IMAGINAL STRUCTURES OF FOSTER MOTHERS THAT SUPPORT THE ATTACHMENT PROCESS

by

LOIS DAVIS

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

PSYCHOLOGY

MERIDIAN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

IMAGINAL STRUCTURES OF FOSTER MOTHERS THAT SUPPORT THE ATTACHMENT PROCESS

by

Lois Davis

The purpose of this study was to research the imaginal structures, or internal representations, of experienced professional foster mothers. The Research Problem was: In what ways does exploration of imaginal structures related to attachment among foster mothers provide insight into the foster mother’s attachment process with adolescent foster children? It was hypothesized: imaginal structures related to attachment are activated among foster mothers; from awareness, access, acceptance, and working relationship to negative affects, insecure attachment patterns can be transmuted into the capacity for secure attachment.

The Literature Review is a combined exploration of the fields of Attachment Theory, foster care, and Imaginal Psychology. The literature review discusses attachment patterns and how these patterns relate to the primary caregiver. Attachment research provides information as to how maternal behaviors can contribute to secure or insecure attachment patterns. The foster care section articulates the social and economic changes that have molded modern foster care services. The Imaginal Psychology section discusses the maternal archetype, imaginal structures, and how aspects of depth psychology intersect with Attachment Theory, attachment research, and the qualities of traditional foster mothers. The Literature Review demonstrates that there is limited research on the...
qualities of professional foster mothers. By examining the imaginal structures of effective foster mothers, insights into their capacities were gained on personal, cultural, and archetypal levels.

Imaginal Inquiry was the methodology used in the research design. It is a qualitative methodology that is situated within the participatory paradigm. Imaginal Inquiry includes four phases: evoking, expressing, interpreting, and integrating experience. The design of the research specifies that experienced foster mothers will meet over the course of a weekend. During these meetings, the experiences, images, and meaning-making of seven foster mothers were interpreted. Experiences were expressed in art and story telling of material images.

The cumulative learning states that bringing negative affects related to attachment failures to consciousness through shared meaning-making and imaginal activities facilitates the integration of these affects, expands one’s capacity to recognize one’s own maternal shadow, and lessons the possibility of unconscious enactment.

Five Learning’s were derived from the research data. Learning One states that those unable to confront and metabolize the negative affects of shame, distress, and fear that arise in response to an exploration of attachment failure defend against these affects by internalizing responsibility for these failures and over-idealizing and/or caretaking neglectful or abusive parents. The second Learning states: The narrative sharing of adult over-idealization of neglectful or abusive parents, as well as challenging the cultural taboos against expressing anger towards one’s mother, breaks down the dissociation from one’s affective experience allowing for an interpersonal resonance associated with secure attachment. The third Learning states that expression of affective experiences of negative
mothering may inhibit unconscious enactment of those experiences by bringing them to consciousness and allowing integration. Learning Four states that working with adolescents whom have experienced significant attachment failures requires the ability to embody the trickster archetype and transmute the negative affect of anger into appropriate fierceness. The last Learning states: The creation and witnessing of an attachment story allows for the expression of unconscious internal representations of attachment patterns, putting one in relationship with aspects of the self that need nurturing, thus providing relief from unconscious defenses.

The myth of *The Abduction of Persephone*, representing the reunion of the maternal dark side into the complex archetype of the Great Mother provides a context for the participant’s experiences. Interpretations revealed that bringing negative affects related to attachment failures to consciousness through shared meaning making and imaginal activities facilitates the integration of these affects, expands one’s capacity to recognize one’s maternal shadow, and lessens the possibility of unconscious enactment.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Research Topic

John Bowlby states that the attachment process is defined in the field of foster care as the ability of the foster mother to influence the child’s feelings of safety and trust in her protection. The experienced foster mother has her own unique pattern of imaginal structures that support her in promoting the attachment process of children in her charge. Experienced foster mothers are defined as caregivers who have worked with foster children for ten years or more. Aftab Omer defines imaginal structures as follows:

The imaginal structures are assemblies of sensory, affective and cognitive aspects of experience constellated into images; they both mediate and constitute experience. The specifics of an imaginal structure are determined by an interaction of personal, cultural, and archetypal influences. These influences may be teased apart by attention to the stories that form personal character and the myths that shape cultural life. During the individuation process, imaginal structures are transmuted into emergent and enhanced capacities as well as a transformed identity. Any enduring and substantive change in individual or group behavior requires a transmuting of imaginal structures. This transmutation depends upon an affirmative turn toward the passionate nature of the soul.

These images determine how the foster mother will experience and respond to children that frequently push her away, lacking trust in her care.

Gaining knowledge of the imaginal structures of experienced foster mothers is valuable, as it can provide information for the recruitment and training of foster mothers for which there is a great need.

The United States General Accounting Office report on out-of-home care affirms that the foster-care system is in crisis. This report states that increasing numbers of foster
parents are ceasing to provide foster care because they do not receive support and positive recognition for the difficulties that they face. The public image of fostering in the United States lacks prestige.

Even though professional foster mothers are currently being trained and provided with more fiscal rewards, there is a lack of research to support the selection and training of these women. The intent of this dissertation is to provide soul-based research on how experienced foster mothers provide secure attachments for foster children.

The vocation of the professional foster mother is not valued in Western culture. The foster mother receives little or no public recognition for the necessity and complexity of her work. At the extreme, professional foster mothers function within a culture that undermines the maternal. There is a trend to provide professional or specialized care to meet the needs of the increasing number of foster children with behavioral, developmental, emotional and medical needs. A survey of professional foster care programs in the U.S. conducted by Pamela Meadowcroft and Victor Floran, documents the following trends: (1) 70 percent are administered by private, nonprofit agencies; (2) pre-service training is required as well as in-service training; (3) usually a reduced number of children at any one time are placed in the professional foster home; (4) the maximum social work caseload per professional foster family is reduced; (5) the average length of stay is shorter than in traditional foster care; (6) the average payment to professional foster parents is higher than that for traditional foster parents; and (7) most programs base their interventions with children on a consistent approach in which all professional foster parents are trained. I have therefore selected professional foster mothers as the participants for this research study as they are the caregivers that are
working with the increasing number of foster children with insecure attachment mental representations.

