

# Critical Realism Storytelling Inquiry into Shamanic and Capitalistic Ways of Emotion in TrumpLand

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David M. Boje & Grace Ann Rosile

New Mexico State University [dboje@nmsu.edu](mailto:dboje@nmsu.edu) [garosile@nmsu.edu](mailto:garosile@nmsu.edu)

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## Abstract

The notion 'good' capitalist-organization raises fundamental questions to theorists of organization *emotion*. Are emotionally "good" and emotionally "bad" organizations ideal types, or archetypes, or perhaps fantasy meta-narratives? How is dominant narrative and antenarrative opposition constructed in relation to 'Good' or 'Bad' emotional processes? Our goal here is to apply Roy Bhaskar's dialectical critical realism to our shamanic praxis and to its storytelling. For us, Shamanic practices can help us as individuals to deal with 'Bad' capitalist 'Storytelling Organizations' of a university, our focal organization, gone 'Bad,' by entering spiritual realms of critical realism. Shamanic practices are also relevant to Heideggerian 'attunement': how our body is in vibrational entanglement with its environs in late modern capitalist organizations, including the public university and business colleges. We become attuned to Earth and institutions differently through shamanic practices. We recommend this different attunement and emotion as our way of reshaping and restorying our existence in what is 'Bad' about academic capitalism colonizing the public university in the event-ness of TrumpLand. The ways of Being-in-the-Shamanic-worlds in ontological attunement and storytelling at many ontological levels, and the way of Being-in-the-academic-capitalism-TrumpLand-world storytelling are decidedly different, and generate quite different Emotion-Attunement outcomes. We offer the combination of shamanistic practices, critical realism, and Heideggerian attunements as starting points for moving our own organizations from emotionally "bad" organizations to better and eventually "good" organizations.

## Introduction

We find that both emotions and spirituality are largely missing in critical approaches to organization studies. We invoke a version of Critical Realism (Bashkar 1975; 2008) as a way to explain how shamanic practices can include materiality, emotion, and spirituality in "attunement" processes to move from "bad" to a greater experience of "good" in organizations. In this paper we will do several

things: 1) we will cover basic key concepts of shamanism praxis; 2) we will relate shamanism to Roy Bhaskar's dialectic critical realism which includes spirituality; 3) we will say something about the transformation of our universities from good to bad, and our own emotions from good to bad, as well as offering suggestions for recovering a greater experience of good; 4) we will discuss ontological storytelling in different simultaneous reality levels.

First we offer Boje's account of a shamanic storytelling journey to other worlds.

Today (April 7, 2017), like every morning, I (Boje) put on a drumming tape that plays through earphones. I begin with a specific intention, a question (who, what, where, why, how, but not when) that I want to ask. I live in Middle World, this Earth, the organizations I work in, study, consult, or participate in to get food and stuff to live. Middle World is where the bad, sometimes evil spirits dwell. Lower World is a natural world of plants and animals, which is free of evil. Upper World is the realm of spirits. A shamanic journey, using sonic drumming (205 to 220 beats per minute) is a way to move from the ordinary reality of Middle World to either Lower World or to Upper World. In shamanic practice, the landscape, the layout, and its cosmography of Lower and Upper World, are quite unique to the individual. I have twelve animal spirits in in my Lower World, with whom I work frequently. I connected with one new spirit in each of the two-day workshop I attended to learn shamanic drumming meditative and healing practices. Before, and in addition to, these twelve workshops over four years, I was coached privately for ten years in shamanic practices.

Following my usual practice, I wrote my intention this morning, and started listening to one of my recordings of drumming. I went into my other worlds by the usual route. My entry to Lower World is a rock cellar on my grandparents' farm in Spokane, along the Little Spokane River, in Washington State. I enter the rock cellar, and see the shelves of jams and jellies, and the wooden boxes of perennial bulbs on the floor. Dragon (one of my spirit animal guides) and I shrank, and went through

tunnels no bigger than a sock, and then down the water whirlpool, and swam to the surface of a lake with a white shark and silver salmon. I like to go to Lower World. In the water were three Power Animals (shark, salmon, & serpent), flying around one more (dragon), and eight more along the beach or close by (including Tarantula, ant, two kinds of snake, gray wolf, and three departed horses I have known who now show up with wings). I asked which of you (Power Animals) could best help me with this intention. Tarantula is the only Power Animal who indicated he would take me deeper into Lowerworld, to a crystal cave. There, again, as earlier in the week, was a vivid image of a red crystal. I have been journeying to Lowerworld for four years, and yesterday, and today, were the first times I encountered the red crystal.

I asked Tarantula for help with my intention: Help me understand the relation of shamanism and academic capitalism. There is a relation of Lowerworld to Middleworld. Middleworld is where the spirit of capitalism does its thing. Tarantula flashed a response that I interpreted: I step out of Lowerworld and I am participating in global capitalism world. I work in a Business College in a state cutting funding to its public universities, in TrumpLand, as I call it. I work in the belly of the beast. I momentarily drop out of Middleworld and reflect on my emotional stages of loss: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and recently acceptance. When I present this paper, I will have flown on a jet plane to get to the EGOS conference, after leaving our automobile (although it is a Prius Hybrid) at the airport. I definitely participate in global capitalism, in Middleworld.

I am half Danish, and love the bicycle culture in Copenhagen, Truth be told, I feel I have witnessed the death of the humanities in my own as well as other Universities, and as much as I resist it, my petitions, marches, speeches, or blogs are not rolling back the transformations of academic capitalism, and neoliberal agenda in TrumpLand. So I just write articles and give talks at conferences about it, as it continues to have its way with me.

I (Boje) discipline myself: I return here and now to Lowerworld where everything is alive. The air, water, fire, earth soil and minerals, the red crystal, all the quantum (subatomic) stuff is alive. There are no cell phones, no computers, no roads, no corporations, no university, no Trumpland ... I want to get back there now!

I instantly flip back into Lowerworld. The Tarantula Power Animal is still there. I got some more insights, then the drumming rhythm changed, and it was time to ascend back to Middleworld. The message today is resilience. I thanked Tarantula for his help, and made my way back to the lake, up the whirlpool, into the tunnels, exiting at the rock cellar, and then back to New Mexico I flew.

