

Accessing Wellness through the Laceweb

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with inspiration drawn from the Internet Site: www.laceweb.org.au/aw.htm

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Introduction

This paper explores wellness in the presence or absence of access. Significant examples of lack of access are the various forms experienced by people with disabilities of differing kinds. Two obvious examples are the lack of wheelchair access and lack of ready access to job opportunities for people with disabilities.

There are people with capacity to provide and even to ensure access for those people without access. These are the politicians, the law and policy makers and regulators, those in charge and control of the public purse, and those in the vast public and private sectorised service delivery policy and program apparatus, and wider afield.

A core issue is that this lack of accessibility *extends to affect even those very people with capacity to provide and ensure forms of access for others*. These very people are also disconnected from many forms of access. Their disconnecting takes a myriad forms. Disconnecting head from heart, rationality from non rational aspects of being, left brain from right brain, what they are doing from how they're doing it, quantity from other forms of quality (the mighty dollar) , actions from emotions; and silo type disconnect of self from people in other sectors of service delivery and other programs. Any form of holistic processes does not fit narrow sectorised criteria; the sectorised world is fundamentally disconnected. Refer [Government and Facilitating Grassroots Action](#)

This disconnect list goes on and on. It affects everybody. Everyone has lack of access. Refer [Wellness Mantra](#).

And the bind is that these people with capacity to provide access typically *never comprehend* or *realise* that they too lack accessibility. They lack access to a massive amount of their own potential and being; lack access to compassion, caring, nurturing, feeling for self and others, passion, and the like. To repeat, the people with capacity to facilitate access have no comprehension that they lack access to a massive amount of their own being and their own being in the world with others. These very people are disconnected from their own potential for many forms of wellness.

One form of bind is that people may have a profound 'blindness' or inability to sense some dysfunction or deficit, even if this is pointed out to them or shown to them, say on a video replay. The double bind comes when they don't know they don't know. As an example, top management was concerned about the quality of the output of their middle management team and as these middle managers were all very competent people, top management could not see what was amiss. Laceweb People were brought in and engaged these middle managers in discussing *how* they do what they do. The differences between content, process and metaprocess were explored. Content is *what* is happening. Process is *how* it is happening. Metaprocess is processes for exploring process (the how of the how). These managers seemed to fully understand the concepts. Some brief video clips were shown and we pointed out the processes and metaprocesses being used and had them head nodding. We then had them engage in some real-play as a team of managers while we filmed them.

Upon replay, *none* of these managers could identify the processes and certainly not the metaprocesses that they had just been using. They did not *want* to even discuss the content. Any engagement with them had them resuming the real-play and being totally absorbed in re-engaging in the content. When these fellows locked in on task, they were tenacious. They were very 'task oriented'. They found it impossible to shift from *engaging* in content, to *discussing* the content, or discussing the processes they were using in discussing the content, or the processes they were using in doing the content, or discussing *how* they were exploring their process. They could not shift to accessing these meta levels; to being 'process oriented'. For these managers this suggestion to explore process was total nonsense. 'We know what we are doing so let's get on with it!'

A key aspect of the dynamic that was happening was that these fellows were relentlessly using their respective competencies that they are very strong in, even when the task is calling for the use of a *different* competence. These fellows are *using their highly refined competencies incompetently*. For example, during a brainstorming task calling for creative imagination and *suspension of criticism*, a talented persuader immediately interrupts everyone else's creativity. He starts to tenaciously sell his very poor idea that had occurred to him almost instantaneously. Others immediately cease their brainstorming and begin using their highly refined attending and listening skills to hear him *collapsing the brainstorming session, without noticing that that's what he is doing, and that that is what they are contributing to*. That's what they are allowing to happen. The others are using their refined skills in critiquing, to critique his ideas.

Now everyone is cooperating together in contributing to collapsing the brainstorming session. These are very talented, highly educated, highly paid people and *they cannot access and perceive the process that's going on*. Even less can they access the processes that are sustaining the process that's going on, what's termed, the metaprocesses. Additionally, these people cannot perceive the *implications* of what

they are doing. Their poor outcomes may get them fired. Any attempt to have them explore the process they were using had them immediately reverting to continuing with their *dysfunctional* use of their highly refined competencies. Unless strategic action to collapse the double blind state occurs, nothing is going to change in this system. They are disabled and they don't know it and their top management do not know how the middle managers are disabling themselves, and hence they top managers are caught up in the same kind of disabling lack of access.