Bowlby defines attachment as the child’s development of confidence or lack of confidence in the protection of the mother or caregiver. All maternal figures or caregivers influence a child to become securely or insecurely attached. Mothering involves the creation of some kind of attachment relationship with the child being mothered. The maternal side of the attachment process involves the caregiver’s provision of safety in order for the child to develop confidence in her protection.

Bowlby created the concept of internal working models concurrently with Attachment Theory. Bowlby suggested that infants construct models of their primary caregivers’ behaviors that can predict interactions between the infant and the caregiver. These models become internalized as the child matures and develops mental representations of the self in relationship to others. Judith Solomon and Carol George contend that there has been much written about attachment internal working models or representations in the research. The internal representations of natural mothers have been studied and found to be complementary to their children’s. However, the internal representations of foster mothers may not be complementary to the children in their care.

Foster children have suffered separation from their natural mothers as a result of neglect or abuse. Bowlby, Leslie Atkinson and Kenneth Zucker agree that environmental failure (usually the mother) causes the foster child to develop unhealthy internal representations. Bowlby described the mental representations of troubled children as being a segregated system that causes defensive exclusion of painful and distressing
feelings associated with attachment. These systems are maintained outside of the child’s awareness.¹⁹

Bowlby’s segregated systems are inferred by: (1) the noticeable absence of attachment behaviors in situations for which they would be appropriate, providing evidence of blocking stimuli that might activate attachment behaviors; (2) the appearance of disorganized, out-of-context and out-of-control behavior, affect, and thought; and (3) alternations or combinations of extreme behaviors.²⁰

The effective foster mother must navigate a child’s attachment model that is most likely dissimilar from her own, the difference being that life events have programmed the foster child to block normal attachment behaviors. Ideally, all foster mothers would be able to promote the attachment of the children in their care, but this is not the case. Professionals in foster care agencies document that some foster mothers are more effective than others in helping children develop positive attachment behaviors.²¹

Omer contends that examination of the foster mothers’ imaginal structures of attachment is an expanded view of the internal representations or internal working models described by Bowlby.²² Omer further states that within the imaginal orientation, the individual’s enhanced capacities promote contact with the soul. Omer defines soul as the “mysterious stillness, aliveness, and otherness at the core of being.”²³ The soul provides the individuation that allows the foster mothers to promote attachment in their foster children. “Individuation is the emergence of human capacities in a unique and connected way,” as defined by Omer.²⁴ The foster mother has developed the capacity for self-knowledge in conjunction with a deeper knowledge of the world, which promotes the enhancement of her attachments.
Omer states that:

A capacity is a distinct dimension of human development and human evolution that delineates a specific potential for responding to a domain of life experience (e.g., Compassion responds to Suffering; Courage responds to Danger, Destinicity responds to the Future; Dignity responds to Failure; Fierceness responds to Injustice: Faith responds to Uncertainty: Reflexivity responds to Personal Identity, and so on.).

Thomas Moore writes, “Soul also appears, of course, in relationships where we dramatize our fantasies. It seems that soul cannot escape the entanglements, the highs and lows of human intimacy, without betraying its very nature.”

My topic, therefore, is the examination of the imaginal structures of experienced professional foster mothers.

**Relationship to Topic**

My adult life has been devoted to the study and practice of Attachment Theory. It is this interest that has influenced my dissertation topic. I have worked with abandoned, neglected, and abused children for forty years. I have been a foster mother and have worked in residential facilities as staff, housemother, and counselor. I am aware that my insecure attachment to my own mother has led me to attempt to mother children that are adrift in the child welfare system. The fact that these children are not with their biological parent guarantees that they have had an attachment disruption. Bowlby found that the severity of attachment disruption varies with the child but all foster children are in a new situation and need to develop confidence in their safety and security in order to thrive. Working with these children has profoundly affected me.

Early in my career, while working for a foster agency at age twenty-two, I attempted to mother abused and abandoned children as I had been mothered. Since I had
ineffective mothering, I was unresponsive to the needs of the children in my charge. I resented them for not obeying me and for being in constant emotional turmoil. I was often overwhelmed and helpless to contain or understand their emotional states.

Additionally, I found myself emotionally withdrawing from these children as my mother had withdrawn from me. Although ineffective at mothering, I became drawn to the work. I focused on reading, taking classes, and doing individual therapy. It was as if my life depended on being able to effectively mother these children. This is how I started to untangle my own feelings of alienation, fear, and dissociation. I had put myself in an environment where answers were desperately needed.

As I became acquainted with the research on attachment and the development of Attachment Theory, I internalized a cognitive map to understand myself as well as the children I continued to care for. My studies included the work of Object Relations theorists. For instance the writings of James Masterson particularly influenced my approach to children. Furthermore, I underwent individual therapy with an Object Relation’s therapist for three years. By this time, my internal representations had been revised to that of the good enough mother. The good enough mother was described by D.C. Winnicot as a mother that can sustain an active relationship between inner and outer reality. According to Winnicot, this is a mother who mothers from her true self. This is the opposite of mothering from the false self, which is an inner disconnection between the inner and outer self through the therapy. I became more effective with the children I was mothering; I could relate to their grief, loss, isolation, and anger.

However, I was also aware that I experienced myself as a “false mother.” I had a map of how to be a mother but I did not feel like a mother. Twenty-five years into my
career and life path, I attended the Meridian University and started to feel myself attached to a community. For the first time there was a container that could hold the full force of my rage and fear. In a final paper for Meridian University, I addressed the dark side of the mother, the evil devouring mother, and the mother that holds wild destructive rage. As I brought this mother into myself, I experienced myself as motherly. The duality of the positive and negative mother had consolidated. I no longer felt like a fake. Marion Woodman, wrote about the dark goddess being the shadow of the good mother, asserting that the dark mother needs to be brought to light in the abandoned and rejected child in order to mature. Woodman’s descriptions of the dark mother supported my experiences and I became curious as to what occurs for other foster mothers caring for wounded children.