Power animals in Shamanic Way of Knowing (SWOK) are a kind of animal-human duality (Harner, 1980: 75). We are relatives to animals, and in IWOK as well, to plants, insects, birds, and to elements of living Earth, fire, water, and air. In shamanic storytelling, we transform by entering altered state of awareness and consciousness. The Power Animal acts as an alter ego. In my case, the Tarantula/Human transforms me as the beleaguered professor, and changes attunements of fear and anxiety into moods of understanding and care, and finally acceptance of inevitability. This helps purge my emotions of anger, shame, and moral indignation, moving through the grief stages. I sometimes dance with my Power Animal, or dance to call in my personal power, after engaging in mostly peaceful resistance to the common sense of the knowledge economy. The drumming meditations help call back the personal power lost in caring about the changes to state budgets, the new ways graduate students are exploited, the ways our academic load has increased, the total victory of academic capitalism globally, the end of professorship as I have known it for 35 years.

Next, I (Boje) explain how this “journeying” relates to the rest of my life in Middleworld.

### ***Life in Middleworld***

In Middleworld I (Boje) participate in globalization. I struggle against it. In terms of emotions, I feel guilty about my involvements, my capitulations to academic capitalism colonizing the public university. In TrumpLand, as in Denmark, higher education is overcome by its own madness.

Our own university is undergoing cutbacks, replacement of tenure-track and tenured faculty by less expensive college faculty and low-paid adjuncts. The common sense is our university needs to keep looking good, which means

investments in buildings, expanding the golf course from 18 to 27 holes, and paying consultants over \$600,000 to reengineer the staff side of the house, while on the faculty side, Ph.D. teaching and research are being sacrificed to budget cuts. Older full-time tenured faculty have had their course loads increased. Everyone's salary is frozen; no open positions are being replaced. For the students, the State's defunding of public universities means that tuition has increased over three decades, from virtually free, to a level requiring debt and loans that are becoming as huge as home mortgages. This is not a good system, as it will mean the poor, the working, and the shrinking middle class will not have access to universities. Any ethic of educating everyone as a 'social good' is in its final death throes.

I don't attend *Academy of Management* (AOM) anymore, enough madness. We conceive of Shamanic Foundation and our own Shamanic Drumming Circle, as 'good organizations' and the multinational corporation, the Business college, and the various Academies of Management, as historically 'bad organizations.' The emotional scaffolding and the attunements that sustain them, are quite different. The Business college, and the various Academies, are at the heart of economic and environmental concerns. Because the U.S. has recently elected leaders convinced of climate denial, and of the uselessness of climate science in relation to corporate economic development, we view this disconnect between business and the natural world as "bad." While I have participated in various marches (for science, for climate, for immigrants), there appears little visible results from these actions. I look for deeper answers through shamanistic practices.

Now we leave Boje's account and return to our Boje & Rosile paper. We want to apply shamanic-organization ways of attunement and organizational emotion to explore how care and love can oppose anger, hate, the unethical environmental stance were we work and live, and the scandalous election of Trump, as he appoints ExxonMobil, Carl's Junior, and Amway executives, hawk generals, and billionaires to run U.S. institutions (this last part is Boje again, in case you could not tell).

***Looking for the 'Good Organization'*** If a "good organization" as in the call for this track, has an emotional scaffolding that sustains it, then the "bad" organization may well be one where the predominant emotions now are fear,

anxiety, and a psychodynamic of miasma. Gabriel (2008) calls the miasma a kind of contagion, a spirit of purging faculty while purportedly following the dictates of common sense. In many universities, it appears the administration micromanages the curriculum, research takes a back seat, and practices of shared governance are tossed out or overruled by using what we call the TINA narrative (TINA is a Thatcher saying, 'There Is No Alternative' to the market control of institutions). In our region, TINA means no alternative to downsizing, reengineering, increasing graduate student teacher's class size, combining departments to save a secretary and a department head salary, and freezing salaries, not replacing faculty who have left, and staff jumping off a sinking ship.

### **The Situation in Middle World**

How are good and bad emotions transformed in good and bad organizations? We (Boje & Rosile) work in a university that in many ways feels like it has gone from good to bad. We turn now to analyze our state of existence.

We have material existence. We have subatomic particles and waves of energy. We have physical and biological existence in flesh and blood embodiment. My flesh and blood existence is inseparable from the world of nature existence. Each of us has a biotic body with about 37.4 trillion living cells. We are a walking ecosystem of living organisms and microbes, and most are symbiotic settlers. As Paula Gunn Allen (2008: 138) puts it, our body is already a walking planetary ecosystem, "energy becoming energy" in a transformation of a "Mandelbrot set", a kind of multifractal of recurring self-sameness.

We are part of many species. We have historical existence. I have relational existence to family and community. And we have spiritual existence. In New Mexico education for the past decade was funded by gas and oil severance taxes. Gas and oil prices took a dive, and the State treasury then lost money to fund K-12 and higher education. Governor Suzanna Martinez had signed a 'no tax increase' agreement with other neoliberal governors. That meant no changes, and vetoing every tax program to bail out education in our state.

As the university entered the greatest financial crisis of its history, administrators used the dire situation as excuse to implement changes they had

always wanted. In each of the financial crises we lived through in the past 21 years, higher administration considered and suggested (up to now, unsuccessfully) that our management department be combined with marketing. Another perennial strategy has been more contract adjuncts (& college professors) hired at lower salaries. This occurred once again, plus our salaries were frozen, assistantship funding for bringing in any more Ph.D. students was frozen, and the two Ph.D. program departments were put under the authority of interim department who were moved in from other departments.

Higher administration has appointed what is called Team 6 to reengineer and reorganize the faculty in six colleges, with input from faculty to be channeled through this Team. Team 6 is headed by the Business College dean, and by a new dean of the Engineering College. Under consideration are such ideas as: to combine College of Education with College of Health Social Services College in order to save money on department heads, deans, and a few secretaries; to combine (now) smaller departments together in order to save money on department heads and administrative assistants, made redundant; and to have fewer and fewer full time tenure track (& tenured) faculty lines, augmented by more and more adjuncts. This is happening worldwide, as labor process strategies of deskilling are embraced by neoliberal capitalism.

Surveillance is more pervasive than ever. Do you remember a time when we could do research without Institutional Review Board, when accreditation by AACSB was not taking up faculty time in every committee, every meeting? Do you remember a time before outcomes assessment mania? Do you remember a time when there was shared faculty governance? Do you remember a time when there was some modicum of academic freedom? Those times are long gone.

I (Boje) protested the arrival of this new university. I protested Team 6 and these proposed university changes, as well as the politically-inspired attacks on science in general, in marches, speeches, and blogs. This had zero effect, except to marginalize me, increase my teaching load, and make me depressed, angry, anxious, and ineffectual. Meanwhile more faculty left the university, and the governor vetoed the budget for 2018, leaving us with no budget at all, until June 2017.

