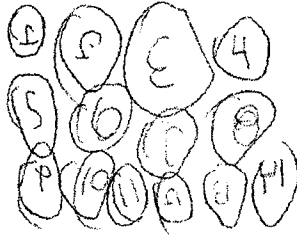


Living Between the Sea and the Sky

**a reflection on the workshop held
October 23 & 24, 1999
with Arny and Amy Mindell**

Skidegate, Haida Gwaii



LIVING BETWEEN THE SEA AND THE SKY

For two days in October, over 100 Islanders came together with Arny and Amy Mindell under the red roof of the Skidegate Small Hall to contemplate what it means to be *Living Between the Sea and the Sky*.

Brought together by our curiosities around Island issues and a collective will to actively participate in creating positive change in our futures, we set off on a journey to enliven body, mind, spirit, community, and the world.

INTRODUCTION

On the windswept Saturday morning of October 23, 1999 Patty Daniels, Gowgaia Institute's Community Program Director, launched the workshop with a warm welcome.

A goal of Gowgaia, she said, is to ensure that what we have here today remains in equal value and measure for generations to come. Such a goal is not unique to the Gowgaia Institute, as many people and groups share the desire to see positive change occur in their communities.

The path leading to a mindful legacy shares a course with the inclusive and inspiring nature of the Mindell's work. Their dynamic group process draws on local issues, needs and desires as each workshop is defined from within. Regardless of size, the Mindell's are capable of moving even the largest gathering towards new levels of awareness, communication and transformation. The longevity of local groups, originating from the Mindell's previous two visits to the Islands, are a bright example of the real and positive impacts new awareness, dialogue and concrete action can have in our communities.

Our hope is that during this weekend we will find an increased understanding of the relationships we have with each other, and the land that sustains us, in order for generations after ours to enjoy what we do today, Patty concluded.

BLESSING

Jenny Cross, on behalf of her father Chief Skidegate, Dempsey Collinson, welcomed us all by singing Chief Skidegate's *Welcoming Song* and by reading her great grandfather Chief Skidegate, Lewis Collinson's, insightful prose *People Are Like Trees*.

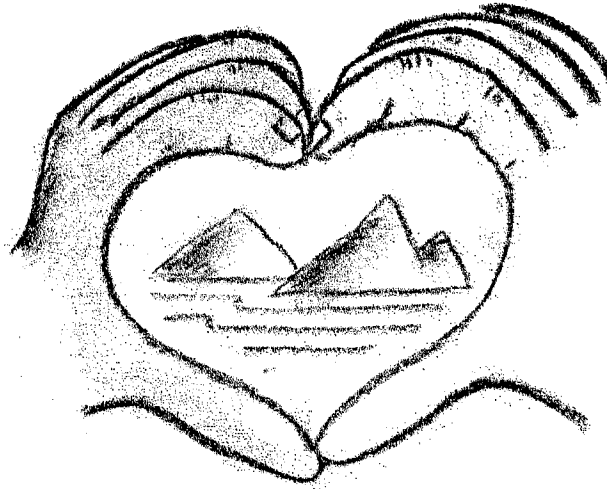
People are like trees, and groups of people are like forests.
While the forests are composed of many different kinds of trees,
these trees intertwine their roots so strongly that it is impossible
for the strongest winds which blow on our islands to uproot the forest.
For each tree strengthens its neighbour,
and their roots are inexplicably entwined.

In the same way the people of our islands,
composed of members of nations and races from all over the world,
are beginning to intertwine, their roots so strongly
that no troubles will affect them.

Just as one tree standing alone would soon be destroyed by the first
strong wind which came along, so is it impossible for any person,
any family, or any community to stand against the troubles of this world.

*Lewis Collinson, Chief Skidegate
March 1966*

Nika Brown and Irene Mills sang *Kagaay gyaaga*, a paddle song, which Nika said symbolizes the beginning of our journey together.



DAY ONE

The Beginning

The journey began with words from Heather Dudoward, Kevin Brown, Cynthia Davies and Rory Annett as they shared their personal stories of what it means to 'make a living and live their culture on these Islands.' Included is the story by Cynthia Davies:

Haida Laas, Good Friends, the question put to us was: How do I live my culture and make my livelihood here on Haida Gwaii? When I started to think about these questions, I was surprised at how quickly my mind left the surface of the matter, and plunged into memories. So, I have been spending some time with those recollections all week – wondering how they might weave back into the question of culture. And here is a diary of my path.

Monday

I remembered today my friend, Maria Kazinski, I haven't thought about her for years and years. We were friends together at school when I was about 11 years old and she was a year or so younger. All dressed up in our black scratchy wool uniforms, black lisle stockings and Oxford lace-up shoes; we went off every day to a convent school called Loretto Academy for Girls in Hamilton, Ontario.