**Theory-in-Practice**

Attachment Theory focuses on maternal behaviors that promote the child’s development of confidence in the protection of their caregivers. This theory also provides a description of the development of an internal world in which representations “internal working models.” These models are also compatible with the work of Daniel Stern who refers to internal patterns of relationships that are specific to a single event. These internal patterns are organizing subjective perspectives the child develops about the self and other. Additionally, C. G. Jung termed internal patterns “internal imagery,” which are formed by the internalization of real external experiences. Biologically the right orbital-frontal cortex sits at the apex of the limbic system and is considered the primary affective regulatory center of the brain. This structure also connects with every other
part of the brain. The early attachment experiences between the infant and caregiver become symbolically represented in the right orbital-frontal cortex.\textsuperscript{37}

Bowlby surmised that these internal models of attachment are developed from the child’s personal experience of the mother. This experience of the mother can cause the child to develop secure or insecure attachment patterns.\textsuperscript{38} The mental and physical aspects of attachment are mediated by images. Omer states, “Mental and physical phenomena are mediated by imagery. That is the core of affects, thoughts and actions.”\textsuperscript{39} When examining the images of effective foster mothers, the parameters of Attachment Theory are expanded.

Mary Ainsworth was able to discover specific associations between the children’s attachment styles and their caregiver’s styles of responding.\textsuperscript{40} The caregivers of securely attached children were very responsive to their children’s needs.\textsuperscript{41} They responded to feeding signals, crying, and returned infant smiles.\textsuperscript{42} Caregivers of ambivalent children were inconsistent in their responses, and caregivers of the avoidant group had a tendency to respond in cold and rejecting ways.\textsuperscript{43} The main influence on attachment patterns, Ainsworth contended, was maternal behaviors: sensitivity to infant signals being the main maternal influence on the nature of attachment patterns.\textsuperscript{44}

Jung also introduced the idea of archetypes to describe the predisposition or orienting structure that is contained in the collective unconscious.\textsuperscript{45} The concept of the Great Mother and various forms of Mother-Goddesses are a derivative of the mother archetype.\textsuperscript{46} Imaginal Psychology expands on the concepts of Bowlby and Jung by using the term “imaginal structures” to describe images, which mediate and constitute experience. Imaginal structures are determined by one’s interaction with personal,
cultural, and archetypal influence. These imaginal structures can be examined by attending to stories and myths both individually and culturally. My particular interest resides in how experienced professional foster mothers’ imaginal structures support or hinder the maternal side of the attachment process. In the process of researching imaginal structures a sense of soul was experienced through deeper patterns working through the participants’ sensing, thinking, and acting. James Hillman defines soul as follows: “And third, by ‘soul’ I mean the imaginative possibility of our natures, the experiencing through reflective speculation, dream, image, and fantasy—that mode which recognizes all realities as primarily symbolic or metaphorical.”

A deeper understanding of the maternal archetype is needed, as the number of neglected, abused and abandoned children is increasing in our country. It is important to know how to select and train foster mothers to care for children in the social welfare system. The care of these children has been my lifetime work, as well as my impetus for personal growth. To examine the imaginal structures of an effective foster mother is to research the deepest level of mothering, and this research has led to the topic of my dissertation study.

**Research Problem and Hypotheses**

Examination of the imaginal structures of experienced foster mothers stimulates curiosity about the images effective foster mothers hold of their foster children. Foster mothers also hold images of themselves as the caretakers of foster children. What images do foster mother’s hold of their own processes of mothering foster children? This question was used to gather information that informed my Research Problem.
The intent of my dissertation is to study the primary research question, the Research Problem being: In what ways does exploration of imaginal structures related to attachment among foster mothers provide insight into the foster mother’s attachment process with adolescent children?

My work with foster mothers through the years, and my studies in Attachment Theory and Imaginal Psychology, has informed my research hypothesis. It is hypothesized that imaginal structures related to attachment are activated among foster mothers: through awareness, success, acceptance, and working relationship to negative affects, insecure attachment patterns can be transmuted into the capacity for secure attachment. My research questions were: What images do foster mothers’ hold of their foster children? What images do foster mothers’ hold of their own process of mothering their foster children? How might the images that the foster mothers hold of their foster children and of themselves be archetypal in nature? How do the imaginal structures of the foster mother support her self-care and strength in dealing with painful issues?

The Research Design

The research methodology used was qualitative, and is situated within the participatory paradigm. The methodology approach is entitled “Imaginal Inquiry,” developed by Omer. 51

There are four phases to Imaginal Inquiry. The first phase is evoked experience. The experience evoked is valid when the authentic experience is the specific experience being investigated. 52 The use of myth, music, art, photography, and story-telling will
evoke the participants’ experiences of the foster-mothering of an insecurely attached foster child.

Expressing experience is the second phase of Imaginal Inquiry. In this stage, data will be collected from the evoked experiences. In the data collection, the researcher seeks to preserve all the essential components of the evoked experience. Data will be collected through journal writing, audio-taping, art-making, and photography. The images created will be collected, the narratives and discussions recorded.

The third phase is interpreting experience. The participants will be asked to interpret some of their own experiences by addressing prepared questions. The researcher will also review the data and make meaning from the collected experiences. The Literature Review will be used to draw upon theories in use to analyze the participants’ collected experiences.

In the final phase of Imaginal Inquiry, the researcher helps integrate the evoked experience. This integration will be facilitated for the participants, the Institute of Imaginal Studies, the field of psychology, and child welfare systems or other agencies that could benefit from the results.

**Learnings**

The data when analyzed presented five learnings describing knowledge concerning the maternal attachment structures of foster mothers.

The cumulative learning states that bringing negative affects related to attachment failures to consciousness through shared meaning-making and imaginal activities
facilitates the integration of these affects, expands one’s capacity to recognize one’s own maternal shadow, and lessons the possibility of unconscious enactment.

Learning One, The Good Mother, addresses the foster mothers’ ability to confront and metabolize the negative affects of shame, distress, and fear that arise in response to an exploration of attachment failure. When these negative affects are defended against, they are internalized, leading to over-idealization and emotional protection of neglectful or abusive caretakers.

Learning Two, Resonance, follows the narratives shared by foster mothers, and includes a comprehensive description of their maternal lineage. The narrative sharing of some foster mothers challenged the cultural taboos against expressing grief and anger towards the mother. When the foster mothers listened to and voiced their negative childhood experiences, they lessened their dissociation and increased the group’s interpersonal resonance associated with secure attachment.

Learning Three, Good and Evil, concerns the creation of and dialogue with negative maternal images. As the foster mothers integrated the unconscious aspects of negative mothering into consciousness, they were able to avoid acting out the maternal shadow.