My (Boje) protests did not change the situation, and I have burned bridges with department, college, and university layers of administration. I will retire in a few years, and the university social structure, culture, and the socioeconomic of neoliberalism austerity will likely continue on without my obstruction. It is the neoliberal form of late modern capitalism, it is a politically-driven austerity, that is dismantling the entire edifice of the academic university, its way of life systematically replaced by something we might not recognize as higher education.

Since I (Boje) could not change the situation, I decided to utilize my shamanic practitioner practices. I am a practitioner, not a shaman. My co-author, Rosile, has a different response. I, co-author Rosile, am not as much of an activist as Boje, I speak up when there is an opportunity, and as much as possible, ignore what I do not like while focusing on what I do like. This is my way of surviving “bad” emotions in organizations. Between us, we agree that shamanic practices are a good way for each of us personally to address what is “bad” in organizations. Such practices allow us to avoid being overwhelmed by the fear, anxiety, and aloneness emotions that seem to characterize “bad” or going-bad-ness that we see in our university and society.

I (Boje) do not want to be consumed by the university story. I want to be the agent of my own storytelling. To be stuck in the past, in the university’s story, keeps me from moving forward. The university existed before I was born, and in some form, will persist after I die.

### **How Shamanic Praxis Helps move between Bad and Good**

Shamanic praxis has allowed me (Boje) to change the meaning of Being-in what we shamanic practitioners call the ‘Middle World’. TrumpLand and my university in midst of being reengineered is in Middle World. By sonic drumming I journey from the ordinary-reality of Middle World via shamanic-consciousness to the Lower and Upper Worlds. I ask who, what, where, how, and why questions so I can find new meaning, heal my soul-loss, my trauma, and my fear, anxiety, and turbulence. To get answers, I commune with animal spirits of Lower World and teacher spirits of Upper World. The main answers have to do with detachment from the university, moving out of bad emotions to find good emotions. Often answers are in the form of



images. One image I have received is it is useless to struggle in quicksand since I only sink deeper. Another image is to find islands of peace in a turbulent Middle World. “Wherever there is unhappiness or disharmony, the shaman can play a constructive role, and whenever new ideas are needed for solving problems or advancing frontiers of any field, the shaman can lend his [or her] special skills (King 1987; 203, bracketed additions, ours).

Is the shamanic-organization a fantasy, an emotional practice, symbolic imagination, subjectivism, or is it a way to attune to a realistic project? We assert that it is a desideratum, an antecedent and necessary requirement indispensable to preserving what was great about the public university invested in the ‘social good’, and institutions of government like the Environmental Protection Agency, Social Security, and Medicare. The possible future and ethical integrity of capitalism itself is a desideratum! The AoM, the U.S. society, globalization, what’s left of the Public University, all pretending to ‘good organizations’ is a dysfunctional fantasy because it does obstruct the emergence of what is ‘good enough’ care (Winnicott, 1964).

### **Shamanic Access to Emotional and Energetic Worlds**

The emotional life of individuals, of individuals in the context of organizations, and of whole organizations, largely has been overlooked in organizational literature. Shamanism provides access to an invisible world of emotions and energies. This access allows us to do two things. First, we can visualize and move about in this Middle world. Second, we can ask and obtain answers to certain types of questions while in Middle world. Third, we can bring answers, and answers leading to emotional shifts, back from Lower and Upper worlds to Middle world.

### **Dynamics of Restorying for Goodness**

Why is access to these otherwise-invisible worlds relevant and important for the “good-ness” of organizations? There are at least 3 dynamics. The first is the “rule of opposition.” The second reason is the principle of non-attachment to outcomes. The third reason is the law of thoughts.

Notice that we have labeled these reasons as a rule, a principle, and a law. This language is intended to convey that our “reasons” are actually dynamics of how change can occur through restorying (Rosile and Boje, 2002; Boje, Rosile, Dennehy, & Summers, 1997; Flora, Boje, Rosile & Hacker, 2016). Typically, when discussing “goodness”, we imply fostering change towards betterment. Restorying addresses change using a series of steps, and several of these steps are rooted in emotional life and in our definitions of good and bad (or undesired). Rather than discuss all of the steps for restorying (Flora et. al, 2016), this discussion focuses on the 3 dynamics (listed above), which demonstrate how the shamanic process compliments restorying. Next we discuss these 3 dynamics in turn.

### **Rule of Opposition**

As soon as we have identified something as either good or bad, we invite a dualistic comparison. If our “good” is defined as a squiggle with a concave curve and a sharp point, then our “bad” becomes a reverse-squiggle with a convex curve with a sharp indentation. In this way, our “good” allows itself to be defined and somewhat controlled by our “bad.”

Restorying avoids the tendency towards dualism by deconstructing it. More specifically, an early step in restorying is identifying the “good” within the “bad” situation. For example, assume my “bad” situation is that I do not assert myself by expressing which of several work tasks I prefer. Where is the good in that situation? Possibly I gained favor with bosses or other workers by my non-assertiveness. It is also possible that this behavior served me well in the past, when I was perhaps new on the job, and may have had no experience as basis for having a strong preference. Perhaps this led to a habit of non-assertiveness which I (Rosile) now find difficult to break.

According to the narrative therapy theory (White and Epston, 1990) which underlies restorying theory, I must incorporate into my story a complete understanding of the “good” parts of the “bad” situation, to be most effective at changing my behavior towards the “good.”

## **Non-attachment**

Non-attachment means we do not have a personal emotional attachment to a solution, probably simply because it is our own. When I let go of my attachments, I am more open to possibilities. To facilitate this openness and non-attachment, restorying evokes solutions from other supportive characters in one's story. For example, what would one's favorite grandparent suggest as a strategy to help one move to the new, more desired story? This opens the door for solutions that are not so closely owned by oneself. In shamanic journeying, spirit guides appear, and we ask them our questions. This is similar to the imaginary visualized conversation that restorying incorporates, and again serves to help with non-attachment to a particular path forward.

It is important to note that the shamanism practitioner who is contacting spirit guides and using "journeying" does not refer to these processes as "imaginary." Instead, these experiences are called "alternate reality." (Of course, this term long predates, and has none but accidental relationship with the "alternate facts" terminology of Trumpism.)

## **Law of Thoughts**

Shakespeare's Hamlet echoes a biblical passage with "...there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." We extend this idea to include that when many people think something is good or bad, that thought gains power. This concept is employed in narrative therapy and in personal and organizational restorying in the phase where support for the more-desirable "new" story is garnered by identifying others who might be willing to support the "new" story. Those supportive others may then be approached to play an active role in supporting the new story, although this process may be completed without any actual contact nor visible response from such potential supporters.