The Kazinski family was one of thousands who came to Canada from Poland in the aftermath of the Second World War. When the war swept through Poland in 1939, Maria's parents had become separated from each other and from their two older children. Her parents spent most the war years in separate concentration camps. Maria's older siblings simply disappeared. She never knew what happened to them.

Her parents had an amazing story about finding each other by chance on a city street in Germany during the chaotic repatriations that followed the war. They came to Canada in 1946 and had two more children, my friend Maria, and her little sister, Violet.

When I went to play at Maria's house the pain and suffering of war was very real for me to see. Her mother suffered chronic kidney failure as the result of having been run over by a tank. Her father had lost all his teeth and was marked with his concentration camp number tattooed on his wrist.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Kazinski looked ancient — white haired, hollow eyed, and bones so worn out they barely held up their bodies — when I think back on it, they were probably the same age as my parents, about 35 or 40 years old. They looked 70 and all used up.

After school, Maria and I used to take the bus, or go on a long walk home, by city streets and sidewalks, to the little neighbourhood library where we hung out. We would choose absurdly romantic novels of historic England, dragon-hearted books about fair ladies who lived in castles, knights in shining armour, of valiant deeds and great love affairs, where good people lived happily (and richly) ever after and the bad guys got theirs.

Tuesday

But no one really talked about the aftermath of that war, perhaps because there were no words adequate to the task. So there was a huge gap between what I was seeing and learning and what I was being taught.

At home, in the hands of my mother, my grandmother, and my aunts, I was doing my very best to get the lessons right. But I found the messages complicated and confusing — be polite to everyone (no matter what), be grateful for abundance (and guard it jealously), speak in nonentities (or hold my tongue) and prepare to get a MRS degree by going to university and snagging a rich husband. That was supposed to solve the questions of livelihood.

Wednesday

I am thinking about the news today, the Nazis and the neo-Nazi's, about Chechnya and Taiwan, about Sarajevo and East Timor. I am thinking about how culture can be mis-used in the worst way to divide human beings up into us and them. Our ways are right, their ways are wrong. We are good, they are evil. A brutal kind of cultural chauvinism descends on the earth in dark clouds.

But what also sticks out in the story of human beings is our irresistible and irrepressible capacity to desire and seek freedom, to survive and throw off oppression, to make justice where before there was none.

We may sometimes hide our face in shame. We may sometimes howl in outrage, but we cry out for justice, and we act. This too is a long story in all our cultures.

Thursday

Who am I? Where do I come from?

My mother was a sixth or seventh generation Canadian descendant of Irish immigrants from Donegal. At the time I was born, my father was a British fighter pilot about to be demobilized after the war.

I grew up on the shores of Lake Ontario and, as a child, I never knew the sea. But something strange happened to me when I went to Northern Ireland in the summer of 1965. I was 20 years old. I spent a week with a friend driving the north coast. Looking out across a cold, grey northern sea I woke up knowing this is where I was from. It was not something I had to think about with my head. I just knew it. I knew where I was, and who I was in that landscape.

I have the same feeling about Haida Gwaii. For 25 years it has been so. When I walk by the sea, I am haunted by almost-remembered dreams and the shifting forms of memories, somewhere just out of sight, drifting and blowing in from the sea, the wheels within wheels of soaring birds, the cold roar of the winter wind, the whisper of the sea on the beach.

This has all been here long before me, long before my ancestors,
long before we even became human beings.

When I am walking by the sea, I know there is something that I
once knew, that I must remember.

Friday

To get to the question — what is culture?

It's about how we express ourselves as human beings in language,
music, poetry, and dance. It's about how we relate to each other — our
manners and our morals. It's about the sacred rituals that mark our
coming in and our going out of this life.

In the larger scheme of things, we are all not long for this world.
We are all returned soon enough to the earth, the sea, and the sky.

Culture is what sustains us as human beings in the world — carries
us forward through our time on earth like the crest of a wave. Culture
is about not only who we are, but who we can be.

How do I live my culture here? Sometimes I feel a stranger in a strange
and beautiful land. Sometimes I am very aware of being a non-Haida
person and a guest on Haida Gwaii and I wonder if I have any honour-
able place or responsibility here.

I feel keenly the loss of my own history — the loss of language, of
homeland, of libraries and Sunday afternoon concerts, of cathedrals
and choirs, of city streets and parklands and other signs of a culture
that I have left behind.

