995). What do you see? Phenomenology of therapeutic art expression.

 London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Betensky, M. (2001). Phenomenological art therapy. In J. Rubin (Ed.), *Approaches to art therapy: Theory and technique*, (2nd ed., pp. 121-133). Routledge.
- Blackdog Institute (2021). https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/news/2021-in-review and http://blackdoginstitute.org.au/about/news
- Bohart, A. C. (1999). Intuition and creativity in psychotherapy. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 12, 287-311. http://doi.org/10.1080/107205399266028
- Bolton, G. (2010). *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development*. 3rd edition, London, Sage Publication.
- Boström, P. K. (2019). In search of themes Keys to teaching qualitative analysis in higher education. *The Qualitative Report*, *24*(5). 1001-1011.

https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2019.3898

- Bowlby, J. (1969). Attachment and Loss: Vol. 1. Attachment. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). Attachment and Loss: Volume II. Separation Anxiety and Anger, New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1981). Psychoanalysis as a natural science. Delivered as the 1980 University

 College London Freud Memorial Lecture and published in *International Review of Psychoanalysis*, 8, 243-256. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2273.1981.tb01318.x

- Branjerdporn, G., Meredith, P. J., Strong, J. & Breen, M. (2019). Sensory sensitivity and its relationship with adult attachment and parenting styles. *PLoS One* 14(1): e0209555. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0209555
- Branson, D. C. (2018). Vicarious trauma, themes in research, and terminology: A review of literature. *Traumatology*, 25(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/trm0000161
- Breheney, A. (2005). *And the dance goes on*. Mulgrave, Vic., Australia: John Garratt Publishing.
- Briggs, M. K. & Dixon, A. L. (2013). Women's spirituality across the life span: Implications for counselling. *Counselling and Values 58*(1). 104-120. http://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-007X.2013.00028.x
- Brogden, L. M. (2010). Identities (Academic + Private) = Subjectivities (desire):

 Re:collectingArt?I/f/acts. *Qualitative Inquiry 16*(5), 368-377.

 https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410364354
- Budoiu-Balan, O. (2019). The psycho-neurologic implications in musical phenomenon:

 Music and personal development. *Psychology*, 10, 1217-1234.

 https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2019.108078
- Burgess, J. (2006). Participatory action research: first person perspectives of a graduate student. *Action Research*, *4*(4), 419-437. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750306070104
- Butler, R. N. (1963). The life review: An interpretation of reminiscence in the aged, *Psychiatry*, 26(1), 65-75, https://doi.org/10.1080/00332747.1963.11023339

- Bylsma, L. M., Vingerhoets, A. J. J. M. & Rottenberg, J. (2008). When is crying cathartic?

 An international study. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 27(10), 1165
 1187. http://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2008.27.10.1165
- Bynam, W. & Varpio, L., (2017). When I say ... hermeneutic phenomenology. *Medical Education* 52(3), 252-253. https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.13414
- Byrne, L. (2016). *Healing Art and the Art of Healing*. Doctor of Philosophy, University of Divinity, Melbourne, Australia.
- Camargo-Borges, C. (2018). Creativity and imagination: Research as world-making! In P. Leavy, (Ed.), *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*. (pp.88-100). London: The Guilford Press.
- Camoirano, A. (2017). Mentalizing makes parenting work: A review about parental reflective functioning and clinical interventions to improve it. *Front. Psychol.* 8(14) 1-11. http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00014
- Centonze, A., Inchausti, F., MacBeth, A., & Dimaggio, G. (2020). Changing embodied dialogical patterns in metacognitive interpersonal therapy. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, *34*(2), 123-137. https://doi.org/10.1080/10720537.2020.1717117
- Ch'Ng, H. (2019). *What makes a mind-minded mother?* [Doctoral Dissertation] University of New South Wales, https://doi.org/10.26190/unsworks/21618, http://hdl.handle.net/1959.4/64946
- Clark, A. (2013). Haunted by images? Ethical moments and anxieties in visual research. *Methodological Innovations Online*, 8(2), 68-81.

 https://doi.org/10.4256/mio.2013.014

- Cole, A. L. & Knowles, J. G. (2008). Visual images in research. In J. G. Knowles, & A. L. Cole, (Eds.). Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues (pp.55-70). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Cortina, M., & Liotti, G. (2010). Attachment is about safety and protection, intersubjectivity is about sharing and social understanding: The relationships between attachment and intersubjectivity. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, *27*(4), 410-441.

 https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019510
- Cotter, A. (2017). Moving and being moved through time: Autoethnographic Reflections on first-person research and its development over 30 years. *Counselling & Psychotherapy Research*. 17(2). 104-112. https://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12098
- Cowen, A. S., & Keltner, D. (2017). Self-report captures 27 distinct categories of emotion bridged by continuous gradients. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114(38), E7900-E7909. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1702247114
- Cozolino, L. J. (2002). *The Neuroscience of Psychotherapy: Healing the Social Brain* (Second Ed.). New York, W. W. Norton & Co.
- Cozolino, L. J. (2014). The Neuroscience of Human Relationships. Attachment and the Developing Social Brain (Second Ed.). New York, W. W. Norton & Co.
- Cypher, M. (2017). Unpacking collaboration: Non-human agency in the ebb and flow of practice-based visual art research. *The Journal of Visual Arts Practice*, *16*(2), 119-130. https://doi.org/10.1080/14702029.2017.1292379

- Cypress, B. (2018). Qualitative research methods. A phenomenological focus. *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*. 37(6), 302-309.

 https://doi.org/10.1097/DCC.000000000000322
- Damasio, A. (1999). The feeling of what happens. Body, emotion and the making of consciousness. London, UK: Vintage.
- Davis, C. S. & Ellis, C. (2008). Autoethnographic introspection in ethnographic fiction: A method of inquiry. In P. Liamputtong & J. Rumbold (Eds.) *Knowing Differently:*Arts-Based and Collaborative Research (pp. 99-117). New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Davis, W. (2021). Keeping the body in body psychotherapy A neurobiological approach to connective tissue. *International Body Psychotherapy Journal*, 20(1), 24-35. ISSN 2169-4745 Printing, ISSN 2168-1279 Online
- Day, E. (2002). Me, My*self and I: personal and professional re-constructions in ethnographic research. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* [On-line Journal], *3*(3). Available at http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/3-02/3-02day-e.htm and https://goo.gl/QbkMq3
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Inquiry*, 3rd edition, (pp.1-29) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K. (2018). The pragmatics of publishing the experimental text. In P. Leavy, (Ed.), Handbook of Arts-Based Research. (pp.673-688). London: The Guilford Press.
- Deveson, A. (1998). Tell Me I'm Here, Ringwood, Vic.: Penguin Books Australia Ltd.

Dillehay, R. & Sandys, M. (2006). In Caqueo-Urizar, A. & Gutiérrez-Maldonado, J. Burden of care in families of patients with schizophrenia. *Quality of Life Research*, *15*, 719-724.

http://doi.org/10.1007/s11136-005-4629-2

- Doane, G. (2003). Reflexivity as presence: A journey of self-inquiry. In Finlay, L. & Gough, B. (Eds.). *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social science*. (pp.93-102). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Dobrzynska, E., Cesarz, H., Rymaszewska, J., & Kiejna, A. (2006). Music therapy–History, definitions and application. *Archives of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy*, 8(1), 47-52.
- Downs, M. (2019). The benefits of art therapy for mental health clinicians who have experienced vicarious trauma, *Expressive Therapies Capstone Theses*. 114. https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive_theses/114.
- Dreher, J. (2003). The symbol and the theory of the life-world: "The transcendences of the life-world and their overcoming by signs and symbols". *Human Studies*, *26*(2), 141-163. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024014620368
- Drummond, J. J. (2004). 'Cognitive impenetrability' and the complex intentionality of the emotions. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, *11*(10), 109-126).