We turn now to ways in which our shamanic journeys to other worlds can be understood in critical realism.

## **Critical Realism and Shamanic Praxis**

Here we will draw on dialectical critical realism (Bhaskar, 1975, 1993, 2010, and our experiences with shamanic practices. We admit that Bhaskar's work is controversial, with some critical realists ignoring the spiritual aspects, and others including them.

Critical realism is a philosophy concerned with ontology, defined as the study of Being. Our goal here is to apply Roy Bhaskar's dialectical critical realism to shamanic praxis. Specifically I (Boje) want to find good emotions and good organization in the latest crisis of global Being, and the worldwide decline of public university, which is under neoliberal attack. In Denmark, the past two summers, I (Boje) was the guest of Copenhagen Business School, and before that Aalborg University. Both have lost much of their humanity disciplines. I know my colleagues in UK, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, all have been experiencing the radical transformations of public university.

How can we address these issues through shamanic practice? First, several levels of reality in critical realism have spiritual relevance that can apply to shamanic praxis. Bhaskar (1975, 1993, 2010) theorizes seven levels of reality, and several have relevance to shamanic praxis. Level 5A (5th Aspect) has to do with spiritual reflexivity. The shaman engages in meditative practices of spiritual reflexivity.

Level 6r (6th Realm) is about re-enchantment. The shamanic practitioner communing with animal spirit helpers, journeying to other worlds still enchanted is relevant. Level 7A (7th Awakening) for the shaman is about finding non-duality, so that Middle World becomes the world of illusion, and Lower and Upper Worlds are the 'real.' This would be a pre-Cartesian, non-separation of body and mind person and nature, subject and object, etc.

**Table 1 - Summary of Bhaskar's 7 Levels of Reality** (based on reading of his work)

**7A - Seventh Awakening** [non-duality of meta-reality or demo-reality of illusion & depression and beneath that is anxiety, trust, & solidarity world that can be basis of universal human flourishing]

**6R - Sixth Realm** [re-enchantment]

**5A - Fifth Aspect** [spiritual reflexivity]

**4D - Fourth Dimension** [human transformative praxis]

**3L - Third Level** [dialectical critical realism]

**2E - Second Edge** [absence, negativity, & change in dialectical critical realism]

**1M - First Moment** [non-identity of scientific or transcendental realism]

We would like to apply an analytic model to the level 3L. It has the initials RRREIC (Bhaskar, 2010: 4). From there, we then expand the analysis to show some points of convergence of spiritual aspects of Critical Realism with Shamanic Praxis (noting this is a controversial move for many critical realists).

**Table 2 – RRREIC of Basic Critical Realism without Spiritual Reality**

**R1 – Resolution of Complex Events into its Components (or parts)**

**R2 – Redescription of Components into Explanatory way**

**R3 – Retrodiction of component causes to Antecedently Existing Events**

**E – Elimination of Competing Antecedent Causal Mechanisms**

**I – Identification of Causal Efficacious Antecedent Generative Mechanisms**

**C – Correcting by iteration of Previous Findings in light of above analyses**

**R1 – Resolution** – New Mexico State University is an open-systemic phenomena, with a multiplicity of (successive) cause, mechanisms, and theories about the latest budget crisis. “What is involved here is typically a conjunctive multiplicity of components” and “the logical form of *open systemic* phenomenon” (Bhaskar, 2010: 4). Here are examples of complex events and components: With the collapse of oil and gas prices, NMSU and every other public university in New Mexico lost its funding by the State, which meant budgets in limbo, salaries frozen, no new hires with attrition. At NMSU, anticipated budget deficits was seen as a time to call in the business process reengineering (BPR) consultants and pay them \$622,700 for 10 days consultation and a PowerPoint presentation on how to save millions by changing span of control of staff.

Boje, Rosile, Dennehy, and Summers (1997) deconstructed reengineering, concluding it was unscientific, counter-productive, and destructive, yet highly popular. Cuts were justified in personnel, while in another part of the university, millions of state money was spent on new buildings. A plan is being considered that would expand the 18-hole golf course (that uses one million gallons to water greens) to 27-holes, and add a hotel and shopping mall. The university's football team continued its losing streak, but picked million dollar practice games with ranked university in other conferences. Students claim the story is that our team is used as tackle dummies, expect to lose, to build the confidence of big league teams. Much more money is now spent on marketing the value of the degree on billboards and in ads playing as advertisements before the start of movies at our local theaters. The official narrative was our university was still a top tier research university, and a premiere Hispanic-serving Carnegie II-level university. Some faculty wondered if this was an espoused theory, but the theory-in-use was to cover over the lack of top-tier performance, and the strange ways Hispanics were being treated in TrumpLand.

Weekly Chancellor and Provost narratives pointed to the student, faculty, and alumni accomplishments. Ontologically, the university's open system is a reality in which there are many different mechanisms at potentially emergent levels combining to produce our novel situation. There are physical mechanisms (building some new buildings, while de-budgeting people), biological mechanisms (flat birth rate in the State), psychological (it feels to us like faculty are more depressed and demoralized than anytime in our 21 years there). There appear to be psych-social and socio-economic changes, and speculation that students no longer see the ROI on higher education investments. There could be cultural reductionism, a clash of migrant culture, white culture, and Trump politics. In short, this open system is a laminated system of many components

**R2 – Redescription** – What is the appropriate level of description of the state of affairs at NMSU? Is it the level of the University, the State Legislature and Governor, the Trump agenda for higher education, the transformation from knowledge society to knowledge economy, or the colonizing of higher education globally by academic capitalism? Does one professor's meeting to be reprimanded

by an administrator matter? Or, does the Governor signing off to never ever raise taxes matter? Or is this a national trend or a global trend of neoliberal ideology to get government out of funding for public education? Which of the possible levels of description of socioeconomic phenomenon is the explanatory critical one to focus on?

Things and events at NMSU are an intricate multiplicity of explanatory mechanisms. For Bhaskar each instantiates some universal law. The multiplicity of mechanisms have mediations, differentiations from others. For example, the reprimanded professor is a father of three, in a second marriage, is a critical theory activist, and a fan of the Rolling Stones. There is a specific geo-historical trajectory involved, including how the birth rate is flat in our region, how being on border with Mexico makes immigration more relevant, how the migrants are expected pick crops at lower wages than would be paid to citizens.