But, there are not ships enough to take all us *Yatzaada* back to
where we came from. Nor would many of us want to return backwards
along the sad trail that we have traveled for so long.

Our responsibility here is to resist the culture of fear and aggression
that sweeps through the world.

I believe Haida Gwaii to be a most extraordinary place on earth.
Here, opens a space between the sea and the sky, between old and new
cultures, between the past and the future, in which we must act
courageously to remember who we are to each other and to the earth.

Saturday

Today, I look around and feel so glad to find myself in such a large circle of friends. And I thank Chief Skidegate and the people of Skidegate for inviting us all into this hall where we are so often welcomed to feasts and funerals, wedding dances, New Years celebrations, graduations, public hearings, loonie auctions, bingos and meetings ... and meetings ... and meetings.

I am very glad to be one of those to welcome Army and Amy here to work with us this weekend. May all the good and strong spirits in this place help us be each other's wise guides.

How'aa.

BRAINSTORMING ISSUES

After lunch, we came together again as one large group in circle. Our minds ticking, encouraged by the personal explorations of Kevin, Heather, Cynthia and Rory about what it means to 'make their living and live their culture on these Islands.' We began the afternoon working together as a large group charting our issues and concerns. Taking cues from the floor, Arny recorded a series of key issues for us and through the anonymity of humming, the most popular stayed on the agenda for the afternoon. Inherent fishing rights, the local school board, health care, the North vs. South divisions, sustainable environment and Haida/non-Haida relations became centres of focus for the rest of the afternoon.

It seemed to many, the issue of cultural relations sat at the base of many of the concerns — on-island and in the rest of the world. Once we identified the questions before us, the Mindells randomly assigned numbers to us all, breaking us into small groups. The exercise was to discuss one or even all of these issues in a small group, while remaining aware of the roles, polarities, hotspots, ghosts and edges which emerge and influence how we communicate over difficult terrain with each other.

The Mindell's urged us all to be aware of these factors which pressure communication and to ask ourselves how we can become better facilitators as well as participants.

RELAXING AT THE END OF THE DAY

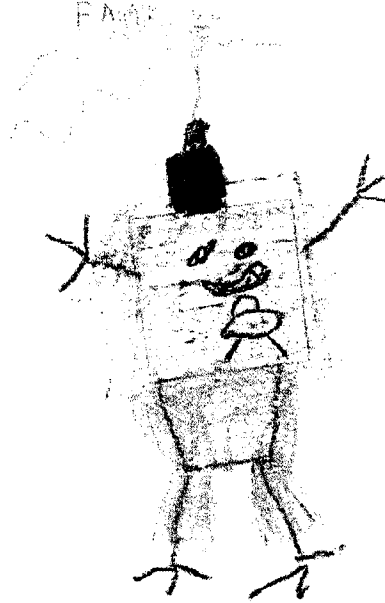
Nearing the end of the first day, we were asked to close our eyes and relax while thoughts of the day moved through us. Amy then asked us to open our eyes slowly and to let them rest where they naturally came to lie. It was at this place of focus she asked us to think of a story, it could be anything, she said, just imagine.

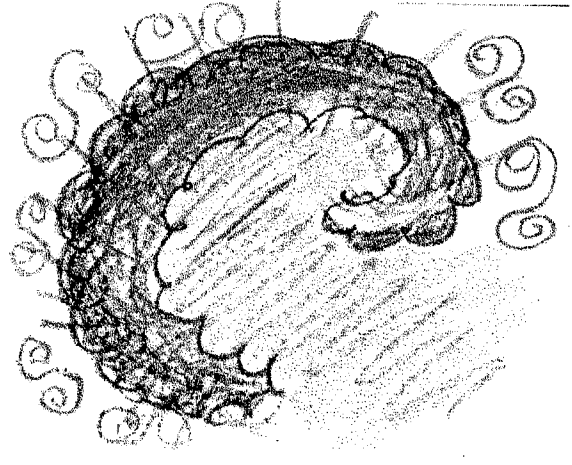
DAY TWO

Stories and Thoughts

The second day of the workshop began by reflecting on the previous afternoon. Stories were read aloud while others were quietly written down and left on the art table. What follows are a few of the stories.

- Who are we? Each of us here these two days in this season – changing Are we caregivers? Each of us wanting a better way. Are we a beginning? Each of us changing or in transition? We are people, each of us living between the earth and sky and we are each of us connected — our roots in both the earth and in the sky. How wonderful.
- As I scanned the room in a half-trance-state and reached Jude, I couldn't let go any further. I did not know why I couldn't go further until Arny said to notice something that caught our attention and feel into it and there would be a significance.
Here is the story. Once upon a time 150 years ago, on Haida Gwaii there lived a large Haida woman who was the wife on the great Chief Koyaah ... As I looked at Jude sitting in a chair across the room from me — here in a workshop on Haida Gwaii 150 years later — sitting in her beauty, her blond hair and blue eyes, laughter bubbled out of my





being, the message came to me as clear as crystal — miracles can and do happen.