 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233612227 "27Cognitive Impenetrability

 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233612227 "27Cognitive Impenetrability Impenetrability Impenetrability Impenetrability Impenetrability Impenetrability Impenetrability Impenetrability Impenetrability Impenetrab
- <u>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed.; DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013).</u>

Duah, A. (2020). Lived experience of caregivers of relatives with alcohol and opiate dependence (A phenomenological study). *Journal of Addiction Research & Therapy*, 11:395.

http://doi.org/10.4172/2155-6105.1000395

- Eddles-Hirsch, K. (2015). Phenomenology and educational research. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, *3*(8), 251-260. Retrieved from http://www.journalijar.com/uploads/287 IJAR-6671.pdf
- Eisner, E. (2008). Art and knowledge. In J. G. Knowles & A. L. Cole (Eds.), *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues*.

 (Pp.3-12) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Ekman, P., & Friesen, W. V. (1971). Constants across cultures in the face and emotion.

 *Journal of Personality and social Psychology, 17(2), 124-129.

 https://doi.org/10.1037/h0030377
- Ekman, P., & Friesen, W. V., (1972). Hand movements. *Journal of communication*, 22(4), 353-374. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1972.tb00163.x
- Elkins, J. (2001). *Pictures & tears. A history of people who have cried in front of paintings*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Elliott, R., Watson, C., Goldman, R. N., & Greenberg, L. S. (2004). *Learning in emotion-focussed therapy: The process experiential approach to change*. The American Psychological Association. http://doi.org//10.1037/10725-000
- Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. P. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity—

 Researcher as subject. In N. K. Denzin &Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.). *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.) pp.733-768. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Ellis, C. & Rawicki, J. (2013), Collaborative witnessing of survival during the Holocaust: An exemplar of relational autoethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry 19*(5), 366-380. http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800413479562

Englander, M. (2016). The phenomenological method in qualitative psychology and psychiatry. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being,* 11(1), 1-11. http://doi.org/10.3402/qhw.v11.30682.

Enriquez, K. B. (2016). Expanding the cultivation and practice of love and compassion in our suffering world: Continuing the dialogue between liberation theologians and engaged Buddhists. *Buddhist-Christian Studies*. *36*, 69-86.

https://doi.org/10.1353/bcs.2016.0008

- Ettling, D. (2000). *Reclaiming the feminine principle*. Unpublished paper presented at the UTA Conference on the Female Principle: Eclipses and Re-Emergencies. Available at http://www.vhmin.org/interconnections/downloads/OrganicInquiry.pdf
- Ettling, D., Guilian, L. (2004). Midwifing Transformative Change. In: O'Sullivan, E.V.,
 Taylor, M.M. (Eds.). Learning Toward an Ecological Consciousness: Selected
 Transformative Practices. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4039-8238-4_8
- Fenner, P. (2011). Place, matter and meaning: Extending the relationship in psychological therapies. *Health & Place, 17*, 851-857. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2011.03.011

- Fenner, P. (2012). What do we see? Extending understanding of visual experience in the art therapy encounter. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, 29(1), 11-18. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07421656.2012.648075
- Ferguson, H. (2018). How social workers reflect in action and when and why they don't: The possibilities and limits to reflective practice in social work. *Social Work Education*, 37(4), 415-427. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2017.1413083
- Finlay, L. (2003). The reflexive journey: Mapping multiple routes. In Finlay, L. & Gough, B. (Eds.). *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social science*. (pp.3-20). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Finlay, L. & Gough, B. (Eds.) (2003). Frontmatter: Prologue. In *Reflexivity: A practical guide* for researchers in health and social science. (pp.-xi). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Finlay, L. & Gough, B. (Eds.) (2003). Introducing Reflexivity. In *Reflexivity: A practical* guide for researchers in health and social science. (pp.1-2). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Fisher, J. (2011). Attachment as a sensorimotor experience: the use of sensorimotor psychotherapy. *New Directions in Psychotherapy and Relational Psychoanalysis*, *5*, 99-107. https://janinafisher.com/pdfs/attachment.pdf
- Fisher, J. (2017). Healing the fragmented selves of trauma survivors: Overcoming internal self-alienation. New York, Routledge.
- Fisher, J. (2019). Sensorimotor psychotherapy in the treatment of trauma, *Practice Innovations*, 4(3), 156-165. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/pri0000096
- Flanders, M. (2011). What is the biological basis of sensorimotor integration? *Biological Cybernetics*, *104*(1), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00422-011-0419-9

- Fogel, A. (2009). The Psychophysiology of Self-Awareness: Rediscovering the Lost Art of Body Sense. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Fogel, A. (2020). Three States of Embodied Self-Awareness: The Therapeutic Vitality of Restorative Embodied Self-Awareness. *International Body Psychotherapy Journal*, 19(1), 39-49. ISSN 2169-4745 Printing, ISSN 2168-1279 Online
- Fonagy, P., Steele, H., & Steele, M. (1991). Maternal representations of attachment during pregnancy predict the organization of infant-mother attachment at one year of age.

 Child Development, 62(5), 891-905. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.1991.tb01578.x.
- Fonagy, P. (2001). The human genome and the representational world: The role of early mother-infant interaction in creating an interpersonal interpretive mechanism. *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic*, 65(3: Special issue), 427-448.

 https://doi.org/abs101521bumc65342719844
- Fook, J., & Gardner, F. (2007). *Practising critical reflection [electronic resource]: A handbook*. http://trove.nia.gov.au/work/7345522?q&sort=holdings+desc&_="1498696766566&versionId=178353824
- Fook, J., & Askeland, G. A. (2007). Challenges of critical reflection: 'Nothing ventured, nothing gained'. *Social Work Education*. 26(5). 520-533.

 https://doi.org/10.1080/02615470601118662
- Franklin, M. A. (2012). Know thyself: Awakening self-referential awareness through art-based research. *Journal of Applied Arts & Health, 3*(1), 87-96.

 http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/jaah.3.1.87_1

- Franklin, M. A. (2017). Art as Contemplative Practice: Expressing Pathway to the Self. Suny Press.
- Freeman, C. (2016). What is mentalizing? An overview. *British Journal of Psychotherapy*. *32*(2). 189-201. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjp.12220
- Freeman, J. (2015). Remaking memory: Autoethnography, memoir and the ethics of self.

 Farington, UK: Libri.
- Fuchs, T., & Koch, S. C. (2014). Embodied affectivity: On moving and being moved. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *5*, 508. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00508
- Gabel, S. (2019). DW Winnicott, transitional objects, and the importance of materialization for religious belief. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, 21(3), 178-193, http://doi.org/10.1080/19349637.2018.1467813
- Gallagher, S., & Zahavi, D. (2020). *The phenomenological mind*. Semantic Scholar. https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.50-1996
- Gendlin, E. T. (1996). Focusing-oriented psychotherapy: A manual of the experiential method. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Gerber, N., & Myers-Coffman, K. (2018). Translation in arts-based research. In P. Leavy, (Ed.), *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*. (pp. 587-607). London: The Guilford Press.
- Gilligan, C. (1993). *In a Different Voice. Psychological Theory and Women's Development.*Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Giorgi, A. (1975). Convergence and divergence of qualitative and quantitative methods in psychology. In A. Giorgi, C. T. Fisher & E. L. Murray (Eds.). Duquesne studies in phenomenological psychology: Vol. 2 (pp.72-70). Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.

