

## **A Brief Overview of Emergent Knowledge**

By Matthew Hudson

Here follows a very brief technical overview of David Grove's Emergent Knowledge. For a fuller description see ReSource Magazine February 2008 and visit [www.powersofsix.com](http://www.powersofsix.com) for information on seminars and an *exclusive extract* from the forthcoming book 'The Joy of Six' by Philip Harland.

### **Over-riding Concepts of Emergent Knowledge**

- The language used is 'Clean'
- The language used is for facilitation
- Solutions come from within the client
- The client uses the space around them

Each of these over-riding concepts is explained below:

#### **The language used is 'Clean'**

Imagine that when working with a client, we are metaphorically entering an operating theatre; we are washed and leave all traces of the outside world outside of the theatre. In the context of therapy it is the clients language and physical gestures that make up this theatre, therefore we only use what they are presenting and saying. The tools or instruments we use, i.e. our questions, are clinical. In fact their very construction limits the amount of influence they have on a client's world.

Doing this enables the facilitator to be 'Clean' in their language and behaviour, not influencing the client, only facilitating the client through their world.

#### **The language used is for facilitation**

The purpose of the facilitators' language is to ease the client into accessing the matrix of their experience. The language creates a context in which change can occur, it is facilitatory and only delivered to assist the client in navigating through their worlds.

#### **Solutions come from within the client**

As this is the clients system, the best solution for their attending problem comes from their system. In this way it will be fully congruent with the overall ecology of the client.

#### **The client uses the space around them**

There is valuable information to be gained by asking questions of the objects and spaces around the client, rather than asking the client directly, also having the client physically move through and use the space allows new information/knowledge to emerge.

Another aspect of utilising the space around the client, is that the client has the opportunity to take aspects of their problem and literally 'get them out of their heads' and place them in space. The use of space in this way thus becomes a facilitatory process to enable dissociation.

## **The Mission Statement**

A mission statement is used as a focal point when beginning a session using spatial techniques. It is a statement written on a piece of paper and placed somewhere in the room. The client then stands in a position in respect to the mission statement.

The statement can be anything, it doesn't really matter. It can be a drawing or written statement that represents or symbolises the clients problem, goal, wish or need. The client may also choose an object in the room if that is more appropriate.

To help the client choose what to write, ask them:

*"What do you want?"* or

*"Why did you come here?"*

Sometimes they don't know. If they don't, ask them to put on the paper what the paper wants to have put on it, or even write something that 'seemingly' has no relevance to them at all. This process takes the responsibility away from the client by dissociating them from having to come up with something.

One important aspect of the mission statement is also in the size of the paper, have a selection of sizes for the client to choose from, say 'Post-it' note up to flipchart size, as the scale of the mission statement is important. Considering that some problems are bigger than others. It might be written in large letters or it might be so small that it's almost impossible to see it.

Once the mission statement has been completed, it is placed in space. The request the facilitator uses for this is:

*"Place that where it needs to go."* or

*"Place that where it would like to go."* or

*"Place that where you would like it to go."*

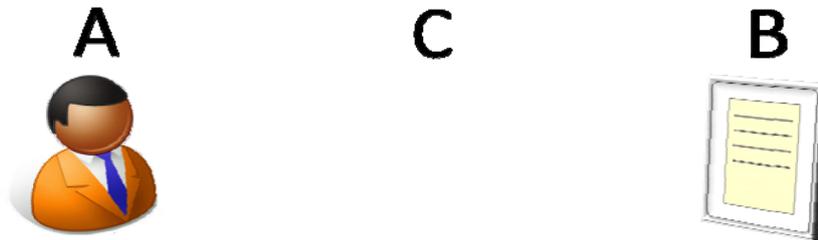
After the mission statement is placed in space, the client is asked to place themselves in relation to the mission statement. The facilitator may ask:

*"Now, place yourself where you would like to be in relation to that."*

The placement of the statement is significant as well as having the client finding out where to stand. The person may choose to have their back to it or they may even sit on. Some will have it so far away that they have it in the next room as if it's something they could never reach, and others will have it just out of reach. Some may stand on it and then realise that it isn't really that close to them.

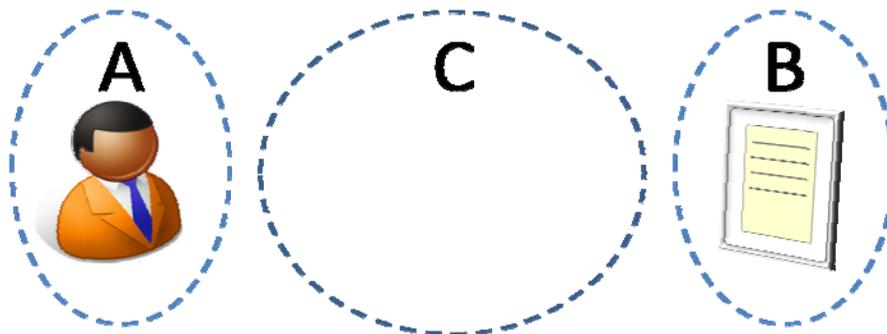
## The Space of A, the Space of B and the Space of C

Writing and placing a mission statement sets up a situation where there is an observer (the client at A below), the observed (the mission statement at B) and the space in between them both (C).



When the observer chooses the place they want to sit or stand in respect to their mission statement, this place and the space around them becomes the 'Space of A', this space holds who they are and what they know at the beginning of the session.