To slightly alter theme - rational people typically take great pride in their rationality. And yet rationality itself may become irrational - where logic disconnects. The term 'logic' comes from the Greek word *logos* meaning 'reason', originally denoting 'the universal principle through which all things are *interrelated* and all natural events occur'. In the rational world relating well with others suffers – as in the above example.

Being hired for their 'brains', there tends to be massive focus on only accessing the front of the brain - the frontal cortex – and not accessing the balance of the brain. The cortex tends to become cleaved from the rest of the body-brain. Along with the cleaving is disconnecting. H.G. Wells wrote in a chapter called '*Primitive Thought*' in his book, 'A Short History of the World' (1929):

And even today those who really control and order their thoughts are but a small minority. Most of the world still lives by imagination and passion.

For HG Wells, using imagination and passion is primitive, and advanced people have controlled ordered thinking. What H.G. Well is terming a 'more advanced' person, is what could be called the cleaved-disconnect type; the type of people who control and order their thoughts while disconnecting imagination and passion. H.G. Wells is sharing in a prevailing view that is held to this day by many with capacity who are disconnecting their Whole-Body-Brain functioning. For them it is ineffective to be emotional and subjective. One has to be objective. This disconnecting entails violating their integrity (being integrated) in many ways in relating to themselves and in their relating with others.

Attention typically attaches to or flits between parts and at the same time disconnects from other parts and the whole. Few have a kind of perceiving that [attends to the whole](#) in its interconnecting, inter-relating and/or inter-depending.

Along with disconnecting there are a number of other processes involved. One is rationalising – where one stays only in the rational and rarely accesses non-rational aspects of life – where the rational mind has been trained to ignore the pre-cortical; with little or no access to emotion and feeling, including gut feeling. There is little access to

embodied knowing; that is knowing and understanding coming to the rational mind through body phenomena and the senses. Another is disconnecting inner and outer realities; disconnecting objective and subjective experience; having a small 'o' objective that excludes the subjective, and having little access to intersubjectivity and intersubjective understanding – my inner experiencing of your inner experiencing of me. 'Advanced people' tend to not use the big 'O' Objective that includes the objective and subjective.

This disconnecting comes with numbness. Numbness is accompanied by dysfunctional detachment – out of sight – out of mind. Disconnect and detachment are accompanied by dissociation so that while seeming to have sight and hearing, these types have functional blindness and deafness relating to their lack of accessibility to vital aspects of their being, and accessibility to the wholeness and wellness of their being in the world with others. They have no access to *how* they are doing what they are doing. They are disconnected from massive amounts of their own being and they have no ability to access this. *They too are disabled*. The big difference is that the disabled *know they lack access*. These advanced people lack comprehension that they too are massively disabled by lack of access. And they do not know they lack comprehension.

These 'more advanced people' have little or no comprehension of their plight. If they were to begin reading this paper they would soon stop. They would dismiss it as not applying to them. On this theme of people's lack of comprehension that they do not comprehend, Martin Heidegger wrote:

To the common comprehension, the incomprehension is never an occasion to stop and look at its own powers of comprehension, still less to notice their limitations.

To common comprehension, what is incomprehensible remains merely offensive – proof enough to such comprehension which is convinced it was born comprehending everything, that it is now being imposed upon with a sham. The one thing of which sound common sense is least capable is acknowledgement and respect (Heidegger 1968, p. 76-77).

To these advanced people, this paper may be largely incomprehensible and dismissed as nonsense. They do not see that what they are experiencing is their *own* lack of comprehension. Therefore, suggesting that they are disabled by their own lack of access is well-nigh useless. They typically have *no capacity* to make *any* sense of any of this.

So, what can we do about this? Massive societal processes are sustaining this pervasive lack of access, ability-impoverishing and stripping of ability from people's lives, as well as shutting down experience and potential for experience from both the

wealthy and the poor; from the most powerful and the most marginalised. Hard driving people with type A behaviour and massive preoccupation with their jobs are so divorced from wellness they are prone to heart attack, ulcers, relationship break down and early death. Protocols of mainstream engagement reinforce disconnect. Common folk resort to disconnect in coping with a disconnected world. Think of the myriad ways people distract, disconnect and disrelate themselves – drinking, smoking, drug taking, texting, gaming, gambling, TV, loud music, etc.

Another source of ability stripping is that service delivery undermines mutual help in protecting its domain. Processes limit experiencing, and limit awareness of experiencing, and limit perceiving and sense making. Hence, for many, things are meaningless and make little sense. Our very capacity to know and understand is shut down and we don't even notice that this is happening. All of this is limits access to meaningful critique and limits scope for transforming action.

Essentially¹ this lack of access extends to everyone. After 1000s of years we have a way to go in connecting with our potential.