- Giorgi, A. (1994). In Moustakas, C. *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Giorgi, A. (1997). The theory, practice and evaluation of the phenomenological method as a qualitative research procedure. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 28(2), 235-260.
- Giorgi, A. (2009). The descriptive phenomenological method in psychology: A modified Husserlian approach. Pittsburgh, PA, Duquesne University Press.
- Giorgio, G. A. (2013). Reflections on writing through memory in autoethnography. In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams & C. Ellis (Eds.). *Handbook of Autoethnography*, (pp. 406-424). Walnut Creek, CA, Left Coast Press Inc.
- Godden, N. J. (2017). A co-operative enquiry about love using narrative, performative and visual methods. *Qualitative Research*. *17*(1), 75-94. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1468794116668000
- Graham, E. (1999). Words made flesh: Women, embodiment and practical theology. *Feminist Theology: The Journal of the Britain and Ireland School of Feminist Theology. 21*, 109-121. https://doi.org/10.1177/096673509900002108
- Greenberg, L S. (2004). Emotion-focused therapy. *Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy*. *11*(1), 3-16. http://doi.org/abs/10.1002/cpp.388
- Greenberg, L. S. (2011). Emotion Focused Therapy. Washington DC: APA.
- Greenberg, L. S. (2017). Emotion-focussed therapy of depression. *Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapies*, 16(2), 106-117.

http://doi.org/10.1080/14779757.2017.1330702

- Greenberg, L. S. & Paivio, S. C. (1997). Working with emotions in psychotherapy. New York:

 The Guilford Press. https://doi.org/10.1080/10720530151143539
- Gu, S., Wang, F., Cao, C., Wu, E., Tang, Y-Y., & Huang, J. H. (2019). An integrative way for studying neural basis of basic emotions with fMRI. *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, *13*, 628. https://doi.org/10.3389/fnins.2019.00628
- Gullion, J. S., & Schäfer, L. (2018). An overview of arts-based research in sociology, anthropology, and psychology. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *Handbook of arts-based research* (pp. 511–525). Guilford Press.
- Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. (2005). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, (pp. 191-215). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Hafeli, M. (2011). The intimate chatter of storied objects: Aesthetics and connectivity in "Matter out of place". In P. E. Bolin & D. Blandy, (Eds.), *Matter Matters: Art Education and Material Culture Studies*. (pp. 26-35). Reston, VA, USA: National Art Education Association.
- Haight, B. K., & Haight, B.S (2007). *The Handbook of structured life review: The structured life review process* (1st Ed.). Chicago: Health Professions Press.
- Hanson, C. (2018). Stitching together an arts-based inquiry with indigenous communities in Canada and Chile. *The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education*. *30*(2). 11-21. Retrieved from https://cjsae.library.dal.ca/index.php/cjsae/article/view/5440
- Hardy, C. & Palmer, G. (1999). Debating the ambiguous enterprise of management. *Journal of Management and Organization*, 5(2), 1-16. https://doi.org/10.5172/jmo.1999.5.2.1.

- Harper, D. (2003). Developing a critically reflexive position using discourse analysis. In L. Finlay & B. Gough, (Eds.) *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social science*. (pp.78-92). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Harris, J. R. (2011). Remembering the way. An enquiry into a journey of loss, healing and emergence, [Unpublished doctoral dissertation], Miecat Inc., Melbourne, Australia.
- Hastings, W. (2010). Research and the ambiguity of reflexivity and ethical practice.

 *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 31(3), 307-318.

 http://doi.org/10.1080/01596301003786902
- Harte, M. (2019). Processing emotional pain using emotion focused therapy: A guide to safely working with and resolving emotional injuries and trauma. Australian Academic Press.
- Heimer, A. (2016). The aesthetics of form knowledge: Embodied knowledge through materialization. *Studies in Material Thinking, 14*(4), 1–55.

 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304354636 The aesthetics of form knowledge through materialization Heimer Astrid 2016e
- Heinemann, L. V., & Heinemann, T. (2017). Burnout research: Emergence and scientific investigation of a contested diagnosis. SAGE Open, 7(1), 1-12.
 http://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017697154
- Henderson, L., & Black, A. L. (2018). Splitting the world open: Writing stories of mourning and loss. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 24(4), 260-269. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077800417728958
- Hendrick S & Hendrick C (2002) Love In C R Snyder & S
- Hendrick, S. & Hendrick, C. (2002). Love. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.) *Handbook of Positive Psychology*. (pp.472-484). New York, New York: Oxford University Press.

- Hendriks, M. C. P., Nelson, J. K., Cornelius, R. R., & Vingerhoets, A. J. J. M. (2008). Why crying improves our well-being: An attachment-theory perspective on the functions of adult crying. In A. J. J. M. Vingerhoets, I. Nyklicek, & J. Denollet (Eds.), *Emotion Regulation: Conceptual and Clinical Issues*. (pp. 87-96). Springer.
- Henriques, G. (2017). Understanding emotions and how to process them. *Psychology Today*. [Blog post]. Retrieved from http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2016/04/how-to-cite-a-blog-post-in-apa-style.html
- Heron, J. & Reason, P. (1997). A participatory inquiry paradigm. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *3*(3), 274-294. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780049700300302
- Heron, J. & Reason, P. (2008). Extending epistemology within a co-operative inquiry. In P.Reason, & H. Bradbury (Eds.). *Handbook of Action Research*, London. SagePublications.

http://www.human-inquiry.com/EECI.htm

- Heyes, C., & Catmur, C. (2022). What happened to mirror neurons? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 17(1), 153-168. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1745691621990638
- Hill, J. (1984). A baby is a person, Spectrum Publications.
- Hill, J. (1997). *The self in formation as a spiritual companion: A multi-modal inquiry*. [Unpublished Master's dissertation). La Trobe University, Bundoora, Australia.
- Hill, J. (2013). Description as an intervention when working therapeutically with children. InJ. Chang (Ed.), *Creative Interventions with Children: A Trans-theoretical Approach*.(pp.225-229). Family Psychology Press.

- Hilt, A. (2014). Entangled into histories or the narrative grounds of multiple realities. In M.
 Barber and J. Dreher, (Eds.), *The interrelation of phenomenology, social sciences and the arts. Contributions to Phenomenology*. (pp 173-193) Springer, Cham.
 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-3101390-9_13
- Holman Jones, S. (2005). Autoethnography: making the personal political. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 763-791). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Holman Jones, S., Adams, T. E., & Ellis, C. (Eds.) (2013). *Handbook of Autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA, Left Coast Press Inc.
- Holz, N., Larrouy-Maestri, P., & Peoppel, D. (2021). The paradoxical role of emotional intensity in the perception of vocal affect. *Scientific Reports*, 11(9663), https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-88431-0
- Horowitz, M. J. (2012). Self-Identity Theory and Research Methods. *Journal of Research Practice*. 8(2), 1-11. Retrieved from http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/article/view/296
- Huang, X-Y., Sun, F-K., Yen, W-J., & Fu, C-M. (2008). The coping experiences of carers who live with someone who has schizophrenia. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, *17*, 817-826.

http://doi.org/10.1111/j1365-2702.2007.02130.x

Hughes C., Aldercotte A., & Foley S. (2017). Maternal mind-mindedness provides a buffer for pre-adolescents at risk for disruptive behavior. *J Abnorm Child Psycho*, 45(2), 225-235.

http://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-016-0165-5.

- Hughes, J. D. (2016). What is environmental history? John Wiley & Sons.
- Hunt, M. E. & Neu, D. L. (2010). Introduction. *New Feminist Christianity: Many voices, Many Views*. Woodstock, Vermont: Skylight Paths Publishing.
- Ingold, T. (2010). Bringing things to life: Creative entanglements in a world of materials [Working paper #15], University of Aberdeen.
- Ingold, T. (Ed.). (2011). Being Alive: Essays on movement, knowledge and description.