Koyaah's wife witnessed bloodshed and the destruction of a whole village — men, woman, children — she was one of the few remaining survivors. The loneliness and grief she felt was so phenomenal and unhealed in that lifetime, that it came back to Jude in the form of reincarnation — including the Haida phrases as she cried out in grief at *Hotsprings* over five years ago. I was one of her witnesses. I am thankful the Haida woman chose Jude to come back as ... this is big karma to clear, and I know that Jude is constantly working on it and I know it isn't easy to be the reincarnation of a Haida woman in such an un-Haida body. Lesson one, we are all simply human beings.

I know why this happened, because I have been thinking about the next healing workshop I'll be attending and knowing that we will be journeying into places of the unconscious mind that we've never been to before. With this in mind, one of my goals, which, to some may seem far out, is to help those I love who are not healthy and always sick, to be their channel for healing and to choose life for them. The message from the universe: Lesson two, miracles can and do happen and to help us achieve them, we have the help of our ancestors. Our spirit guides, our helpers, our angels, the light beings and the healing facilitators who travel the world to help all who are willing to clear the way.

Howaa

- My Story - emerging from my closed eyes, inward place, my foggy vision quickly settles on a reflection. Across the room from me, sits Isobel and the light is catching her eyeglasses in such a way as to show two brilliant eyes looking out.

As I thought about the meaning ... Eyes that do not see and tend to view the negative or dark side of things. Sadness, withdrawal, distancing. Slowly, as one heals their old places of pain and fear, a faint light can be seen. Forgiveness and love pave the way. The light

grows within that person until they are able to shine that light outward. They can see the positive and bright side in all things. They can see that place of grace in all people. This positive light reflects out to their family, their friends, their community and the whole earth.

Message: Let your light shine into a world of greater love and harmony.

- One sunny day a blue jacket flapped and flew down the beach. It landed on a palm tree. The tree was happy with the jacket. The tree had been tired of the wind — tired of being blown and buffeted by the wind. The tree had long felt cold. The tree put on the jacket; she felt warm and protected. She was comfortable. She decided to keep the jacket.

Eventually a time came when the tree found the jacket restraining and she let it go. The tree discovered happiness. The wind blew and buffeted her. Its cool breeze let her dance and bend and stretch up and out. She took such pleasure in the flapping of her fronds. Though rooted, she was once again free and free to be herself.

- As I sit here I feel so alone. A crowd of people of which I don't belong. How can I fit in? I am so very shy. No one seems to notice my pain or try to find why. Maybe it's the signals I send, "Leave me alone! Don't come near!"

I'm not sure what it is I fear, the intimacies have never been easy for me. Feeling vulnerable with myself out there, what if no one likes me for who I am at face value? My identity is unknown even to me. I guess I should learn that first but it is so very hard, maybe too hard — a fear of the unknown.

Why can't I just be me? What is normal?

- How blessed we are to be able to share this place, how blessed we are to share with one another. Let us never forget these blessings and be eternally grateful for each day that we are given. Let us always

remember our children ... they deserve our very best. God bless all who shared of their spirit, of their soul and of their heart. Thank you

- I looked at a soft blue sweater ... I saw a window ... I was lying back and looking up at a blue sky, watching the clouds, carefree like I was as a child growing up here on Haida Gwaii ... the color of the ocean ... blue. A feeling of gentleness and nurturing comes from the sea. It envelops us here with its magic ... it sweeps gentleness into my heart. The sea and the sky are changing constantly, their energies flow through our hearts ... they are pure and fresh ... they protect us, and fill us with a special magic ... we are blessed here.
- How am I feeling now, after all of this? Warmer, closer to the many faces I have seen around this Island on my journey. Less fear in coming together. Insight, understanding and compassion for the Haida's struggle. Grateful for the people who opened up and expressed their pain. It is through this empathetic connection that we realize we are all one with all our differences. We are beautiful in our visions. And it is through the expression of our pain that we heal ourselves, our community and our sacred earth mother who sustains us all.
- The always growing understanding between people that what I am perceiving may not be who you are but only a reflection of something inside myself. And through honest and open, fearless dialogue I can see you and you can see me.



TOOLS, THEORY and CONCEPTS

During the weekend the Mindell's introduced a world of tools they use to help us get to the places we collectively yearn for. They say, with perseverance, awareness, and support from friends and family, we can *all* pursue conflict resolution within ourselves, our homes, and our communities.