**R3 – Retrodiction** – refers to antecedent state of affairs. Retrodiction means an explanation or storytelling interpretation of past actions or events inferred from the universal laws that are shown to have governed them. One universal I have noticed, is every time there is an economic crisis at this university, the management department is slated for reorganization. In 21 years, this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> main economic crisis we have experienced. It seemed that with each crisis, the administration suggests a strategic plan that asks management to combine with the marketing department, to have one department head, one less administrative assistant, a reduced or eliminated PhD program. Now, admissions to our Ph.D. program have been put on hold, apparently moving to an every-other-year admissions scheme.

In storytelling terms, antenarrative is a process of discovering the nature of relatively enduring generative mechanisms at work. It involves retrodiction. Retrodiction is a form of logical inference which starts with an observation of components of the system (R1) their Redescription (R2) then seeks to find the simplest and most likely explanation (R3).

Retrodiction and retrodiction are ways critical realists can notice and care for antenarrative preparations in advance of the next economic downturn. This would include convincing legislators that higher education is important to more

than vocational development. It would mean developing an understanding of the difference between knowledge society and knowledge economy. In the later, students are customers investing in education as ROI, faculty are knowledge laborers whose work is patentable, and knowledge is just a commodity traded on the global market.

Here is an antenarrative analysis. Civilization is not unconscious, ruled by a corporate and governmental elite, which in the US this is the corporate lobby. Do we really have democracy anymore? The world is running out of natural resources, and all the rhetoric about sustainability does not meet the simplest empirical understanding of climate change, population explosion, the migration crisis worldwide, and so on. The 1% wealthy are amassing all the wealth, so much so, that half the world's population lives on less than \$2 day.

Our universities act to reinforce a number of myths that keep the generative mechanisms of economic and social inequality out of the commonsense. As an exercise in retrodiction and retroduction, we might ask ourselves and our students whether we believe the following nine myths, plus one more added by Boje, taken from Chapman (2004: 98):

1. We live in a democracy
2. Our society is just and fair
3. Economic growth is good for everyone
4. Everyone can succeed if they work hard enough
5. Society is a collection of individuals each of whom, by their choices and efforts, determine their own fate.
6. Success is the accumulation of wealth and possessions
7. The wealth of society is managed best by its rate of economic growth
8. Progress and development are by increased control and more complex technology
9. Freedom is the ability to choose in the market place.

I will add a 10<sup>th</sup>:

10. Liberal faculty are responsible for the decline of student's ROI in higher education.



**E – Elimination of Competing Antecedent Causal Mechanisms** – Now that we have elaborated a number of generative mechanisms of the transformation of higher education, we can eliminate some of them, and focus in. We suggest that by dumbing down higher education and purging the university of the humanities, the result is the 1% can engage in wealth accumulation while convincing the 99% general public to vote against their own self-interests. This is done by propagandizing the 10 myths above, and masking the generative mechanisms of neoliberalism.

**I – Identification of Causal Efficacious Antecedent Generative Mechanisms** – Here we narrow in on the culprits. It is all about convincing the public that university education is not about the ‘public good’, not about social justice, it’s a leap backwards into Social Darwinism, into the knowledge economy, into academic capitalism.

Critical realism begins with the assumption that *empirical* experience (here I include retrospective sensemaking narratives) limiting our understanding of events and things (Bhaskar, 1975). The empirical sensemaking is embedded in the *actual*, in events and things that are sometimes quite independent of human sensemaking. It seems that *empirical* is being Trumped (pun intended) by mythic. The *empirical* and the *actual* are embedded in something still wider, the ‘*real*’, in which often unseen, unheard generative mechanisms, powers of the 1%, are manipulating events and things. An antenarrative analysis of antecedent generative mechanisms operating below the level of retrospective sensemaking of empirical experience, and below the actual events and things of history, can help us understand the transformations happening in higher education, in New Mexico, in US, and globally.

**C – Correcting by iteration of Previous Findings in light of above analyses** - We continue our analysis with the seven levels of reality in Table 1, intertwined with four planes.

**Table 2: Four-Planar**

1. **Material transactions with nature** – Boje chairs the Sustainability Council at my university, and we are struggling. We have lost our Gold Star

accreditation rating from The Association for Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). We were about to be set back from Gold, below Silver, to Bronze. The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS) system has raised the bar, and we can no longer get by with having narratives that lack policy statements. I asked the higher administration to postpone the reaccreditation until we can get some policies about our material transactions with nature. I continue to fight against the idea of expanding our golf course to 27 holes, as a waste of water in the desert eco-region.

2. **Social interactions between people** – Interactions are tense. The department meets, but we keep silent in front of the interim head, and in front of the dean. Other faculty who never complained before, now are complaining, but only one-on-one, privately, and not in university meetings.
3. **Social structures that endure** - Our university will likely endure, but it will have a tough time convincing people it is top tier. There is an administrative order, and it expands, to cover the needs of academic capitalism: the golf, the proposed mall-like shopping area (the “mall-ification” of campuses, turning them into retail hubs like airports have become), the intellectual asset capture, the sports teams, the privatizing of everything possible, and so on. This endures, but academic freedom and shared governance, does not feel like what it was in previous decades.
4. **Stratification of the embodied personality.** There are administrative personalities, and many faculty personalities, we no longer recognize. We wonder if the trend towards limiting what is appropriate to be taught in the classroom, to be free of “politics,” to be limited to a strict definition of a “discipline,” is a Foucauldian panoptic gaze.

Bhaskar contends, (and here Boje agrees, while Rosile agrees but believes that this is nothing new) that humanity is in obvious crisis on all four planes. The material transactions with nature have come into severe crisis, and projections of 11 billion in population by 2100 suggest it will only worsen (Boje, *in press*). I (Boje) am

both a spiritual being and material being, composed of atoms and subatomic particles, and waves of quantum energy. If subatomic materiality is lacking then there is no higher level of biological (cells and metabolism), and without these layers, there is no psychological being, and no social being.

Regarding social interactions, in politics the distribution of economic resources is inequitable but the 1% who control the wealth appear unconcerned by this widening gap. The social structures of economic and social inequality are not being redressed by WTO, World Bank, European Union, and so on. The stratification of embodied personalities seems to produce more narcissism than ever before (e.g. Trump's election).

What is there to do? We can think of alternatives to cope with the present crises. For example, Boje proposes an alternative to reengineering the university, employing instead a set of direct democracy initiatives.

How to Develop the University of the Future?