 Routledge.
- Irwin, R. L. (2008). Communities of A/r/tographic Practice. In S. Springgay, R. L. Irwin, C. Leggo, & P. Gouzouasis (Eds.), *Being with A/r/tography*. (pp. 71-80). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Izard, C. E. (1997). "Differential emotions theory." In *Human Emotions. Emotions,*Personality, and Psychotherapy, pp. 43-66. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-2209-0_3
- Jenko, M., Gonzalez, L., & Alley, P. (2010). Life review in critical care: Possibilities at the end of life. *Critical Care Nurse*, 30(1), 17-28. https://doi.org/10.4037/ccn2010122
- Jiang, L. C., Yang, I. M., & Wang, C. (2017). Self-disclosure to parents in emerging adulthood: Examining the roles of perceived parental responsiveness and separationindividuation. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. 34(4), 425-445.
 http://doi.org/10.1177/0265407516640603
- Jung, C. G. (1959). *The archetypes and the collective unconscious*. (2nd Ed.). New York: Princeton University Press.

- Kast, V. (1992). *The dynamics of symbols: Fundamentals of Jungian psychotherapy*, (trans. Susan A. Schwarz), New York: Fromm International.
- King, M. (2002). *The Patriarchal Voice. Turn Your Hidden Persuader into a Powerful Ally*. Melbourne, Victoria, Australia: Brolga Publishing Pty. Ltd.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2005). On to the next level: Continuing the conceptualization of the bricolage. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(3), 323-350. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405275056.
- Klein, M. (1937). *The psycho-analysis of children*. (2nd ed.), Leonard and Virginia Woolf, Hogarth Press.
- Knowles, J. G. & Cole, A. L. (Eds.) (2008). *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research:*Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

 Publications, Inc. https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452226545
- Kobak, R., & Bosmans, G. (2019). Attachment and psychopathology: a dynamic model of the insecure cycle. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 25, 76–80.
 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2018.02.018
- Kobak, R., Abbott, C., Zisk, A., & Bounoua, N. (2017). Adapting to the changing needs of adolescents: parenting practices and challenges to sensitive attunement. *Current Opinion in Psychology*. 15, 137-142. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2017.02.018
- Kossak, M. (2012). Art-based enquiry: It is what we do! *Journal of Applied Arts & Health*, 3(1), 21-29(9) /10.1386/jaah.3.1.21_1
- Kreshak, R. (2020). *Good-Enough Therapeutic Space Design: A Literature Review and Considerations for Expressive Arts Therapy*. Expressive Therapies Capstone Theses. https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/expressive_theses/307

- Labanyi, J. (2010). Doing things: emotion, affect, and materiality. *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, 11(3-4), 223-233. https://doi.org/10.1080/14636204.2010.538244
- LaMothe, R. (1998). Sacred objects as vital objects: Transitional objects reconsidered. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, *26*(2), 159-167. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F009164719802600202
- Lapsley, H., Pattie, A., Starr, J. M., & Deary, I. J. (2016), Life review in advanced age: qualitative research on the 'start in life' of 90-year-olds in the Lothian Birth Cohort 1921. *BMC Geriatrics*, 16(74), 1-12. http://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-016-0246-x
- Lapum, J. (2018). Deepening the mystery of arts-based research in the health sciences. In P. Leavy, (Ed.), *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*. (pp.526-545). London: The Guilford Press.
- Leavy, P. (ed.) (2018). *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*. London: The Guilford Press. ISBN 9781462540389
- Lederman, S. J., & Klatzky, R. L. (2009). Haptic perception: A tutorial. *Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics*, 71(7), 1439-1459.

 https://doi.org/10.3758/APP.71.7.1439
- Leerkes, E. M., & Zhou, N. (2018). Maternal sensitivity to distress and attachment outcomes: Interactions with sensitivity to nondistress and infant temperament. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 32(6), 753–761. https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000420
- Leggo, C. (2008). Autobiography: Researching our lives and living our research. In S. Springgay, R. L. Irwin, C. Leggo, & P. Gouzouasis (Eds.), *Being with A/r/tography*. (pp. 3-23). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

- Lenormand, M. (2018). Winnicott's theory of playing: A reconsideration. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 99(1), 82-102, http://doi.org/10.1080/00207578.2017.1399068
- Lett, W. (1993). How the arts make a difference in therapy. In W. R. Lett (Ed.), *How the Arts Make a Difference in Therapy*. (pp. 10-23). Melbourne, Australia: Australian Dance Council (Victoria).
- Lett, W. (1998). Researching experiential self-knowing. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, *25*(5), 331-342. http://doi.org/10.1016/S0197-4556(98)00038-0.
- Lett, W. (2007). *Trustworthiness of experiential data in the experience of being fully present*.

 Professional Doctoral Seminar. Miecat Inc.
- Lett, W. (2011). *An Inquiry into Making Sense of Our Lives*. Melbourne, Australia: Warren Lett and Rebus Press.
- Leunig, M. *How to get there*. http://www.leunig.com.au/works/poems
- Levine, S. (1997). A year to live. New York: Bell Tower.
- Levine, E. G. (2015). *Play and Art in Child Psychotherapy. An Expressive Arts Therapy Approach*. London, England: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Liamputtong, P., & Rumbold, J. (Eds.), (2008). *Knowing Differently: Arts-Based and Collaborative Research Methods*. New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Liamputtong, P., & Rumbold, J. (2008). Knowing differently: Setting the scene. In P.

 Liamputtong & J. Rumbold (Eds.), *Knowing Differently: Arts-Based and Collaborative Research Methods*. (pp.1-24). New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

- Lieberman, M. D., Eisenberger, N. I., Crockett, M. J., Tom, S. M., Pfeifer, J. H., & Way, B. M. (2007). Putting feelings into words. *Psychological science*, *18*(5), 421-428. https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fj.1467-9280.2007.01916.x
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Inquiry*, 3rd edition, (pp.1-291) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. In N. K. Denzin &Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (4thEd.). (pp. 97-129). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/03090560610681050
- Lindquist, K. A. (2013). Emotions emerge from more basic psychological ingredients: A modern psychological constructionist model. *Emotion Review*, *5*(4), 356-368. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1754073913489750
- Lindquist, K. A., Wager, T. D., Kober, H., Bliss-Moreau, E., & Barret, L. F. (2012). The brain basis of emotion: A meta-analytic review. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *35*(3), 121-143. http://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X11000446
- Liu, Z., Heffernan, C., & Tan, J. (2020). Caregiver burden: A concept analysis, *International Journal of Nursing Science*, 7(4), 438-455, http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnss.2020.07.012. eCollection 2020 Oct 10.
- Lyle, E. (2009). A process of becoming: In favour of a reflexive narrative approach. *The Qualitative Report*, *14*(2). 293-298. Available at http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR14-2/lyle.pdf

- Mackintosh, R., Beech, N., Bartunek, J., Mason, K., Cooke, B., & Denyer, D. (2017). Impact and management research: Exploring relationships between temporality, dialogue, reflexivity and praxis. *British Journal of Management*, 28(1), 3-13.

 https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12207
- Malchiodi, C. A, & Crenshaw, D. A. (2014). *Creative Arts and Play Therapy for Attachment Problems*. The Guilford Press.
- Malchiodi, C. A. (2014). Art therapy, attachment, and parent-child dyads. In C. A. Malchiodi & D. A. Crenshaw (Eds.), *Creative Arts and Play Therapy for Attachment Problems*, (pp. 52-65). The Guilford Press.
- Malchiodi, C. A. (2014). Creative arts therapy approaches to attachment issues. In C. A. Malchiodi & D. A. Crenshaw (Eds.), *Creative Arts and Play Therapy for Attachment Problems*. (pp. 3-17), The Guilford Press.
- Malchiodi, C. A. (2018). Creative arts therapies and arts-based research. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *Handbook of arts-based research*. (pp.68-87). London: The Guilford Press. ISBN 9781462540389
- Manton, K. (2005). *The gift of Julian of Norwich*. Mulgrave, Vic. Australia, John Garratt Publishing.
- Masero, M. (2017). The wisdom of the body and couple therapy A sensorimotor psychotherapy perspective: An interview with Pat Ogden. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 38(4), 657-668.