Concept - Worldwork

"Worldwork is the politics of awareness. It is not only about solving problems, but especially about community awareness." *Demokratia* is the Greek word for people power. Democracy functions through the balance of power, Arny says, but power is slippery and can not be balanced simply by rules and laws. Democracy requires us to be aware of the presence, and the power of hidden signals which marginalizes many groups and individuals.

Worldwork not only exposes the abuses of power, it brings power forward, makes it clear and enables people to find and to create a fluid balance through interactions with others, Arny says.

In *Sitting in the Fire*, he writes, "democracy is, really a very basic but undeveloped form of worldwork. Democracy is to worldwork as a rowboat is to a sailboat. The rowboat requires human power; the sailboat moves with the wind."

The Mindells encourage us, as individuals and communities, to voice the key issues we see, feel, fear and celebrate. Fostering a search for solutions, they believe resolution is found within the disturbance itself and 'process work' is a tool for uncovering and understanding the root of the problem.

Concept - The Internal Guesthouse

"Your strongest ally is your enemy," Arny says. Opening your *internal guesthouse* to all beings relieves despair and internal oppression. If we find our *guesthouse* closed too often, he says, we can expect to find increasing levels of despair within ourselves. Ask yourself often, "is my *guesthouse* open to all beings?"

Concept – Frames

When working in groups, people commonly approach issues from very different places of understanding. The Mindells call this framing. An issue may be understood from a spiritual place, or from a place focusing on inner bodywork. To others, perspectives may be rooted at a relationship level, a large group process level or from a level of systemic change [legal systems, social action, and legislative change].

All of these levels are inherent to an issue, the Mindells say, though it is important to be mindful of the various *frames* operating at any given time. People interested in systemic change may feel those interested in the spiritual aspects are off in space while those interested in spirit may feel the political counterparts have fallen away from their roots. "We also need to recognize the mixed emotions and sensibilities operating within ourselves," Arny says.

Concept – Edges

Edges are communication blocks that emerge when individuals or groups fear, repress, or do not acknowledge taboo topics.

"There are many ways to allow processes to unfold, but perhaps the most essential way is to stay with the *edge*, with awareness of the group's forbidden communication, its tendency to avoid emotional issues, personal feelings, idealistic visions, and relationship conflicts." The issues

against which a group has an *edge* will return if they are not dealt with thoroughly, he says. For example, if a group member speaks about feeling angry or hurt, others might become embarrassed or irritated and want to change the subject. If the group does not stay with the issue of hurt or anger, it will return until the issue is fully processed.

"If you find yourself coming up against an *edge*," Arny says, "Ask yourself: How am I not feeling completely free in this group right now, and how is this conflict part of my individual growth?"

As a participant or group facilitator be aware of people coming up against *edges* — for example, those who begin to speak but can't finish — how can you help that person grow towards security and openness?

Concept – Ghosts

"Everyone is afraid of *ghosts*," Arny writes in *Sitting in the Fire*. "A *ghost* role in a group is something we feel but cannot see." When people communicate with each other, there are often aspects that are part of the exchange but are not represented by anyone. Past experiences, continued suffering, prejudices, oppression, or the dead often play a role in how we communicate with each other. Draw them out, the Mindells say, and make them visible by integrating them into the process — role-play for the *ghost*.

Concept - Hotspots

In a group setting, a moment of attack and defense, fight and flight, ecstasy, apathy, and depression, is known as a *hotspot*. These extreme moments reveal deep feelings surfacing.

Arny says it is very inspiring to see and hear in this workshop so many people recognizing the myriad of mixed emotions and sensibilities existing within themselves.

Concept - Double signals

When we are communicating with others some of our messages and signals are intended while others are unconscious. Arny and Amy refer to the intended messages as *primary signals* and the unconscious messages as *double signals*.

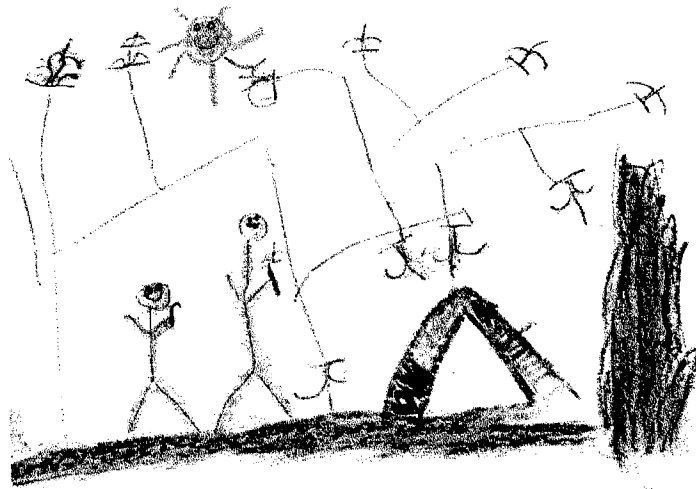
Arny says an example of sending *double signals* occurs when you try to act happy when you are unhappy. The intended message may be a smile or a little laugh; the *double signal* may be hanging your head or speaking in a low tone.