Learning Four, Positive and Negative, involves the foster mothers’ writing and sharing of negative and positive experiences regarding their adolescent foster children. The data demonstrates that working with adolescents who have experienced significant attachment failures requires the ability to embody the trickster archetype and to transmute the negative affect of anger into appropriate fierceness.
Learning Five, Attachment Story, provides for the participants to create original attachment stories. The stories revealed unconscious expression of internal representations of attachment patterns. As the participants shared their stories, they were provided relief from unconscious defenses, and revealed aspects of the self that need care.

**Significance and Implications of the Study**

The primary purpose of this study is to provide a deeper understanding of the imaginal structures of experienced professional foster mothers. Bowlby observed that:

> Paradoxically it has taken the world’s richest societies to ignore these basic facts. [Man and woman power] devoted to the production of material goods counts a plus in all our economic indices. Man and woman power devoted to the production of happy, healthy, and self-reliant children in their own homes does not count at all. We have created a topsy-turvy world.\(^56\)

Gaining knowledge of the imaginal structures that support effective foster mothers will enhance the appreciation of the mothering process in general. The intent is to stress and appreciate maternal capacities that are often culturally devalued.\(^57\) The study of capacities of the professional foster mothers will bring recognition to their accomplishments. Although, Attachment Theory has received much clinical attention, it has been principally supported by research on the attachment behaviors of the individual child. Therefore, this research is taking the approach of Imaginal Psychologists, who use the term “reflexivity” to describe the individual’s capacity to engage in and be aware of imaginal structures that shape experience.\(^58\) Imaginal structures include personal, cultural, and archetypal influences.
To summarize, the purpose of this study is to address the following issues that are not found in the current literature on attachment: Foster mothers are necessary to care for the increasing numbers of neglected and abused children. These mothers will need to support the attachment process of the children in their charge. There is no current research on the training and selection of professional foster mothers. Western culture has little or no support for maternal capacities. By linking maternal capacities to effective mothering there may be an increased appreciation for the effective foster mother. Attachment Theory has much to offer in the understanding of the individual’s personal attachment processes. By the examination of imaginal processes, an expanded view of attachment is developed. It is the researcher’s hope that further research will be stimulated from this expanded view.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The child’s attachment to the caretaker is purported to be crucial to the healthy development of the child.\(^1\) Marshall Klaus and John Kennell describe this attachment as one of the strongest relationships developed by human beings.\(^2\) Bowlby describes healthy adult and child attachment behaviors as follows:

Attachment behavior is any form of behavior that results in a person maintaining or attaining proximity to some other clearly identified individual who is conceived as better able to cope with the world. It is most obvious whenever the person is frightened, fatigued, or sick and is assuaged by comforting and caregiving.\(^3\)

While parenting and meaningful parent-child relationships are not overly valued in our society, there are women who have chosen parenting as a profession.\(^4\) Edith Fein reports that foster mothers care for children who have been victims of families who experience violence, poverty, drug use, parental death, parental imprisonment, and homelessness. These children are placed in out-of-home care within our foster care system.\(^5\) Since the 1980s the foster child population has needed more psychological treatment services, as there has been an increase in the reported instances of neglect and abuse of children being placed. Fein concludes that these children have developed ambivalent, avoidant and disorganized patterns of attachment.\(^6\) Steven Rholes, Jeffery Simpson, and Jami Stevens report that foster children have generally lost confidence that their caregivers are accessible to support them when they are in need.\(^7\) It is the effective foster mother who is able to win back the foster child’s confidence.\(^8\) The foster child
becomes attached when they can trust the foster mother to offer them support when they are in need.⁹

The purpose of my literature review is to provide a comprehensive review of three main areas in which the literature review clusters. The first section of Literature Review is titled, Attachment Theory and the Mother. The first subtitle is History of Attachment Theory. This subsection traces the development of attachment theory and its supporting research. The literature review discusses attachment patterns and how these patterns relate to the primary caregiver. Attachment research provides information as to how maternal behaviors can contribute to healthy or unhealthy attachment patterns. The second subsection is Internal Working Models reviews mental representations, which contain the generalized beliefs and expectations, held by the mother and the child about the nature of attachment and interpersonal relationships. These models are available at the symbolic level.¹⁰ Bowlby’s concept of internal working models describes how the child develops a sense of self through interactions with the caregiver.¹¹ The next subsection Neurobiology of Attachment is about the neurobiology of the attachment process and how this relates to the caretaker child attachment processes. The last subsection of this cluster is Culture and Attachment, which reviews the literature relating to how culture affects the attachment process.

The second section is entitled, Foster Care and the Mother. A subsection entitled Historical Overview and Current Trends in Foster Care Services provides a chronological view of the development of foster care services into the twenty-first century. This section articulates the social and economic changes that have molded modern foster care services. The growth of professional foster care and the need to provide treatment
services to foster children is discussed. Moreover, the increased need for effective professional foster mothers is documented in response to the changing values of our society.  

Within a second subsection entitled, Traditional Foster Mother, the literature discusses the limited research on the characteristics of trained professional foster mothers, who are recently prevalent in the welfare system. Additionally, there is extensive research on the characteristics of the traditional, untrained homemaker foster mothers recruited by churches and social agencies, which is reviewed as well. A review of this literature provided some basis as to what the qualities of the professional foster mother might be.

Another approach to understanding the characteristics and qualities of the professional foster mother is to obtain knowledge of the population they are serving. A review of the literature on the characteristics of modern foster children has the subtitle of Modern Foster Child Characteristics. This section provides more specific information about the demands put on the professional foster mother by reviewing current foster child behaviors. The last section of the foster care cluster reports the grief and loss the professional foster mother experiences and this section is subtitled Professional Foster Mother’s Grief and Loss. A comprehensive review of foster mothering relates to my research problem in that it provides an overview of what is currently known about foster mothers and the context they work in.

The third and final section of the Literature Review is entitled, Imaginal Structures and the Mother. A complete definition of imaginal structures is presented in this section as well as how the symbolic addressed within the previous section applies. A
subsection, Mother Archetypes, provides a discussion of the nature of archetypal structures and specifically the archetype of the Mother. There is a focus on the Great Mother generally and on Sophia in particular. This section in its entirety explores the primordial image of the Mother. This is not a concrete image in space and time but an inward image existing in the human psyche. The Great Mother is an eternal image that resides in the human psyche and can appear at any time.\textsuperscript{14} As Eric Neumann states, “The archetypes of the collective unconscious are manifested, as ‘mythological motifs’ that appear among all peoples at all times in an identical analogous manner and can arise just as spontaneously from the unconscious of modern man.”\textsuperscript{15} The final subsection is Shadow Feminine, which discusses the feminine archetypal shadow and the dark side of the maternal archetype.

