Collectives Connecting to a Collective Spirit

Welcome to Part 2 of The Lapidus 20th Anniversary Special Triple Edition – this is the second of a three Part Special Edition with the theme, Capturing the Collective and Connected Spirit of Writing for Wellbeing. This Part focuses on writing practices which enable multiple people to connect with each other or to other things in some way, and in doing so, create new meanings, understandings, or relationships with something, including themselves.

The contributions in Part 2 purposively draw from ancient ideas and practices to shake up the words or writing processes we might typically use, as a more or less direct route to change how we think. Sharing developments in her own developmental work, Kate Pawsey in Adapting Spiritual or Philosophical Ideas for Creative Writing for Therapeutic Practice describes how she was inspired by an ancient wisdom informed by Buddhist Tsultrim Allione. Similarly, Sandra Hopkins, Aimee Smith, and myself engaged in A Collaborative Haiku Experiment. This process engaged the Stumbled Upon website to inspire alternative perspectives, with some very positive yet unexpected outcomes.

The third contribution by Emma Filtness and Molly Crawford drew on Native American peoples’ beliefs and language in Seeing Wetiko: personal reflections on working as part of a collective on a global healing arts project this summer. The project develops awareness of Wetiko, or the “cannibalistic spirit or thought-form driven by greed, excess and selfish consumption”. As Molly observes, Wetiko “hovers over the things that make us feel uncomfortable about being human”.

The final three contributions share different manifestations of how people can write together with wellness outcomes: in What happens in WriteClub stays in WriteClub by Alison Powell, participants “laughed together, sighed together, gasped together”; in The Poetry Exchange - encounters with poems as friends by Fiona Lesley Bennett, we find evidence that collaboration can happen anywhere, including “a teepee, a 14th central chapel, a victorian library”; and in Creativity off the page by Francesca Baker, participants played with the idea that the “smallest insect might trigger a response, and the grandest building be a catalyst for emotion”. Francesca also provides a beautiful collaborative poem created at the Lapidus Day 2016 celebration.

We hope you enjoy a strong sense of the collective and connective within this part of the Special Edition.
Dr Tony Wall
Co-Editor, *The Lapidus 20th Anniversary Special Triple Edition*