Most *double signals* are dreamlike; they convey a person's deepest feelings, spiritual experiences, and unconscious sense of power and rank, the Mindells say, and they are often the keys to unlocking the intricacies and depths of relationships.

During the workshop people expressed a strong sense of dissatisfaction with conventional forms of group communication and public processes which do not allow multi-leveled expression to take place. One woman says there is a stamp of disapproval exerted on passionate expressions in meetings.

"People are feeling desperately alone when they speak out." Arny says, such *points of despair* need to be identified and recognized out loud when they occur in a meeting. Breaking through mainstream communication styles is very important, he says. Bringing *ghosts* into the conversation can have very powerful impacts on the process.

After Arny and Amy played out a scenario ripe with double signals, they asked us to turn to our neighbour and while engaging in conversation we were to become aware of and to identify the source of the *double signaling* taking place.



WORKING TOGETHER

Reports from the Open Space Exercise

"How do we work together to create a better future?" Arny asks. Together, our large group identifies areas of intense concern to our communities. These *hotspots* are listed, people wishing to address a particular concern gather in small groups and a reporter is chosen to document the group's ideas. After the discussion the large group reforms and ideas and action plans are shared.

Under the red rooftop, desires for better environmental practices, cross cultural relations, youth, health, Island dialogue and local governance were voiced and embraced by small groups. We regrouped after the session and action plans were reported to the larger group. The group came together creating pathways to greater awareness of individual and community goals and ambitions, as well as giving words of encouragement and support.

Report - All Island Dialogue

A story: There were two women living on opposite sides of Skidegate Inlet. They had been friends for many years and though they enjoyed each other's company immensely there was a dark lingering shadow in their friendship. Many years ago, there had been a disagreement. The two friends could not agree on clearcut logging. One favoured it as a moneymaker; the other could see it only as the breath of destruction. "Agree to disagree," they had said, promising to never speak of it again.

One afternoon, the two friends were visiting. Looking out her kitchen window over Moresby Island, she turned to her friend. With concern in her voice, she shared her wondering and fears over why the woodpeckers had failed to return to her yard this year. She was distressed as the birds had been coming to her house at the same time of season for as long as she could remember. This year, the air had remained still.

Placing a hand on her friend's back, "the woodpeckers aren't coming back because their habitat has disappeared. There aren't enough forest lands here for miles."

The woman turned and looked at her friend. They were quiet for what seemed the longest of moments.

Over fresh cups of coffee they sat at the kitchen table. For the rest of the afternoon they talked about local logging, about fish creeks and habitat. They talked about woodpeckers, murrelets, bears, and their children. They asked each other all the questions they had been kept outside of their friendship since their fierce disagreement. They had found a common road, a connection in their love of birds, which allowed them to talk about that one topic which had kept them distant for so long.

How do we create honest and healthier dialogue between island neighbours? What must we do before we can comfortably talk about those issues buried in the background for so long?

There is not one style of communication which works for everyone. There are different types of communication styles, Arny says, and often people experience "unconscious injury" resulting from incongruous modes of communicating with another.

The story of *The Women and the Woodpecker*, illustrates the role of common experience replacing fear with understanding. Group members say constructive dialogue is often suppressed and people feel torn between the different roles functioning in their lives. At times such 'roles' can keep people quiet and on the outside whether it is about how you make your living or where you place your volunteer effort.

The route to healthier dialogue is really simple and even the most political messages can be shared in a non-political manner, some say. People coming together, talking about birds, plants, and woodworking — be an ambassador, bring a friend, share news, and ideas.

Within the pursuit of stronger better all-Island communication there is time to celebrate differences and the flavour of individual community identities. Diversity is generative and fosters creativity and new ideas. The need to respect uniqueness and boundaries is essential.

Uncertainty around Island events occurs. In the case of a potlatch, don't be afraid to ask about protocol, someone says. One of the ironies of dialogue is when situations grow increasingly confusing it seems people are the most reticent about asking for help. Don't be afraid to ask questions! "Is the event public, is it private, what should I bring, and what should I wear?"