 https://doi.org/10.1002/anzf.1267
- McLean, C. L. (2015). The intersection of research, ethno drama and nutrition education, *The International Journal of the Creative Arts in Interdisciplinary Practice*, 12, 1-4,

- Available at http://www.ijcaip.com/ or http://www.ijcaip.com/
- McMann, J. (1998). *Altars and icons: Sacred spaces in everyday life*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books.
- McNiff, S. (1998a). Art-Based research. London, England: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- McNiff, S. (1998b). *Trust the process: An artist's guide to letting go.* Boston & London: Shambala.
- McNiff, S. (2004). *Art heals. How creativity cures the soul*. Boston, Mass.: Shambhala Publications, Inc.
- McNiff, S. (2008). Arts-Based Research. In J. G. Knowles & A. L. Cole, *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues* (p.29), Sage Publications. http://doi.org/10.4135/9781452226545
- McNiff, S. (2011). Artistic expressions as primary modes of inquiry. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, *39*(5), 385-396.

 http://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2011.621526.
- McNiff, S. (2013). *Art as research: Opportunities and challenges* (Ed.). Bristol, UK: Intellect Ltd.
- McNiff, S. (2014). The role of witnessing and immersion in the moment of arts therapy experience. In L. Rappaport (ed.), *Mindfulness and the arts therapies: Theory and practice*. (pp.38-50). Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- McNiff, S. (2018). Philosophical and practical foundations of artistic enquiry: Creating paradigms, methods and presentations based in art. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *Handbook of arts-based research*. (pp.22-36). London: The Guilford Press. ISBN 9781462540389

- Mehl-Madrona, L. & Mainguy, B. (2015). *Remapping your mind: The neuroscience of self-transformation through story*. Simon and Schuster.
- Meins, E. (1997). Security of attachment and the social development of cognition. Psychology Press/Erlbaum (UK), Taylor & Francis.
- Meins E. (1999). Sensitivity, security and internal working models: Bridging the transmission gap. *Attachment and Human Development*. *1*(3). 325-42. http://doi.org/10.1080/14616739900134181.
- Meins, E. (2013). Sensitive attunement to infants' internal states: Operationalizing the construct of mind-mindedness, *Attachment & Human Development*, *15*(5-6), 524-544. http://doi.org/10.1080/14616734.2013.830388
- Meins, E., Fernyhough, C., de Rosnay, M., Arnott, B., Leekam, S. R., & Turner, M. (2011).
 Mind-mindedness as a multidimensional construct: Appropriate and nonattuned mind-related comments independently predict infant—mother attachment in a socially diverse sample. *Infancy*, 17(4), 393-415.
 https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7078.2011.00087.x
- Meins, E., Fernyhough C., Fradley E., & Tuckey M. (2001), Rethinking maternal sensitivity:

 Mothers' comments on infants' mental processes predict security of attachment at 12

 months. *J Child Psychol Psychiatry*, 42(5), 637-48. PMID: 11464968.
- Melzer, A., Shafir, T., & Tsachor, R. P. (2019). How do we recognize emotion from movement? Specific motor components contribute to the recognition of each emotion. *Frontiers in. Psychology*. 10, Article 1389.
 http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01389

- Miller-McLemore, B. J. (2014). Coming to our senses: Feeling and knowledge in theology and ministry. *Pastoral Psychology*, *63*, 689-704. http://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-014-0617-1
- Montage of Altars on youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7v8UabjsUA
- Morley, C. (2008). Critical reflection as a research methodology. In P. Liamputtong & J. Rumbold (Eds.), *Knowing differently: Arts-based and collaborative research* (pp. 265-280). New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Morrison, P., & Stomski, N. J. (2019). Australian mental health caregiver burden: A smallest space analysis. *BMJ open*, *9*(6), e022419. http://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2018-022419
- Morse, J. M., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K. & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(2), pp.13-22. http://doi.org/10.1177/160940690200100202
- Moustakas, C. (1972). Loneliness and Love, Prentice-Hall: University of Michigan.
- Moustakas, C. (1990). *Heuristic research: Design, methodology and applications*. London: Sage Publications.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Murray-Smith, J. (2002). *Bombshells*. A Play acted by Caroline O'Connor. Currency Press, Melbourne, Australia ISBN: 978-0-86819-751-7
- Nash, Johnny. "I can see clearly now". I can see clearly now. Published by Nasho Music Inc. /Record Label Epic. 1971, Single.

- Neubauer, B. E., Witkop, C. T., & Varpio, L. (2019). How phenomenology can help us learn from the experiences of others. *Perspectives on Medical Education, 8*, 90 97. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-019-0509-2
- Neville, B. (2008). Creating a research community. *Qualitative Research Journal* 8(1), 37-46. http://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0801037.
- New Revised Standard Version (Anglicized Edition) (1995). *The Bible*. Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Available at http://bible.oremus.org.
- Novello, I. (1945). *Love is my reason*. https://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn1061091
- O'Connor, K. J., Braverman, L. M., & Braverman, L. D. (Eds.). (1997). *Play therapy theory and practice: A comparative presentation*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Ogden, P., & Fisher, J. (2015). Sensorimotor psychotherapy: Interventions for trauma and attachment. WW Norton & Company.
- Ogden, P., Goldstein, B., & Fisher, J. (2012). Brain-to-brain, body-to-body: A sensorimotor psychotherapy perspective on the treatment of children and adolescents. In R. E. Longo, D. S. Prescott, J. Bergman, & K. Creeden (Eds.), *Current perspectives and applications in neurobiology: Working with young persons with are victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse*, 229-258. Holyoke, MA: Neari Press.
- Ogden, P. & Minton, K. (2000). Sensorimotor psychotherapy: One method for processing traumatic /memory. *Traumatology*, *3*(3), 1-17. http://doi.org/10.1177/153476560000600302
- O'Neill, A. (2011). Art therapy and intimate bonds: An exploration of attachment theory,

intersubjectivity and the influence of neuroscience as a framework for art therapy practice.

Published MA in Art Therapy, Crawford College of Art and Design, Cork Institute of Technology.

- Orford, J. (2017). How does the common core to the harm experienced by affected family members vary by relationship, social and cultural factors? *Drugs: Education,*Prevention & Policy, 24(1), 9–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687637.2016.1189876
- Orford, J., Copello, A., Velleman, R., & Templeton, L. (2010). Family members affected by a close relative's addiction: The stress-strain-coping-support model. *Drugs: Education, prevention and policy, 17*(Sup1). http://doi.org/10.3109/09687637.2010.514801
- Orford, J., Velleman, R., Natera, G., Templeton, L., & Copello, A. (2012). Addiction in the family is a major but neglected contributor to the global burden of adult ill-health. *Social science & medicine*, 78, 70-77.

 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2012.11.036
- Palli, A., Kontoangelos, K., Richardson, C., & Economou, M. P. (2015). Effects of group psychoeducational intervention for family members of people with schizophrenia spectrum disorders: Results on family cohesion, caregiver burden, and caregiver depressive symptoms. *International Journal of Mental Health 44*, 277-289. http://doi.org/10.1080/00207411.2015.1076291
- Park, C. L. (2008). Testing the meaning making model of coping with loss. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 27(9), 970-994. http://dx.doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2008.27.9.970

- Parsons, J., & Boydell, K. (2012). Arts-based research and knowledge translation: Some key concerns for health-care professionals. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, *26*(3), 170-2. http://dx.doi.org/10.3109/13561820.2011.647128
- Pichon, S., & Vuilleumier, P. (2011). Neuroimaging and neuroscience of emotions-imagery and cognition (8). *Medicine Sciences*, 27 (8-9), 763-770. https://doi.org/10.1051/medsci/2011278019
- Pinkas, S. (2016). Psychic fragments and changing bodies: Theoretical and clinical applications of bodily reverie. *Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*, 11(4), 206-219.

https://doi.org/10.1080/17432979.2015.1134659

- Poulos, C. N. (2010). Spirited accidents: An autoethnography of possibility. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(1). 49-56. http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800409350063.
- Rajagopalan, R., & Midgley, G. (2015). Knowing differently in systematic intervention.