This brief paper is to provoke awareness of, and interest² firstly in the processes contributing to impoverishment of being in the world with others, and secondly, and more importantly, to provoke awareness of, and interest in processes for transforming all aspects of life towards wellness. The words 'Well and Wellness' are used for the *experience* of wellness in the Illness-Wellness Continuum. *What constitutes wellness may vary considerably between different cultures, communities and people in their varied habitat and context.* Forms of wellness may include (in no particular order) communal, cultural, physical, family, clan, inter-family, personal, interpersonal, spiritual, emotional, psychological, habitat, relational, village, inter-village inter-religious, financial, inter-clan, safety and security, geo-social, environ-mental, inter-factional, economic, and inter-cultural wellness. Generalised wellness flows from the *interaction* of the above forms.

Perhaps one place to start exploring wellness is with the [Laceweb](#), a [new form of informal networking social movement](#) evolving in the Australasia Oceania SE Asia Region since the 1950s. The name 'Laceweb' emerges from a natural outback Australian phenomenon. Millions of tiny spiders floating in on thin webs may spin overnight a continuous, immense web that may spread to the horizon in all directions. Similarly the Laceweb wellness networking evidences the manifesting of a massive

¹ From the Latin '*inter*' to enter and *esse*' essence or God Energy, hence to enter the God Essence)

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local co-operative endeavour. It's not 'carved in stone', rather, soft, light, and pliantly fitting the locale and made by locals to suit their needs.



A massive resource is the [Laceweb Homepage](#), an action research archive on wellness containing 117 papers, 19 audio programs, videos, and E-books that are freely downloadable. For over fifty years, Laceweb action research has been exploring the experience of wellness in the indigenous cultures of East Asia Oceania Australasia Region with associated networking and sharing of wellness ways among cultural and intercultural healers and resonant others. For example, in 2005, this action research through University of Philippines with the support of UN-Inma brought together in the Philippines countryside 49 natural nurturers/healers from eleven countries in the East Asia Oceania Australasia Region for [Regional Emergency Psychosocial Support Network August 2004 Regional Consultation Workshop](#) with funding support from UK. H.G. Wells' so called 'primitive' people may well set the lead in being profoundly connected to aspects of their being, their being in the natural life world and their being in the social life world with others. 'Primitive' derives from 'of an original cause'. Our best learning is in our first 12 months and then learning tends to become disconnected.

Another place to start is with marginal folk at the very edges of dominant society. Gatherings, Celebrations Festivals, informal get-togethers and parties provide scope to evolve supportive friendships exploring all aspects of wellness and how to connect and integrate these aspects.



The night Market at ConFest – a conference festival going since 1976

Again, mainstream people tend to dismiss the margins and yet nature abounds with examples of innovations on the margins.

Following Maslow, many top management people aspire to be 'self actualised'. We will *never* be actualised if we are actually disconnected from huge parts of our potential, especially if we do not even know we are disconnected. For many examples of transforming towards actual holistic self actualising, refer:

[The Life Work of Dr Neville Yeomans](#)
[Community Ways for Healing the World](#)
[Un-Inma Atherton Tablelands Inma Project](#)

For evolving wellness support networks, refer:

[Laceweb Sociograms](#)
[Wellnet](#)

For engaging in transforming of Wellness in bureaucrats, refer:

[A Process for Transforming Senior Bureaucrats](#)
[Natural Learning Processes](#) (perhaps start a mutual-help discussion group based on Lexicon experiences)
[Natural Learning Processes](#) (PDF version)

An interesting collective of characters are the [Australian Bush Mechanics](#). These folk are exemplars of accessing their abilities and all of their creativity and resources and linking these to the [moment-to-moment changing context](#).

Another glimpse of issues in accessing abilities and sabotaging processes is contained in [Report from the Pikit War Zone](#).

A collection of over 130 stories from life about transforming to wellness are woven together in the freely downloadable E-Book [Coming to One's Senses – By the Way](#). This resource continually weaves together glimpses of transforming ways in action so you may explore them in your own life.

While this paper has been referring to massive seemingly intractable issues, over fifty years of action research linked to Laceweb Action provides compelling evidence for transforming processes that work well to generate wellness. Coming to Ones senses has a number of stories from life expressly relating to processes for changing the processes used by top managers and bureaucrats in government and large businesses towards wellness.

Laceweb articles are not about theories. They are reporting transforming experiences that have worked for others and they outline how to do the transforming ways. Anyone may use these for wellness. They are all about you connecting with your ability, psycho-emotional resources, [resilience](#) and capacity.

All of this is extremely hopeful.
Les Spencer.