There are very real and practical conditions which make it difficult and often impossible for people to participate in community events, meetings or to sit on volunteer boards. Transportation costs and child care are the type of issues which need to be addressed before equal opportunities exist for people to take part as they'd like.

The use of alternate methods of reaching out to the community may be useful. Messages can reach the home via Channel 10, local videos produced for Islanders, by Islanders, with Island content may also be a way to share community messages between homes. A low-tech community radio project can serve people's interests.

Keep going and keep growing, the group says. If there is intent to foster all-Island dialogue we need to engage in this type of workshop more often to keep the momentum moving forward. Don't forget to keep our eyes open for positive examples around us, the group says, like the Gwaii Trust, Island Community Stability Initiative and the Haida Gwaii Marine Resources Group which are all operating with 50/50 representation from all-Island communities.

Report - Youth Empowerment

Healthy communities are inclusive of all living within them. Island youth need to be included and empowered in their pursuits and need to be surrounded by positive role models, this group says.

One way to increase the direct participation of youth in education is to provide an opportunity for direct interaction with the school board. Interested youth could either speak to the board during a designated time, such as the first 10 minutes of the board meeting, or through an educational committee composed of students, teachers, and administration. Participating in staff meetings, or meetings between area representatives on the school board — we should be responsible for hearing youth voices, incorporating their perspectives in problem solving and fostering their voice by trusting it, the group says.

Empowering youth can be effectively done via leadership and peer mentoring. The group advocates for more mentoring to take place and more individuals taking part in the process. Empowering youth and providing avenues for actual contribution, the group says, wherein youth are directly participating in the future vision of Island education.

The group recognizes many sources of learning lie beyond the borders of our schools. Creative spaces, other than school or home, should be pursued to assist youth's participation in arts, drama, athletics, and outdoor education.

Celebrate their individuality and their special natures by validating their whole person not just their intellectual side, the group says.

Putting letters in the *QCI Observer* and other newsletters requesting people to become a mentor.

“The Great Spirit would want us to be here doing this
and having fun doing it!”

Report - 500 Years of Economic Development

A farmer, woodworker, Shiatsu practitioner, administrator, artist, student and a homekeeper put together a collective telling of an economic vision for the Islands.

The vision takes shape around a locally defined and sustainable economy. The players include all living on the Islands — and spirit, education, and dialogue texture the backdrop.

The tradition of 'taking it all away' would be replaced by locally controlled resources run by community resources boards for extractive industries like logging, fishing and mining.

The group advocated for a local monetary system weighted on bartering. The present economic system is based on a mechanistic model; but like a machine with missing parts it fails to run for the benefit of all. It fails to provide the necessities for all and particularly falls short in the natural arena.

High unemployment is a symptom of the systemic failures to provide for all – over regulation, licensing requirements, and bureaucratic restrictions on small business ownership deter independent living, the group says. Centralized government diminishes and takes away local community control.

Investigate permaculture, grow our own food, harvest local resources responsibly and support the transfer of monetary value to intrinsic value of trees. Support initiatives to start up community greenhouses, garden land, and dairy operations.

Develop a Haida arts centre, cultural centre, and tourism and museum centre, they say.



Report - Haida Gwaii Health Group

Promoting Preventative/Alternate Health Care: Healthy communities begin within ourselves. If our bodies are unhealthy it becomes increasingly difficult to act constructively beyond ourselves. The health group advocates the promotion of existing health groups, better communication with the Community Health Council (CHC), the pursuit of an Island Healing Fund and individual commitments to support health related actions.

The promotion of existing health groups may happen through pieces submitted to the *QCI Observer* or through the creation of an all-Island directory. The designation of an information centre or an Island Health website would help people find out more about alternate health care options on-Island.

Enhancing the existing relationship between the CHC and health care providers could be achieved through sending representatives to meetings regularly and pursuing meaningful follow up to ideas and potential plans. The formation of a lobby group dedicated to the promotion of community – CHC dialogue would assist in this pursuit, the group says.

In our daily lives, don't forget to think about preventative health measures and supporting existing local health care providers and groups, such as *Nygstle*. If you are holding onto a health concern, write a letter to the CHC, the group says. Be Active!

On November 13th, 1999, this group met in the QCC Clinic lounge. During this meeting they formed the Haida Gwaii Health Group, defined a mission statement and are still meeting to date.

Report - Environment

Concerns about 'the environment' fall into the spaces occupied by all groups. For we can only be as healthy, as empowered and open communicators as the natural spaces around us encourage us to be. What is our legacy? What would we like to see happen on our landscapes and what will we do to realize these commitments?