 Systems research and behavioral science, 32(5), 546-561.

 http://doi.org/10.1002/sres.2352
- Reisenzein, R., Meyer, W. U., & Schützwohl, A. (1995). James and the physical basis of emotion: A comment on Ellsworth. *Psychological Review*, *102*(4), 757-761. http://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.102.4.757
- Remes, O. (2009). Replaying the old stereotypes into an artistic role: the case of Tracey Emin. *Women's History Review, 18*(4), 559-575. http://doi.org/10.1080/09612020903112208
- Reuther, R. R. (1996). *Womanguides. Readings towards a feminist theology*. Boston USA: Beacon Press.

- Richardson, L. (2000). Writing: A Method of Inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.)

 Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd ed., pp. 923-948). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
 Publications.
- Richardson, L. (2005). Sticks and stones: An exploration of the embodiment of social classism. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(4), 485-491. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405276807
- Riddett-Moore, K., Siegesmund, R. (2012). Arts-based research: Data are constructed, not found. In Klein, S. R. (eds.) *Action Research Methods*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Rochat, P., & Passos-Ferreira, C. (2008). From imitation to reciprocation and mutual recognition. In *Mirror Neuron Systems* (pp. 191-212). Humana Press. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-59745-479-7_9
- Rogers, C. (1995). On becoming a person: A therapist's view of psychotherapy. HarperOne; 2nd Ed.
- Rohr, R. (2009). The naked now. USA: Crossroads Publishing Company.
- Romanyshyn, R. (2021). *The Wounded Researcher: Research with Soul in Mind.* New York: Routledge.
- Rothschild, B. (2000). *The body remembers. The psychophysiology of trauma and trauma treatment*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Rowe, N. (2003). Researcher as storyteller and performer: Parallels with playback theatre. In Finlay, L. & Gough, B. (Eds.). *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social science*. (pp.187-199). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.

- Rumbold, J., Fenner, P. & Brophy-Dixon, J. (2013). The risks of representation: Dilemmas and opportunities in art-based research. In S. McNiff (Ed.) *Art as research:*Opportunities and Challenges. (pp. 65-78) Bristol, UK: Intellect Ltd.
- Ryan, A. & Walsh, T. (Eds.) (2018). *Reflexivity and critical pedagogy*. Boston, USA: Brill Sense.
- Sajnani, N. (2012), Improvisation and arts-based research, *Journal of Applied Arts and Health*, 3(1), 79-86. https://doi.org/10.1386/jaah.3.1.79_1
- Schaefer, H-E. (2017). Music-evoked emotions—Current studies. *Frontiers in neuroscience*, 11, 600. https://doi.org/10.3389/fnins.2017.00600
- Schenstead, A. R. (2012). The timelessness of arts-based research: Looking back upon a heuristic self-study and the arts-based reflexivity data analysis method. *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*, 12(1), 1-10. Retrieved from https://voices.no/index.php/voices/article/view/2035/1779
- Schore, A. N. (2001). Effects of a secure attachment relationship on right brain development, affect regulation, and infant mental health. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 22(1-2), 7–66.

https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-0355(200101/04)22:1<7::AID-IMHJ2>3.0.CO;2-N

Schore, A. N. (2008). Paradigm shift: The right brain and the relational unconscious. *Psychologist-Psychoanalyst*, 28(3), 20-25. Retrieved from http://trieft.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Right_Brain_Relational_Unconscious_Schore.pdf

- Schore, A. N. (2011). The right brain implicit self lies at the core of psychoanalysis. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, *21*(1), 75-100. https://doi.org/10.1080/10481885.2011.545329
- Schore, A. N. (2021). The interpersonal neurobiology of intersubjectivity. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*, 1366. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.648616
- Scott, S. D., Brett-MacLean, P., Archibald, M., & Hartling, L. (2013). Protocol for a systematic review of the use of narrative storytelling and visual-arts-based approaches as knowledge translation tools in healthcare. *Systematic Reviews, 2*(19), 1-7. http://doi.org/10.1186/2046-4053-2-19
- Scotti, V., & Chilton, G. (2018). Collage as arts-based research. In P. Leavy, (Ed.), *Handbook of arts-based research*, (pp. 355-376). London: The Guilford Press.
- Sharif, F., Jahanbin, I., Amirsadat, A., & Hosseini Moghadam, M. (2018), Effectiveness of life review therapy on quality of life in the late life at day care centers of Shiraz, Iran:

 A randomized controlled trial. *International Journal of Community Based Nursing and Midwifery*, 6(2), 136-145. PMC5845117
- Siegel, D. J. (1999). *The developing mind. How relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are.* London: The Guilford Press.
- Siegel, D. J. (2001). Toward an interpersonal neurobiology of the developing mind:

 Attachment relationships, "mindsight", and neural integration. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 22(1-2), 67-94. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-355(200101/04)22:1<67::AID-IMHJ3>3.0.CO;2-G">https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-355(200101/04)22:1<67::AID-IMHJ3>3.0.CO;2-G
- Siegel, D. J. (2012). *Mindsight: change your brain and your life*. Australia: Scribe Publications.

- Sjöholm, J. (2014). The art studio as archive: Tracing the geography of artistic potentiality, progress and production. *Cultural Geographies*, *21*(3), 505-514. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1474474012473060
- Smith, H. and Dean, R.T. (Eds.), (2009). *Practice-led Research; Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Smith, J. A. (2003). Shifting identities: the negotiation of meanings between texts and between persons. In Finlay, L. & Gough, B. (Eds.). *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health and social science*. (pp.176-186). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Snyder, C. R., & S. J. Lopez (Eds.) *Handbook of Positive Psychology*. (p.608-618). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Solomon, M. (2014). Reverie and reflection: Thinking in the marrowbone. *Ata: Journal of Psychotherapy Aotearoa New Zealand*, *18*(1), 11-21.

 https://doi.org/10.9791/ajpanz.2014.02
- Spinelli, E. (1989). *The interpreted world: An introduction to phenomenological psychology*. London: Sage Publications.
- Spinelli, E. (2002). The therapeutic relationship as viewed by existential psychotherapy: Rembracing the world. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, *32*, 111-118. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1015547632139
- Springgay, S., Irwin, R. L., Leggo, C., & Gouzouasis, P. (Eds.), (2008). *Being with A/r/tography*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Srivastava, P., & Hopwood, N. (2009). A practical interactive framework for qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 76-84. Available at

https://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM/article/view/1169/5199

- St. Ignatius, Prayer of St Ignatius Loyola. http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=592
- Stern, D. (2004). *The present moment in psychotherapy and everyday life*. New York. London: W. W. Norton & Co.
- Stevanovic, M., & Koski, S. (2018). Intersubjectivity and the domains of social interaction:

 Proposal of a cross-sectional approach. *Psychology of Language and Communication*,

 22(1), pp. 39-58. http://doi.org/10.2478/plc-2018-0003
- Stolorow, R. D., Atwood, G. E., & Branchaft, B. (Eds.). (1994). *The intersubjective perspective*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Stuckey, H. L., & Nobel, J. (2010). The connection between art, healing, and public health: A review of current literature. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100(2), 254-263. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2008.156497
- Taylor, B. B. (2009). An altar in the world: A geography of faith. New York: Harper Collins.
- Taylor, J. B. (2009). My stroke of insight: A brain Scientists Personal journey. Hachette UK
- Taylor, J. B. (2021). The 90 second life cycle of an emotion (Video). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxARXvljKBA
- Tedlock, B. (2013). Representing, breaking, and remaking. Introduction: Braiding evocative with analytic autoethnography. In S. Holman Jones, T. E. Adams & C. Ellis (Eds.). *Handbook of Autoethnography*, (pp. 358-362). Walnut Creek, CA, Left Coast Press Inc.