**Attachment Theory and the Mother**

The terms and concepts of attachment theory have been confused with the term bonding.\textsuperscript{16} Bonding was introduced to describe the emotional bonds that are formed between individuals, and the processes by which this occurs.\textsuperscript{17} In contrast, attachment theory has focused on the behaviors that promote the child’s development of confidence in the protection of their caregivers.\textsuperscript{18}

Robert Karen writes, that the concept of attachment includes components that are social, emotional, behavioral and cognitive.\textsuperscript{19} As the child develops the relationships between these components change, as well as the nature of these components.\textsuperscript{20} However, attachment remains a relationship in which a weaker, less skilled person relies on a more powerful person for protection.\textsuperscript{21} The child’s relationship to the caregiver will stimulate
the child to develop a specific attachment pattern (Appendix 24). Secure attachment helps the child develop normally while insecure attachment will impede the child’s age appropriate development. Susan Goldberg wrote about various types of insecure attachment patterns. Bowlby termed these attachment patterns working models or internal representations of the attachment relationship. This relationship changes with development, but also remains stable in some cases. Although, meaning the same as Bowlby’s original terms, he later used the term internal working model. The term internal working model is the term used in this text. The internal working model of the caretaker influences the development to the child’s internal attachment representations. Bowlby and others note that when attachment is insecure the child needs help to prevent perpetuation of this pattern. Richard Delaney points to the professional foster mother as the attachment figure that is most readily available to help support this secure attachment process. There has been limited research on the attachment process of foster mothers.

History of Attachment Theory

William Goldfarb conducted early studies of attachment focused on children in orphanages. His studies considered the psychological effects on the development of children raised without the benefit of a primary or consistent caregiver. Children raised in orphanages were developmentally delayed with abnormal social and emotional behaviors. Goldfarb found these children could not form close relationships and were inappropriately friendly to strangers. When these children were adopted or moved to foster homes their cognitive and affective defects persisted. Ainsworth attributed these effects as being due to mother deprivation. In addition Rene Spitz made a black and white film called, “Grief: A Peril in Infancy.” In this film, Rene Spitz compared infants
separated from their mothers to healthy and attached infants. Separated infants were dejected and failed to make eye contact or respond.\textsuperscript{33} They failed to explore their environment and demonstrated signs of despair.\textsuperscript{34}

Additionally, the research of Marie Skidak and Harold Skeels finally established the need for consistent caregivers. They discovered that orphaned children housed with mentally retarded older girls were more likely to develop normally than those who were housed with just orphans. The children were ‘adopted’ by a particular girl and given individual attention. Results indicated that these attached children were more likely to become contributing members of society.\textsuperscript{35}

Konrad Lorenz did naturalistic observations on how hatched ducklings attached to their mother. Lorenz introduced the term ‘imprinting’. Imprinting describes a critical period shortly after birth that the newly hatched duckling attaches itself to the first moving object it sees. It is usually the mother, but the duckling will also attach to others in the absence of the mother.\textsuperscript{36} In contrast, Leonard Hersher, A. Ulric Moore and Julius B. Richmond observed that among sheep and goats the young could not be returned to the mother if they were removed shortly after birth. The mother would not accept them back if they were gone for a prolonged period. This indicates that early attachment may affect the quality of care giving at a later stage.\textsuperscript{37} Imprinting may be two directional. The mother and child may both need to imprint for effective mothering to occur.\textsuperscript{38} Later, the study of primates brought the issue of attachment more distinctly into focus.\textsuperscript{39}

Harry Fredrick Harlow and M.K. Harlow did a pivotal study with monkeys. They reported a series of experiments in which infant monkeys were separated from their mothers after birth. In their cages, these infants were entirely alone except for access to
two types of “surrogate mothers.” One mother was a block of wood covered with sponge rubber and terry cloth. There was a circular face, large eyes and a light bulb behind to generate heat. The other mother was made of wire, had a face and also gave off heat. Both types of mothers were fitted with a feeding nipple. But regardless of the mother that was feeding them, the infants clung to the terry cloth mother. The infants, when attracted to items away from the cloth mother would return and cling to her if fearful. They would even rub their bodies against her and would use her as a base of exploration. Harlow’s work with monkeys brought into question the belief that the affectional ties between mother and child were based on nursing. The cuddly terry cloth mother offered security whether feeding from the nipple or not.

As a result of continuous research findings, Attachment Theory was developed. Bowlby is considered the father of Attachment Theory. Bowlby drew from many sources to form his concepts. He observed maladjusted children: children separated from their parents and non-human primate mothers, and studied the concepts of ethnology, psychoanalysis and control systems. After reading ethnological studies, Bowlby found a biological basis for his beliefs. These beliefs are that a child needs a stable attachment to a primary caregiver in order to develop. In Bowlby’s early work “Forty-four Juvenile Thieves: Their Characters and Home-Life,” he repeated that early caregiver separation impacts the child’s development, character formation and ability to attach in the future. These early findings provided the basis for Bowlby’s further development of Attachment Theory. He had established that the child’s positive and continuous relationship to a primary caregiver provided the foundation for the child’s future development.
As Attachment Theory was developed, Bowlby stressed several main issues. He observed and noted that attachment behaviors differed from other aspects of human interaction. For example, the signaling behaviors of a young child become more intense when the child was under stress and at the same time exploring behaviors were inhibited. Bowlby considered attachment to be a developmental process that continued throughout one's life cycle. When an individual's dependency needs are met they form healthy attachments. Healthy attachments promote independence. These attachments support maturity and adult behaviors. Bowlby wrote:

Dependency always carries with it an adverse valuation and tends to be regarded as a characteristic only of the early years and one, which ought to soon be grown out of. As a result in clinical circles it has often happened that, whenever attachment behavior is manifested during later years, it has only been regarded as regrettable but has even been dubbed regressive. I believe that to be an appalling misjudgment.

Placing the development of attachments within a biological framework was the third area defined by Bowlby. Bowlby states:

I regard it as useful to look upon parenting behavior as one example of a limited class of biologically rooted types of behavior of which attachment behavior is another example, sexual behavior another, and exploratory behavior and eating behavior yet others. Each of these types of behavior contributes in its own way to the survival either of the individual or his offspring. It is indeed because each one serves so vital a function that each of these types of behavior is in some degree preprogrammed. To leave their development solely to the caprices of individual learning would be the height of biological folly.