The mission statement and the space around it is the 'Space of B' and the boundary of the space in between is the 'Space of C', the figure below shows this.



The facilitator can ask questions of the person (A), the mission statement (B) and even of the space in between (C), in the belief that space can hold information as well as the person or mission statement. The questions are not limited to only what the observer knows because information is valuable no matter where it comes from. If questions are only ever asked of the observer, there will be very interesting and useful information missed.

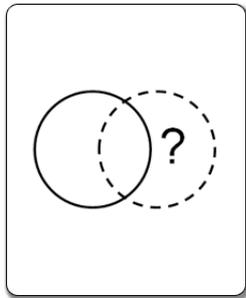
The concept of moving to another space is known as 'Adjacency' as we are moving the client to adjacent spaces within their problem space. This problem space can actually be represented by expanding the 'Space of C' so that it contains both A and B.

Which in reality is actually how the problem exists, i.e. the problem space, its boundaries and limits are what is keeping A and B in this feud, it is what is stopping A and/or B from getting out.

## The Basic Processes

We will now be learning some of the more advanced Emergent Knowledge terms and processes that can be applied to A, B or C.

### The Clean Setup or Clean Start



What is it? The Clean Setup is a series of questions that are re-iterated either in sequence or as the facilitator requires, until a positive answer to all of them has been received in succession, if a client states that they or the problem is not right, the client should move themselves or the problem to suit.

Purpose: To make the space psychoactive and elicit from the client their spatial organisation.

The list of questions that are asked of the client is:

*“Are you in the right space?”*

*“Are you at the right height?”*

*“Are you at the right angle?”*

*“Are you facing the right direction?”*

*“Is that in the right space?”*

*“Is that at the right height?”*

*“Is that at the right angle?”*

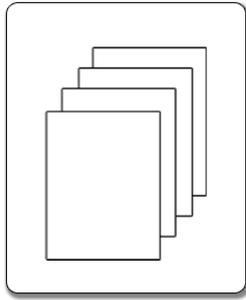
*“Is that facing the right direction?”*

*“Is that the right distance between you and that?”*

Once a positive answer has been received from the client for each question in succession, the client and the problem are considered to be in a state of stasis.

We feel it necessary to mention here that the attentive facilitator will notice that although the client has said ‘Yes’, they may have actually made a gesture, nodded or shifted their body position slightly before or whilst giving their verbal response, this is to be considered a ‘No’ and the questioning and moving of the client or problem is continued.

## **Over-Driving**



What is it? A simple question asked of either the observer (A), the observed (B) or the space in between (C), quite simply it asks, *“What do you know?”*

Purpose: To break or pass through the boundaries of A, B and C in such a way to allow new Knowledge to emerge.

As the Over-Drivers are fundamentally driving the Knowledge in the system, they are run as an iterative process, each question is asked six times.

The Over-Driving questions can be directed at either A, B or C.

### **Questions to A**

*“And, what do you know?”*

### **Questions to B**

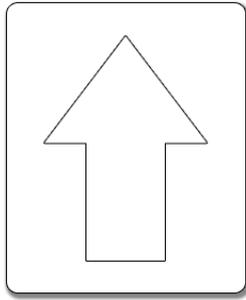
*“And, what does that know?”*

### **Questions to C**

*“And, what does that space know?”* Facilitator gestures to space

When the client is working with paper and writing or drawing the problem. The information that emerges with each question or at the end of an iteration, is usually acknowledged this with the use of the ‘Upload’ process which is linked directly with the ‘Over-Driver’ see next process.

### Uploading (Direct Connection with Over-Driving)

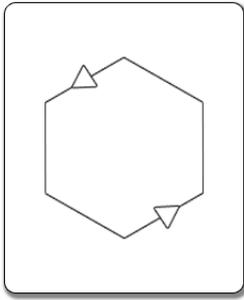


What is it? A process whereby the client writes or draws the answer to the Over-Driving or Download questions on the mission statement or on new sheets of paper.

The instruction is simply: *“Ok, so put that on there.”* or varieties of this.

Purpose: To make sure the existing and new knowledge is recognised, that it has residence (an address), a source. It puts the knowledge in relationship to everything else. It allows A to release and let go of the information. It saves the facilitator and client from having to remember what has been said. It short-circuits the linguistic patterns people have, when they tend to ‘talk’ their way out of situations.

## Meta-Driving

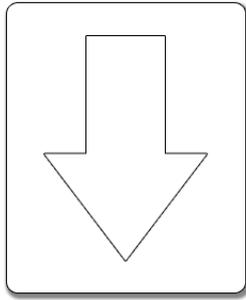


What is it? An instruction from the facilitator that shifts the client, usually spatially.

The instruction is simply: *“Move to another space.”* or varieties of this.

Purpose: To shift the client’s locus of attention and therefore create separate nodes in the network.

## **Downloading**



What is it? A direct question to either A or B, that brings the client back to the 'Now' to consolidate their learning.

The question is simply, *"So, what do you know now?"*

Purpose: Signifies the 'End of an Iteration' within the evolving network. It also confirms and consolidates the Knowledge that A has acquired, it brings it back home to A so that A can process it and self-organise.

We can also run this process on B to consolidate, however this is an optional process.

*"So, what does that know now?"*

Once this information has Downloaded, the use of the Upload process, will allow that space to then hold that information. It can be written or drawn on the existing papers or on a new sheet, follow the client.

For further information contact [info@uniquechange.com](mailto:info@uniquechange.com)