- Torre, J. B., & Lieberman, M. D. (2018). Putting feelings into words: Affect labeling as implicit emotion regulation. *Emotion Review*, 10(2), 116-124. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1754073917742706
- Trevarthen, C. (1993). The self born in intersubjectivity: The psychology of an infant communicating. In U. Neisser (Ed.), *The perceived self: Ecological and interpersonal sources of self-knowledge.* (pp. 121–173). Cambridge University Press.
- Tsachor, R. P., & Shafir, T. (2017). A somatic movement approach to fostering emotional resiliency through laban movement analysis. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*. 11: 410.

http://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2017.00410

- Tsakiris, M. (2017). The multisensory basis of the self: from body to identity to others. *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 70(4), 597-609.

 https://doi.org/10.1080/17470218.2016.1181768
- Turner, K. (1999). *Beautiful necessity. The art and meaning of women's altars*. New York: Thames & Hudson.
- Valle, R. S., King, M., & Halling, S. (1989). An introduction to existential-phenomenological thought in psychology. In R. S. Valle & S. Halling (eds.), *Existential-phenomenological Perspectives in Psychology*. Boston, MA, Springer.
 http://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-6989-3
- van Ijzendoorn, M. H. & Bakermans-Kranenburg, M. J. (2019). Bridges across the intergenerational transmission of attachment gap. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *25*, 31-36. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2018.02.014
- van Laar, C. (2020). Seeing her stories: An art based inquiry. Carlavanlaar.com. Brunswick, Australia.

- van Manen, M. (1984). Practicing phenomenological writing. *Phenomenology & Pedagogy*, 2(1). 36-68. Available at https://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/pandp/article/view/14931/11752
- van Manen, M. (1990). Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- van Manen, M. (2007). Phenomenology of practice. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 1, 11-30.

 Available athttps://www.2007-Phenomenology of Practice.pdf
- van Manen, M. (2014). Phenomenology of practice: Meaning-giving methods in phenomenological research and writing. Routledge.
- van Manen, M., & van Manen, M. (2021). Doing phenomenological research and writing. *Qualitative Health Research*, *31*(6), pp. 1069-1082. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F10497323211003058
- Vingerhoets, A. J., & Bylsma, L. M. (2016). The riddle of human emotional crying: A challenge for emotion researchers. *Emotion Review*, 8(3), 207-17. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1754073915586226
- Watts, L. (2019). Reflective practice, reflectivity and critical reflection in social work education in Australia. *Australian Social Work*, 72(1), 8-20. http://doi.org/10.1080/0312407x.2018.1521856
- Weintraub, L. (2016). Archetypes of material use and disuse: An art and ecology primer. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, *3*(1), 1168910. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2016.1168910

- White, P. A. (2015). The pre-reflective experience of "I" as a continuously existing being: The role of temporal functional binding. *Consciousness and Cognition*, *31*, 98-114, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.concog.2014.11.003.
- Wilkinson, S. J., & Morton, P. (2007). The emerging importance of feminist research paradigms in built environment research, *Structural Survey*, 25(5), 408-417. https://doi.org/10.1108/02630800710838446
- Willis, P. (2001). The "things themselves" in phenomenology. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, *I*(1), 1-12. http://doi.org/10.1080/20797222.2001.11433860
- Winkler, I. (2018). Doing autoethnography: Facing challenges, taking choices, accepting responsibilities. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 24(4), 236-247.

 http://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417728956
- Winnicott, D. W. (1953). Transitional objects and transitional phenomena: A study of the first not-me possession. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*. *34*, 89-97.

http://doi.org/10.1093/med:psych/9780190271367.003.0034

- Winnicott, D. W. (1971). The use of an object and relating through identifications. *Playing and reality*. 86-94. London: Tavistock Publications.
- Wix, L. (2010). Studios as locations of possibility: Remembering a history. *Art Therapy*, *27*(4), 178-183. https://doi.org/10.1080/07421656.2010.10129388
- Worth, S. E. (2008). Storytelling and narrative knowing: An examination of the epistemic benefits of well-told stories. *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 42(3), 42-56.

 Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/25160289
- Zahavi, D. (2005). Subjectivity and selfhood: Investigating the first-person perspective.

 Massachusetts, MIT Press.

FIGURES

Figure 1. The Black Madonna's Wounded Breast, Ochre paint, J. Hill, 2001	10
Figure 2. Circles of My Life, clay and fabric representation, J. Hill, 2003	11
Figure 3. My Father's old Workbench, Photo J. Hill, 2005	17
Figure 4. Exhausted Woman on Altar, crayon, pastel & paint representation, J. Hill, 1994.	18
Figure 5. A Celebration Altar, crayon representation, J. Hill, 1995	18
Figure 6. Journey down a Golden Path, crayon, water colour and paint, J. Hill, 2005	20
Figure 7. Altars made along a precipice, pastel representation, J. Hill, 2005	66
Figure 8. Wire Torso, found object.	71
Figure 9. Meat Mincer, and other utensils circa 1950, found objects	71
Figure 10. Dad's workshop items & a china piano, circa 1950, retrieved objects	72
Figure 11. Presentation at Colloquium, digital photo, J. Rumbold, 2005	73
Figure 12. Entrapment, wire cage, found objects, J. Hill 2005	74
Figure 13. Broken dolls, broken dreams, 1950s dolls, collection J. Hill, 2005	75
Figure 14. ISR: Length of crepe bandage rolled up, digital photo, J. Hill, 2005	78
Figure 15. Rock encased pain with river of tears, mixed media, J. Hill, May, 2006	83
Figs. 16. ISR & Rock encased pain, mixed media representations, J. Hill, May 2006	83
Figure 17. Holding the bandaged wound, digital photo, J. Rumbold, 2006	85
Figure 18. Avalanche, sand tray scene, J. Harris, June 2007.	86
Figure 19. How I wanted it to be, J. Hill, June, 2007	86
Figure 20. Patriarchy, digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2015	89
Figure 21. A burden enters, digital photo, Peter Iorlano, 2015	89
Figure 22. Holding my burdens gently, digital photo, J. Rumbold, July, 2007	90
Figure 23. Feminine conversation, digital photo, J. Rumbold, July, 2007	90

Figure 24. The feminization of patriarchy, digital photo, J. Rumbold, July, 2007	90
Figure 25. Tea Party conversation, digital photo, J. Rumbold, 2007	90
Figure 26. Small memorabilia of family, mixed media representation, Jenny Hill, 2007	92
Figure 27. Baby put back together again, digital photo, P. Orlano, 2006	96
Figure 28. Baby cried her eyes out, digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2016	97
Figure 29. Figure 29. <i>Utensils, kitchen table,</i> collected objects, photo, J. Hill, 2010	105
Figure 30. "She dropped the baton", digital photo, J. Hill, 2010	113
Figure 31. Edwina's ISR, <i>The good wife's guide</i> , Housekeeping monthly, July, 1955	119
Figure 32. White paint on ladder, digital photo, J. Hill, Oct, 2010	122
Figure 33. Colour added, digital photo, J. Hill, Oct, 2010	123
Figure 34. <i>Close up of finished ladder</i> , photo, J. Hill.	124
Figure 35. Slumped on Kitchen table, photo, J. Hill, Nov, 2010.	128
Figure 36. Tangled wool ambivalence, mixed media, J. Hill, Nov, 2010	131
Figure 37. I could not keep them connected, mixed media, J. Hill, Nov, 2010	132
Figure 38. My Mother's face, Mannequin, acrylic paint, false eyelashes, J. Hill, 2011	135
Figure 39. On edge can't see her face, but can see her art, photo, R. May, 2011	136
Figures 40. Aspects of Mother, of me? Digital photographs, Jan Allen, 2011	137
Figure 41. Measuring Up, Digital photograph, Jan Allen, 2011	139
Figure 42. Dad's things, digital photo, Jan Allen, 2011	140
Figure 43. Music and work tools, mixed media representations, Jenny Hill, 2011	141
Figure 44. An Altar to my Dad, mixed media, Jenny Hill, 2011	142
Figure 45. The Altar to Adolescence, photo, Trish Menzies, 2011	147
Figure 46. Trapped by image making, collected objects, collage, J. Hill, Dec, 2010	148
Figure 47. Perspex legs, digital photograph, Jenny Hill, 2010	151
Figure 48. Bridal Altar in black and white, mixed media, photo, T. Menzies, 2011	154