Additionally, Bowlby postulated that children developed internal working models as representations of relationship patterns that were somewhat stable throughout one's life cycle. Bowlby also made the connection between early insecure attachment patterns and the development of psychopathology in adults. It was Bowlby’s trilogy on attachment that provided the cornerstone for the construction of Attachment Theory.
However, it was Ainsworth who discovered explanations to account for the child’s inner world as it develops through interactions with the primary caregiver. Ainsworth observed the infant as being an active participant in the establishment of a relationship with the mother. The infant was biased toward social interactions that lead to developing a relationship with the primary caretaker. Rather than being a bundle of primary drives to be organized; the infant was seen as proactive in forming emotional ties with the caregiver. Even though the infant’s behavioral repertoire was limited these behaviors drew attention and enticed the caregiver; the infant was not a blank slate waiting for experience. Ainsworth and others recognized that children have different characteristics from birth and agree that the characteristics and temperaments of both participants affect the mother child interaction. Mother-child interactions assume predictable patterns over time. These patterns are termed attachment patterns (Appendix 22).

According to Goldberg and others, attachment patterns reflect internal working models that provide rules that guide responses when an individual is distressed. Some researchers have described attachment theory as being a theory of affect regulation. The adjustment of negative emotions is thought to develop from the infant’s experiences of regulating distress in relationship to the caregiver. The infant learns a pattern for organizing emotional experience from interaction with the caregiver. These patterns become generalized as they are applied to emotional situations. Judith Feeney and Patricia Noller stated that as the infant matures these patterns may or may not fit the long-term situations. Ainsworth and her colleagues studied primary caregiver and attachment patterns with a systematic research design. They were able to differentiate the various
attachment styles of children separated from their primary caregiver. The design is commonly referred to, as the _Strange Situation Study_. The patterns noted by Ainsworth are avoidant, secure and anxious-resistant attachment. The children with the avoidant style showed little distress upon separation and avoided proximity to the caretaker upon reunion. Secure children were able to use the attachment figure as a secure base. They could explore the environment and were not upset by the presence of a stranger. When the primary caretaker returned these children could easily reattach to them. They sought proximity and were easily comforted by the caretaker. The anxious-resistant or ambivalent children demonstrated ambivalence in regards to proximity to their caregivers. They would push the caregiver away while trying to establish contact. These children were unable to explore in the presence of the caregiver, were alarmed by the stranger and could not be comforted by the caretaker upon reunion.

Furthermore, Ainsworth was able to discover specific associations between the children’s attachment styles and their caregiver’s styles of responding. The caregivers of securely attached children were very responsive to their children’s needs. They responded to feeding signals, crying and returned infant smiles. Caregivers of ambivalent children were inconsistent in their responses, and caregivers of the avoidant group had a tendency to respond in cold and rejecting ways. The main influence on attachment patterns, Ainsworth contended, was maternal behaviors: sensitivity to infant signals being the main maternal influence on the nature of attachment patterns. In an analysis of infant crying and maternal responses, Silvia Bill and Ainsworth found no stability in the amount of infant crying in the first six months. The caregiver’s responsiveness, however, remained stable over the same period. In the second half of
the first year mothers who were more responsive had infants who cried less and unresponsive mothers had infants who cried more. Mothers of securely attached infants were the most responsive to their infant’s signals. They responded to their child’s crying, smiling, babbling and clinging with sensitivity. In the first year, the caretakers of securely attached infants, demonstrated co-operation with their child’s developmental needs. Goldberg and Bowlby described these mothers as being flexible and emotionally expressive in dealing with their babies. Securely attached adults find it relatively easy to get close to others. They depend on others as well as allowing others to depend on them. Alan Sroufe found that stability of the attachment pattern between mother and child cannot be attributed to the child’s inborn temperament and is the result of the infant-caregiver relationship.

In contrast, Goldberg reported mothers of avoidant infants as rejecting. These mothers were slow to respond to their infant’s signals. When these mothers interacted with their infants their behaviors were described as rigid and they appeared to be uncomfortable with close body contact. They often interfered with their infant’s activities. Feeney and Noller stated that avoidant adults find it hard to depend on others and become nervous when others get close.

Goldberg stated that inconsistent maternal responses were observed in anxious-ambivalent infants. Mothers of anxious-ambivalent infants were relatively insensitive to their infant’s signals. However, they were not as rejecting as the avoidant mothers. There was little spontaneous affection towards the infant and they were not comfortable with physical interaction with their child. Fenney, Noller and others wrote that adults with an anxious-ambivalent attachment pattern find that they want to be closer
than others want to be.\textsuperscript{108} They often feel others are going to leave them.\textsuperscript{109} Julie C. Rothbard and Phillip R. Shaver and others contend that in the United States, the proportions of the three attachment styles appear consistently in the general population: secure 56 percent, avoidant 23 percent to 25 percent, anxious-ambivalent 19 percent to 20 percent.\textsuperscript{110} He reports that perhaps the amount of children insecurely attached is increasing into the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{111}

Daniel Siegel and Marion F. Solomon found that attachment stories stimulated by the Thematic Projective Test have demonstrated theoretically predictable associations between the story content and attachment styles.\textsuperscript{112} Rholes and Simpson write that the individual’s attachment style can predict the way people are portrayed in the stories they wrote in response to a picture.\textsuperscript{113} They state that their studies demonstrate that adults with different attachment styles are predisposed to write about and explain relationship events in story that is consistent with their individual expectations concerning relationships.\textsuperscript{114} For example, persons with an avoidant attachment style have a lower emotional investment in relationships, and view relationships as less positive.\textsuperscript{115} In their stories, individuals with an avoidant style contained more negative representations of close relationships, portraying them as threatening and harmful.\textsuperscript{116} Their characters demonstrated an affect tone of relatively low interpersonal investment.\textsuperscript{117} The parents were portrayed as less benevolent and more punitive.\textsuperscript{118} Their stories were hostile with strong characters being hurtful, rejecting, distant, and disapproving.\textsuperscript{119} Rholes and Simpson continue to report that individuals with the ambivalent (anxious) attachment style wish for security, stability, love, and respect from a significant other without being hurt in the process.\textsuperscript{120} Stories written by individuals with an ambivalent attachment style
have conflictual themes centered on doubt about self worth, excessive seeking of
closeness and reassurance, dependence, and the inability to deal with interpersonal
conflicts or use coping responses. They further state that ambivalent individuals share
stories that lack a sense of enjoyment and the characters lack the ability to handle
separation. In contrast, they found stories written by securely attached individuals have
less anxiety, depression and hostility than stories written by the insecurely attached
individuals. Their stories emphasize the importance of openness and closeness in
relationships.