<https://davidboje.wordpress.com/2017/02/25/how-to-develop-a-university-of-the-future-at-new-mexico-state-university/>

Implementing Mary Parker Follett's and Bernie Sanders' practices

<https://davidboje.wordpress.com/2017/02/12/implementing-mary-parker-folletts-and-bernie-sanders-social-democracy-practices-could-new-mexico-state-university/>

Applying Ensemble Leadership Theory and Hegel to the University crisis

<https://davidboje.wordpress.com/2017/02/23/what-is-relationship-of-ensemble-leadership-theory-to-hegels-and-mary-parker-folletts-dialectic/>

Boje's speech in front of NMSU administration building at a End Trump Hate March <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFmgOmrYPIA&t=3s> (part 1) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m2k6BvizpMA&t=42s> (part 2)

Boje recognizes that these acts of resistance had little or no effect on the university. Yet, ethically he must take responsibility for his participation in the unsustainable material transactions, the hegemonic social inspirations and social structures of injustice, and his own embodied personality complicit in Middle World.

As shamanic practitioner Boje enters the interior worlds (Lower & Upper) and looks back on the Middle World.

Shamanic practice brings awareness to show we are spiritual beings in an open system of complexity, contingency, conjunctuality, and change.

Universities are complex systems with multiple factors (persons, bodies, artifacts, things, buildings, etc.) in which there are interpersonal, social structures, and forms of storytelling expression. Universities are contingent, history entities with multiple causal forces. Universities are conjectural combinations of causal forces and emergences. Universities are changing in dynamic ways, morphogenic with causes coming in and out of existence. The university is many processes, structures, and productions. The university is an imperfect assemblage of multiple factors held together somewhat by agency, structure, and academic cultures.

As Boje journeys to Lower and Upper Worlds, he asks what is causing these changes in the university to happen. He asks who, what, where, how, and why questions of my spiritual animals and spiritual teachers. He has the power to choose his own story path, to move from denial, anger, depression into acceptance. None of us has to be stuck in our University identities, or in our Academy of Management identities. New doors have opened.

The anger we notice in TrumpLand is more than frustration, or breakdowns of communication, or ego violations. There is anger in the U.S., at the rupture of a moral code, with renewed energy, aimed at putting right the many new wrongs. Anger that many of us are experiencing by so many new bully bosses, nationally and locally, is more than brief madness that has a currency in TrumpLand's world of organizations. The anger, hostility, and aggression being cast at the liberal professors in humanities, in social sciences, those of us who believe in climate action --- that is not living up to neoliberal ideals. Anger at such conformity, the norms of knowledge economy, the downsizing of the university, the dismantling of the EPA, putting a Fast Food executive and ExxonMobil executives, along with World Wrestling and Amway executives in charge of federal institutions, is sheer absence of the normal order. Yes, our expression of emotion, anger and outrage is ethical. We adhere to a moral code that values the public good.

These are moral emotions in response to alleged unethical university, corporate, and government workplace behaviors that have huge consequences to community and environmental destruction. When the common sense is 'climate denial' and 'knowledge economy' then defense of climate action and efforts to sustain 'social good' (knowledge society) are seen as in appropriate practices that challenge neoliberalism. Neoliberal morality is a weapon used now by billionaires to capture more wealth, justify environmental destruction, move working class into the unemployed poor who also lack housing and healthcare. Bullies, for example, that I know, seem not to experience shame or guilt following oppressive acts of humiliation and belittling of those more vulnerable (Hosmanek & Rynes, 2012; Lindebaum & Gabriel, 2016,; Lindeman & Geddes, 2016; Walker & Jackson, 2016). Bullying for example is a deficit of compassion, a failure of the duty of care, a discrimination that adds to organizational malfeasance. In a downsizing economy, a downsizing corporation or university, bullying is a way of organizational change, a way to let the cost cutters have their way, in a bureaucracy that has itself fallen into madness.

### ***A bit of history***

Shamans were almost entirely purged from the planet by acts of colonization, by religious wars on IWOK, and by Western science that labels shamanic ways of knowing as animism. The Shamanic Foundation, founded by anthropologist and professor, Michael Harner, is devoted to preserving indigenous traditional knowledge of shamanic practices. Harner (1980" xiii) in *Way of the Shaman: Guide to Power and Healing* says indigenous tribes around the world are "keepers of remarkable body of ceremonial techniques that they use to achieve and maintain well-being and healing for themselves and members of their communities."

Shamanic Ways of Knowing (SWOK) are a subset of IWOK (Indigenous Ways of Knowing), and both precede capitalism, and antedate the industrial revolution by thousands of years. SWOK transcend ordinary capitalism ways of knowing. SWOK enters deeper levels of consciousness of "shamanic knowledge" that can only be acquired through "individual experience" of mediation in which "learning form the trees is considered superior to learning from another shaman" in some cases, or one

is expected in other cases, to continue the shamanic practices after training by a practicing shaman for a day or five years or more (Harner, 1980: xv).

We are shamanic practitioners affiliated with the Shamanic Foundation, and facilitate a monthly 'Shamanic Drumming Circle' in Las Cruces, New Mexico. We are also critical theorists coping with the demise of our university profession under academic capitalism, and the aftermath of the election of Donald Trump, and what is known as TrumpLand. We enact shamanic practices learned from the teachings within the Shamanic Foundation of anthropologist Michael Harner (1983; 1987; 2013), as well as our study of psychoanalyst and shamanic educator, Sandra Ingerman (2014) who for many years was the chief educator of the Shamanic Foundation.

The purpose here is to make journeys to other world (s) of 'nonordinary reality' that are beyond this 'ordinary reality' and Earthly existence of our own university in order to find 'Good' Emotions to offset 'Bad' Emotions of TrumpLand and the 'Bad' Organization of our University and its government. This is not just a way of knowing. Rather, it is rather an ontological way of Being-in non-ordinary existence, to gain a new attunement to this worldly existence, being colonized by academic capitalism, accelerated in TrumpLand. By attunement we mean a response that is deeper than surface emotion. More specifically, attunement is a vibrational relation between our body and the vibrations of the environment. Some see an overlap between certain attunements and some emotions. Our shamanic practices are a way to use the vibrations of shamanic drumming to enter other worlds, to change the energetic vibrations so as to lighten our mental anguish, and find a different and more positive way of Being in TrumpLand.

How does vibratory-attunement in a capitalist-organization differ from a shamanic-organization? Our purpose here is to relate the attunements and a few emotions, to both capitalist- and shamanic-practices. Our focus here is on how to sustain a caring attitude in academic capitalism university culture in TrumpLand.