One of the first steps, the group says, is to take a look at our own ecological footprint. Ask ourselves some simple questions about our own relationships with the natural world. Watching how much and what type of groceries we buy at the store. Taking note of how many times a day we throw an electric switch, which companies we support and which ones we refuse to will all lead us to better understandings about our dual roles as both consumers and stewards of this place.

What sort of lifestyle changes do we, as individuals and communities, need to undertake? How do we move clearly to more simple and responsible living when the pressures and distractions of popular culture are so loud and persuasive?

A good place to start, the group says, is to begin dismantling those messages preaching to us the benefits of more pavement and even taller skyscrapers. Better facilitation around local land issues may help more people understand what the forces on the landscape really are. Creating an e-mail string of environmental issues may help more people get 'connected' to such issues and stimulate more and new local visions, plans, and control.

Taking time to focus on inner body work, to unearth our fears of saying 'no', and opening and sharing our visions and hopes for the future is freeing of the spirit and a choice of healthy bodies and healthy landscapes.

Forging connections with children by going into the schools and talking about what is going on around us, putting it into context is a strong starting point. Finding ways to maintain positive energy and relationships during these investigations is crucial to healthy legacies, the group says. "Be positive – not reactionary!"

KIDS IN THE HALL

Closing remarks from John Broadhead: I want to thank people for coming here and taking the risks that have been taken this weekend. Thinking back on the past two days, I recall someone saying when she raises concerns in her community, the response is often 'the healing circle is down the road.' I believe that the healing circle is right here, in this room, in this community, with us; not down the road.

As our time with Arny and Amy Mindell closes, I am reminded of something my dear friend Bill Reid said in court five years ago about what it means to be human, living on a narrow strip of land between the forest and the sea on Haida Gwaii. 'Haida' means 'human', he said.

Many of us here have struggled with the terms 'Haida' and 'non-Haida' dissatisfied with the divisions and the meaning of 'non-person'. If I could be 'king for one day' and have my wishes granted I would hope for the use of 'non-person' to disappear and for us to think, live together and enjoy each other as 'people.'

As John was coming to an end the Small Hall doors opened up with the buzz of children arriving from daycare. Arms full with paintings, Halloween ghosts on strings and sparkled pumpkins they moved around the room towards parents and loved ones. Their excited energy after two days spent at Skidegate Day Care with Kim Goetzinger, Thea Borserio and Jason Goetzinger was electrifying.

Soon the hall transformed, yet again, for dinner. A song was sung in celebration of the feast Roberta Olson had prepared and a long line formed towards the food-laden table. The kitchen was busy with activity as Toni Lynn Pearson, Scott Bellis, Wally and Chad Pollard and Debbie Muldowan assisted Roberta.

After dinner the Skidegate dance group, *hltaxuulang guud at k'aaju* (friends singing together) performed bringing the evening and weekend to a close.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- Jenny Cross for welcoming everyone on behalf of Chief Skidegate.
- Heather Dudoward, Kevin Brown, Cindy Davies, and Rory Annett for getting the ball rolling.
- Roberta Olson and all her helpers (Wally, Scott, Toni-Lynn, Sharlene & others) for the great meals and snacks.
- Rachel Crosby at Skidegate Daycare for donating the use of the facility.
- Kim Goetzinger for running the childcare service and Jason Goetzinger and Thea Borserio for assisting at the daycare.
- Old Massett Village Council for donating the use of the bus, and to Henry Williams for driving the bus both days from Old Massett.
- The Hltaazuulang Guud ad K'aaju dancers for closing the workshop on such an energizing note.
- and the children for joining us at supper with their art and energy.
- The W Alton Jones Foundation, Lichen Foundation, Mary Jackson, and the Gwaii Trust for financial support.
- All those who purchased prints and gave donations of cash and food.
- Army and Amy Mindell for creating a safe place to explore, and especially those who attended the workshop and are going to bring their learning into practice.

To everyone who helped make
Living Between the Sea and the Sky
a huge success we say how'aa.

Books by Amy Mindell

Metaskills - The Spiritual Art of Therapy
Riding the Horses Backwards
Comawork

Books by Arny Mindell

Dreambody - Working with the Dreaming Body
Coma - The Dreambody Near Death
The Shaman's Body
Sitting in the Fire
Leader as Martial Artist

Available through your local bookstore.

Web sites on Process Work and the Mindells

<http://www.processwork.org>
<http://www.processwork.org/mindells.htm>

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Amy Mindell

Creating freedom, community and viable relationships
has its price,

It costs time and courage to learn how to sit
in the fire of diversity,

It means staying centered
in the heat of trouble