As a result of research by Judith Solomon and Carol George on attachment
patterns another attachment pattern emerged. It is described as the *disorganized
pattern*. The disorganized infant is unable to maintain a consistent attachment
pattern. These infants either have no attachment strategy or the strategy they have
developed does not respond consistently. A disorganized infant may cry for their
caregiver while avoiding them. However, when they are in contact with the caregiver
they are still in distress. As these infants approach their caregiver they may stop, move
around from one foot to the other while looking at the toys. Solomon and George
discuss six categories of behavior that are considered when describing a disorganized
pattern: (1) sequential or simultaneous displays of contradictory behavior such as strong
proximity-seeking followed by strong avoidance or avoiding the parent when distressed,
(2) misdirected and incomplete movements such as attempting to follow a stranger out of
the room, (3) strange postures and movements such as huddling prone on the floor when
the infant is not tired, (4) displays of fear or anxiety towards the parent such as
demonstrating a fearful expression when picked up by the caregiver,(5) slowed or no
movements and expressions, and (6) disorganized behaviors such as flinging hands about or in front of the face when the caretaker returns. They stress that all attachment patterns are expressions of the child’s internal working models.

To conclude, Goldfarb conducted early studies of attachment focused on children in orphanages. These studies considered the psychological effects on the development of children raised without the benefit of a primary or consistent caregiver. Harlow and his colleagues did a pivotal study with monkeys. They reported a series of experiments in which infant monkeys were separated from their mothers after birth. They found that infant monkeys responded to a soft and warm mother object using this object as a secure base. Bowlby noted that the signaling behaviors of a young child become more intense when the child was under stress and at the same time exploring behaviors were inhibited. He considered attachment to be a developmental process that continued throughout ones life cycle.

Additionally, Bowlby postulated that children developed internal working models as representations of relationship patterns that were somewhat stable throughout ones life cycle. Bowlby also made the connection between early insecure attachment patterns and the development of psychopathology in adults. Ainsworth and her colleagues studied primary caregiver and attachment patterns with a systematic research design. They were able to differentiate the various attachment styles of children separated from their primary caregiver. Mary Main and Nancy Kaplan conclude that for attachment patterns to change there must be a shift in the child’s internal working models and this can only happen through the images held by a greater source or the caregiver.
There is limited research on how attachment patterns might change and what are the images held by the caregiver. In studying the attachment processes of foster mothers and their imaginal structures new information will be added to the literature.

**Internal Working Models**

Nancy Collins and Stephen Read describe internal working models as generalized beliefs and expectations that are developed while the infant is attempting to gain security. They contend that working models influence cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to others. These working models reflect the social reality of an individual, which can be either positive or negative in nature. Internal working models affect cognitive response patterns in several ways. It is in the vast stimuli of attachment experiences that working models support what is ignored and what is responded to. They suggest that individuals select to pay attention to information that is consistent with their working models. Bowlby states that cognitive responses also direct what the individual remembers about attachment relationships. They may recall interactions that did not occur, as well as exaggerating the occurrences of negative events. Painful experiences are remembered in more detail than pleasant events. Past responses are also instrumental in the way internal models interpret current attachment relationships. As the child matures, these internal models are influenced by experience and can change as new experiences accumulate. However, the existing structure of the model determines the manner in which new information is integrated. Bowlby concluded that, the development of early attachment patterns is maintained, even as they undergo change.
Alice Miller contends that when adult children cannot remember and express feelings about the abuses they have suffered at the hands of their parents they are destined to a life of delusion, compulsion, pretense, and self-deception.\textsuperscript{154} Robert W. Firestone observed that the emotionally deprived child attempts to alleviate pain by fantasizing that their parent is good.\textsuperscript{155} As adults, these children continue to idealize their parents, take responsibility for attachment failures, and avoid.

Daniel A. Hughes notes that insecurely attached children have internal representations that promote habitual shame, which they frequently defend against.\textsuperscript{156} Donald Nathanson defines shame as an affect that throws the individual into a painful experience of tension by attempting to reduce the possibilities for positive affects in situations that are stimulating them.\textsuperscript{157} The affect state of shame is a parasympathetic-dominant state characterized by depleted energy, which is manifested by the individual’s withdrawal from significant others.\textsuperscript{158} Most individuals will want to convert the experience of painful shame into something more pleasant.\textsuperscript{159} Nathanson arranges these defensive scripts into four affect management systems, which function to reduce the effects of shame.\textsuperscript{160} Withdrawal and avoidance are movements away from the uncomfortable situation. Mild withdrawal and mild avoidance are normal reactions, but insecure attachment patterns encompass extreme remoteness or self-aggrandizement.\textsuperscript{161} Another defensive management system involves attacking the self with a number of techniques in order to avoid shame.\textsuperscript{162} This unhealthy technique recreates the earliest relationship with the parent and change involves giving up identification with a shaming parent.\textsuperscript{163} Another unhealthy compliment of the attack-self technique is the attack-other
technique, which halts any tendency to look within the self thus fostering a system of externalization.\textsuperscript{164}

Nathanson concludes that caretakers who are not conscious of their own affects do not have the ability to mentally contain their child emotionally, thus promoting an insecure attachment pattern.\textsuperscript{165} Only caretakers who can experience affects freely can have the freedom to be present emotionally in order to help the child mediate affects.\textsuperscript{166}

Feeney and Noller reported that internal working models activate behavior automatically and are accessed easily.\textsuperscript{167} If a model is used often it may become outside of conscious awareness and in time habitual.\textsuperscript{168} Bowlby contends that some aspects of internal working models, such as unconscious patterns, are resistant to change.\textsuperscript{169} These working models contain each individual’s pattern of their concept of self and other, which influences the individual's relationship expectations.\textsuperscript{170} Inge Bretherton reasoned that internal working models may be resistant to change and that they are likely to be self-fulfilling.\textsuperscript{171} When individuals expect to be rejected they act in ways that reinforce their working model. Relationships offer the opportunity for internal working models to change and modify as new experiences replace previous realities. Ellen Bercheid, Mark Snyder and Allen Omoto found that with a consistent and responsive caregiver the child’s internal working model becomes strengthened through repeated experiences.\textsuperscript{172} Children who have sensitive caregivers on a consistent basis develop models of themselves as worthy of care and they trust their caretakers will care for them as reported by Bretherton.\textsuperscript{173}