The Weberian university-bureaucracy, the academic capitalism where we work has been undergoing radical changes before Trump took office that are for the worse. Bureaucracy is supposed to be a way to create social and ethical values and

norms. However, since our university is in the most severe downward economic spiral in its history, the best we can do is find an island of peace and caring in the fear, anxiety, and turbulence engulfing all higher education, in our state, and in our nation. After gas and oil prices plummeted, and this being the primary source of K-12 and higher education funding in New Mexico, “Gov. Susana Martinez vetoed all public university funding in early April [2017] amid a dispute with lawmakers over how to fund state government”.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. is in the throes of the Great Recession, since 2008, and in New Mexico, with a drop in gas and oil revenues, funds are being cut even more dramatically to higher education than during the last 35 years of Thatcherism and Reaganomics, which we refer to here as ‘neoliberal’ capitalism, or in a more everyday way, as the knowledge economy. Before Thatcher/Reagan, before the rise of ‘knowledge economy’, in the US and UK, higher education was a ‘social good’ and now its just a ‘consumer good.’ This is a shift in common sense by political leaders, and by public university administrators.

The attribution of blame in the neoliberal narrative is toward the faculty, especially older tenured faculty with liberal pro-environmental orientations in their teaching, research, and service. As we are liberal faculty in an increasingly neoliberal university, one that is downsizing its elder faculty, hiring more adjuncts, and more and more administrators to dumb down the labor process, privatize everything, automate everything, and render the university a giant shopping mall, we have been experiencing ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ emotion as the university slides from whatever was ‘Good’ organization to what most critical theorists would agree is quite ‘Bad’ organization.

Shamanic practices antedate globalization and academic capitalism practices. Shamanic practices extend 20,000 years of civilization, and are rooted in Indigenous Ways of Knowing (IWOK). In Melissa Nelson’s (2008) edited book, *Original Instructions: Indigenous Teachings for a Sustainable Future*, there are contributions

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<sup>1</sup> Dyer, Jessica. (2017). UNM [University of New Mexico] approves \$2.9 billion 2018 budget. Albuquerque Journal, June 13. [https://www.abqjournal.com/1017309/unm-approves-2-9-billion-budget.html?utm\\_source=notification&utm\\_medium=notification&utm\\_campaign=1017309](https://www.abqjournal.com/1017309/unm-approves-2-9-billion-budget.html?utm_source=notification&utm_medium=notification&utm_campaign=1017309) Accessed June 13, 2017.

of indigenous scholars we know. Jack Appleton, a student Boje knew 37 years ago when he was a professor at UCLA in early 1980s, who is still a friend, gave the book to us.

### **Shamanic Ontology**

We will present an inquiry into shamanic ontology. In shamanic ontology this 'Middle World' (where we live now) is no more real than the 'Lower World' and "Upper World'. All are the realm of the 'real.' The three worlds rather than being independent are inseparable, and they are as they say in quantum physics, 'entangled.'

Shamanic ontology is defined here as the study of Being and Becoming in Shamanic existentialism. In the shamanic entangled worlds, "things will seem quite as material as they are here" (Harner, 1987: 4). As in quantum physics, in the shamanic state of consciousness (SSC) in which everything is alive, and everything is interconnected.

The question of Being of animal helping spirits of Lower World and teaching spirits of Upper World has not been posed in a systematic way in shamanism.

### **What is Being in shamanic ontology?**

In shamanic ontology we have Being-in-the-worlds of both ordinary and non-ordinary realities. By shamanic practices of meditation we journey to nonordinary reality in order to gain insight and healing in ordinary reality. These worlds are mutually interdependent, inseparable. Our potentiality-for-Being is thwarted by our submission to what Heidegger (1962) terms the 'they-self' (what they want us to do?). For centuries the 'they' has wanted institutions not shamans to mediate between individuals and the spiritual realm. Shamanism is a recovery of spiritual democracy, our own direct access to revelation.

We are radically embedded in Middle World socio-economy, political economy, and sociomateriality. At same time, we are exists as souls in spiritual existence.



## **Hermeneutic Spiral of Shamanic Ontology**

Our sojourns to Lower and Upper Worlds allow us to interpret and understand our Middle World experiences. For example, experiencing Lower World helps us understand the situations we are embedded within Middle World. Shamanic practitioners record their journeys to Upper and Lower worlds, and record as well the outcomes.

### **Heidegger's notion of Care has three dimensions:**

Facticity

Fallenness

Existentiality

Facticity of my existence (Boje) in Middle World is that I was born at the end of WWII into the historical period that has resulted in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan wars. I am thrown in this Trump world, feeling like I am without any say in it. I am falling into the world where the new normal is to have a President Trump, treat climate change as a debate, and have modern-day slavery in agriculture, and more human trafficking than ever before. I do not want to obey the dictates of the 'They'. The 'They' does not permit us to talk about the Fallenness of the University, the society, the Middle World. It remains an untold story among many other untold stories.