Figure 49. Black and white ambivalence, mixed media, J. Hill, Photo T. Menzies, 2011	155
Figure 50. Wedding Cake, mixed media representation, J. Hill, 2011	156
Figure 51. Disappointment, mixed media representation, J. Hill, 2011	157
Figure 52. Covering up the cover up is now exposed, J. Hill, 2011	158
Figure 53. Mother as tree of life, mixed media, J. Hill, 2011	161
Figure 54. Strong foundation, mixed media, J. Hill, photo T. Menzies, 2011	162
Figure 55. Three eggs from the nest, mixed media, photo P. Iorlano, 2016	164
Figure 56. Representing love for my children, J. Hill, digital photo T. Menzies, 2011	164
Figure 57. Underworld Altar painted, digital photo, J. Hill, Oct, 2010	176
Figure 58. Anger transformed into compassion, digital photo, J. Hill, 2010	184
Figure 59. Trying the Mannequin's head in the vice, digital photo, J. Hill, 2010	187
Figure 60. <i>The Scream</i> , digital photo, J. Hill, 2011	189
Figure 61. Head in Vice, digital photo, T. Menzies, 2011	190
Figure 62. Hanging on by a thread, collected objects, J. Hill, 2011	190
Figure 63. <i>Hearing voices</i> , <i>seeing voices</i> , visual representation, Hill & Hill, 2011	191
Figure 64. The Underworld Altar, visual representation, J. Hill, 2011	192
Figure 65. Broken dolls, Broken dreams, J. Hill, 2011.	195
Figure 66. Torn asunder, photographs, J. Hill & J. Allen, 2011	197
Figure 67. Exhaustion, Hessian doll, C. Connelly, 2011	200
Figure 68. Rest or sacrifice? Photos T. Menzies, 2011	201
Figure 69. ISR's from Jan Allen, digital photos, 2010.	204
Figure 70. Bandaged wound exposed, mixed media representation, J. Hill, 2011	207
Figure 71. Rivers of tears, mixed media representation, J. Hill, 2011	208
Figure 72. <i>The Sentinel</i> , multimodal representation, J. Hill, 2010	213
Figure 73. Standing Tall, digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2016	216

Figure 74. Baby's Cradle, digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2016	217
Figure 75. River of Tears, digital photo, T. Menzies, 2011.	217
Figure 76. Listening, Looking and hearing her scream, digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2016	224
Figure 77. New Conversations, digital photo, P. Iorlano, 2016	226
Figure 78. Getting there, but via the river, visual representation, J. Hill, 2007	228
Figure 79. I have almost finished writing, pastel drawing, J, Hill, 2016	309
Figure 80. Celebration Altar, J. Hill, 2011.	316

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Making Altars: Four short films, 45 minutes of viewing time: https://youtu.be/yb2ZvoDP5uA

Appendix 2

Key words and phrases.

sad sadness heavy rock feeling cry burst open tears flow bowls jug of water tier of receptors cascaded rain outside gentle very loud significant moments beneath the tears shaft of pain in my torso instantaneously drawn rolled roughly hands crumpled ball expression of pain breakdown significant relationships given my all love devotion others' well-being binding these immerse stir it up bucket of blue paint pool of tears emotions wind chimes beautiful day sun on my skin sadness is all contained it's manageable lightness into the centre managing the grief very heavy haul it out dry in the sun yesterday's grief I'm going to think about what to do sweep and clean collect the bits start a new room spaces within sitting in the sun shade fruit

Reduction to poetic statement.

Attending to sadness reveals the Heavy rock feeling within, followed by a Cascade of tears that flows like a jug of water Poured into a tier (tear) of receptors.

The shaft of pain is drawn out By the poultice of gentle probing And the crumpled balls contain The pain of giving of one's all.

The grief is managed although heavy,
Becoming yesterday's grief.
being returns,
And together light and shade bear fruit.

Appendix 3

ALTAR.

CHILDADOD Attachment (w Edwina)

clustered into groupings is in the Appendix (6). However, I include some examples of each cluster and the headings I gave in the clusters below.

KITCHEN TABLE.

Key words and clusters

- 1. In the body: bodily felt sense I do it by how it feels satisfying to thread I have enacted that shivery and shaky strength of the body felt sense of wanting to hang on I sided with Mum walk the divide
- 2. Relational: I am rather attached this is where dad comes in I find I can't stay with Mum a difficult relationship saw dad deeply wounded I don't know if she loved him they were two different people
- 3. Feelings: satisfying pleasing bored feelings I never since childhood needy preference to work from feeling I can't see because I am feeling sad I'm getting angry now comforting confusing
- 4. Getting it right: getting the right green not going the way I want it to right and wrong it's not giving me a sense of confidence or competence original idea was symmetry how you will make a decision
- 5. Not trying: I think I am getting bored don't want to do it all mum's way don't want to do it all dad's way we can get on with something else not perfect
- 6). Materials: the collection utensils gold thread is meaningful a sieve wooden spoon ladder

Poetic statement

I reflected again on the key words from the transcript, my felt sense of being in the process of making the altar and on the six labels for the clusters. I 3ecognized3 this into a poetic summary which sums up the essence of this part of the process involving the utensils and the ladder.

I am threading attachments

to my mother but symmetry cannot

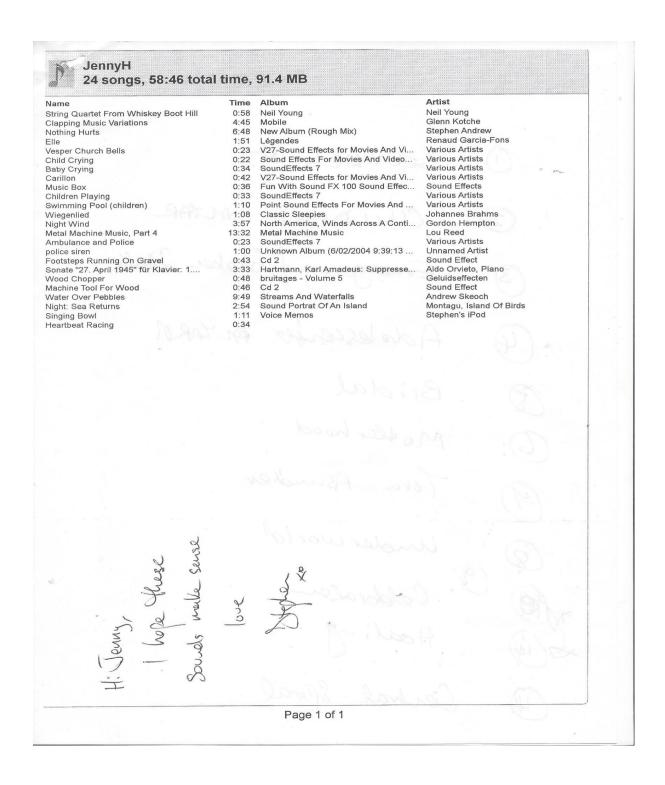
hold my attention. In claiming dad

I have someone to hold onto,

ATTACHMENT

Appendix 4

SONG AND SOUND LIST



Stephen Andrew, 2010