### **What is the relation between my potentialities and my actuality in the Middle World?**

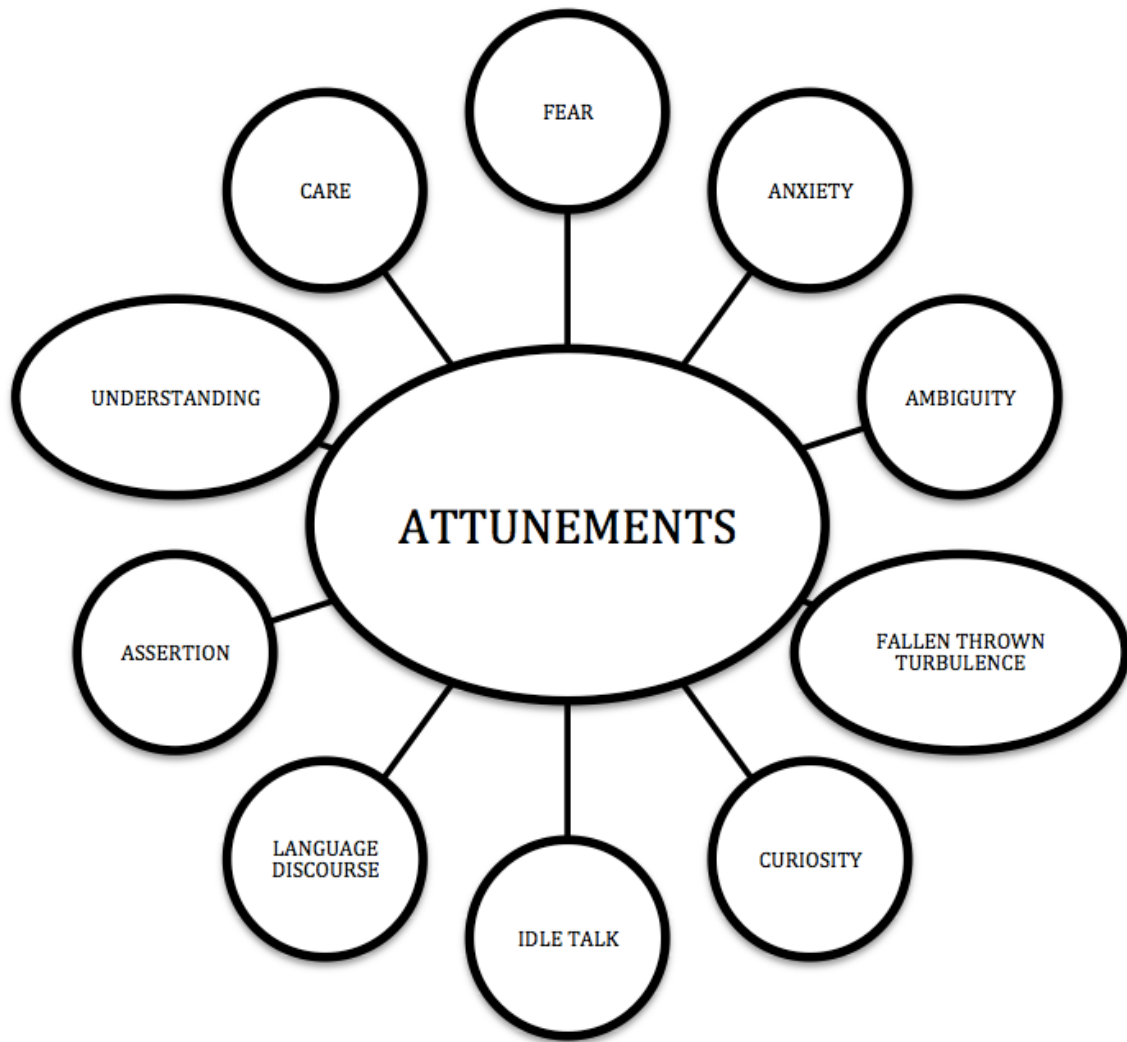
The Shamanic Hermeneutic Ontology takes up the question of death, the whereabouts of departed souls in Upper and Lower World, as well as souls unable or unwilling to move beyond the between levels, between Middle World existence and the Upper and Lower world existence. We gain phenomenological access to Lower World and Upper World.

## **ATTUNEMENTS**

We do assert that too sharp a distinction between 'emotion' and its function, and the 'talk about' emotion's role in sustaining the 'good' organization, is problematic (Lindebaum & Gabriel, 2016; Lindebaum, Geddes, & Gabriel, 2016). We

follow Heidegger (1962) in differentiating several 'attunements' as different from emotions. Lindebaum and Gabriel (2016) oppose current conceptualizations of anger as temporary individual psychological disorder or as a cause of social disorder. Rather they assert anger can be profoundly more emotion, aimed at maintaining the moral order, and restoring social order that has been ruptured.

Ten attunements are presented in Figure 1 include both "good" and "bad" emotions, from fear, anxiety, ambiguity, to understanding and care. The concern is how to adjust shamanic journeying to move from one attunement to another. We define attunement here as the vibratory relation of the human body to its ecosystems. Here we are interested in the tenth attunement, an ethic of care. Care is done differently in a capitalist-organization and a shamanic-organization. In globalization of late modern capitalism, its ideology is the commonsense contemporary wisdom, which says the Earth, its minerals, its ecosystems, and its peoples are material-resources to be exploited. By contrast, the shamanic-organization attunes to what is called 'Lowerworld,' in an altered state of consciousness, to afford a different consciousness, a premodern indigenous wisdom, which says Earth, its minerals, its ecosystems, and its peoples are all living entities: rivers, mountains, air, and water are living, not just humans, animals, and plants.



**Figure 1: Ten Attunements in Heideggerian Ontology** (adapted from Boje, 2014)

Our shamanic practices help us understand capitalist-organization practices differently. This morning while I (Boje) wrote this next paragraph, my wife and coauthor prepared the apples and grapes for our three-day juice fast. She prepared the tea ingredients the night before. I made my morning shamanic drumming journey, as usual, to Lowerworld, and then wrote in the journal and read a book for total of three hours, until it was time to re-enter this world, here and now. My journey, its attunement, ended with my awakening to the Champion juicer world, where I admit to ‘bad’ emotions: anger, frustration, and resultant pouting, all quite unseemly, as I did the chores I had agreed to. I really hate leaving Lowerworld.

**Conclusion**

There are broader ramifications. Healing one's own emotion change the destiny of one's life. IWOK and SWOK are ways of understanding the Lowerworld relation to Middleworld, how the two cosmologies intermingle.

Shamanic practices privilege an attunement to the ethic of care, and to fore-caring that our living planet can support and sustain the 7<sup>th</sup> generation, our grandchildren's grandchildren, and so on. Shamanic practices help us, the authors, to break out of feeling stuck in emotions of helplessness and anger at forms of domination that are increasing, and that it appears we can do little to change.

Shamanic practices offer a way to attune to the ecology, to what Nature has to offer humankind. Shamanic practices, not only meditation with the drumming, but walking in Nature while in a meditative state, are ways to attune to living things, and living beings in their ecological survivance. Globalization is putting a strain on ecosystems to be able to sustain future generations (Nelson, 2008: xvii). Shamanic journeying to Lowerworld is a way of attunement to ways of caring, what we write about as fore-caring, in our own adaptation of Heideggerian ontology to storytelling. The notion of living story comes from IWOK, from many indigenous scholars, including Kaylynn Twotrees' work.

In connecting going from "bad" to "good," or engaging in any change, there is always the issue of moving between individual and organizational levels. In this paper, we have offered 3 key concepts in fostering change that includes individual and organizational levels, and power dynamics as well as value orientations. The attunements include the emotional and value aspects of change but neglects power dynamics. The critical realism includes the power dynamics but neglects the spiritual. Both Heideggerian attunements and critical realism together offer a more complete picture of organizations, including emotional. Shamanism adds the spiritual dimension, along with another important feature of change: shamanism offers a place to start. That starting place incorporates the emotionally attuned and spiritually prepared and guided individual, who through shamanism, has a place to start with intentional being-in-the-world.

There is a gentle interruption. "Hey, it's time for you to run the juicer." I react in anger and frustration. I plod into the kitchen. I really wanted to write some more.

But its time to do a different kind of purge, the purging of all the toxic cake and pizza we ate during the holidays. It takes a few days to pollute one's body and months to get it back.

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