Main, Kaplan and others suggest that by three years of age the child has developed more stable internal working models.\textsuperscript{174} These models are more available at
the symbolic level. These researchers have studied the organization of internal models by observing children’s symbolic play. Ann Shouldice and John Stevenson Hinde developed and used story scripts regarding attachment related situations, doll-play enactments of attachment and related story exerts. Teresa Jacobsen, Wolfgang Edelstein and Volker Hofmann have used picture projections in an attempt to capture children’s internal working models. R.B. Bloom and others found that children who were classified with disorganized patterns had symbolic representations that differed from other attachment groups. The themes of their stories were often disturbing in that they depicted a world that was frightening and chaotic. The representations revealed parents or adults that were absent, helpless or abandoning. Family members could not deal with or prevent life threatening dangers. For example the house blew up, the family was pulled apart, the child died, parents abandoned the child or the wicked witch took over the home.

In relation to the symbolic, Main suggests that different attachment styles reflect mental representation processes. Individual processes differ not only in content but also in the ability to reflect on that content. Individuals with secure base attachment patterns are able to think about thought. This means that mental representations not only determine attachment patterns but also the ability to examine the validity of such patterns. The mental representations of insecure attached individuals are harder to examine and reflect upon. Rothbard and Shaver propose that insecurity of attachment may create mental representations that distort thought, limit access to feelings and memories with limited ability to examine the source.
The mothers’ internal narrative directs her attachments style and influences her child’s attachment pattern. Bowlby states that attachment images of oneself and of others enables one to trace one’s origins and understand what has led them to their current attachment patterns.\(^{189}\) Rholes and Simpson conclude that there are numerous studies that predict that attachment styles are associated with the content and structure of the individual’s personal representations and narratives of attachment figures.\(^ {190}\) This puts the individual in a position to reflect and see how old images are the product of past experiences, providing the opportunity to check them against current reality.\(^ {191}\)

Solomon and George propose that differences in attachment organizations are linked to quality of metacognitive capacity and the ability to recollect and relate coherent narratives.\(^ {192}\) The capacity to maintain a coherent and cohesive autobiographical narrative and reflect on the mental states of oneself and others are capacities that promote secure attachments.\(^ {193}\)

Eric Hesse surmised that verbal sharing of childhood experiences requires the speaker to perform dual tasks.\(^ {194}\) The speaker must maintain communication while searching for memory. In this process the speaker must accomplish several tasks in order to maintain coherence in their narrative.\(^ {195}\) Hesse adds that examination of an adult narrative represents a state of mind towards attachment not an attachment to the individual adult parent.\(^ {196}\)

Daniel Siegel found that autobiographical narratives of individuals with secure attachment patterns demonstrate an internal connection to the past, present and future.\(^ {197}\) The external expression of ones life events through narratives allows different forms of interpersonal resonance to occur.\(^ {198}\) Right-hemisphere-to right hemisphere resonance
with the speaker and listener involves the nonverbal aspects of communication. Also left-to-left and bilateral communication often does not occur. Siegel writes that external expression of narrative thought is a form of communication that is influenced by the listeners.

Parents are not always able to give children the security to develop secure attachments. As stated by Siegel and Mary Hartzell parents are unable to provide the attunement, balance and coherence necessary for the child to develop secure attachments. The parent’s secure or insecure attachment patterns are carried foreword and directly influence the attachment patterns of their children. Siegel and Hartzell elaborate on the parental behaviors that promote attachment patterns. Parents that promote secure attachment patterns are emotionally available, perceptive, and responsive to their children. Children of parents with secure attachments are provided repeated experiences of feeling understood and connected and especially so in times of emotional distress. Parents with an avoidant attachment pattern are emotionally unavailable and unresponsive and perhaps rejecting towards their children. These children learn to deny the importance of relationships and become emotionally barren. Parents with anxious-ambivalent attachment patterns are available to the child intermittently and are intrusive into the child’s world. The child develops a sense of anxiety and distrust in the attuned support of the parent and latter their trust in the larger world. The parent with the disorganized pattern is frightening, and often leaves the child in a disoriented state. These children are not able to integrate the function of their mind and are vulnerable to stress as they cannot regulate their emotions.
Similarly, Donald Kalsched has described attachment disorders as taking two main forms. First, children who have been abused or neglected by the caretaker, show aggression, lack of emotional responsiveness, fearfulness, and hyper vigilant and ambivalent social responses.\textsuperscript{212} Secondly, adds Leslie Atkinson and Kenneth J. Juker there is a pattern for children who have had there physical needs met, however, have not been responded to emotionally.\textsuperscript{213} Their research shows these children to be clinging, indiscriminately friendly, attention seeking, and have problems forming relationships.\textsuperscript{214} The prevailing view is that these disorders arise out of the child’s “internal working model” of relationships developed by their interactions with their caretakers.\textsuperscript{215}

Rothbard and Shaver demonstrate that Mothers have representational models of themselves in relation to their infants. These models exist before the child is conceived or born.\textsuperscript{216} The parents’ internal working model developed in childhood predicts the attachment patterns they will develop with their children.\textsuperscript{217} The attention of the secure caregiver is attracted when an infant cries.\textsuperscript{218} However, for other caregivers the crying could evoke ambivalent feelings.\textsuperscript{219} Rothbard and Shaver state that if the caregiver has experienced negative or painful responses from their own caregivers, the caregiver may want to ignore reminders of their past by not responding to the infant.\textsuperscript{220} Bowlby observed that the caregiver appears to turn off their infant in order to manage their own emotional distress.\textsuperscript{221} His interviews of abusive mothers show that there is a tendency for these mothers to expect their children to care for them.\textsuperscript{222} When interviewed these mothers described that they felt like they should have cared for their own parents.\textsuperscript{223} Main and Kaplan conclude that parents who expect their children to care for them have
not had adequate parenting themselves.\textsuperscript{224} This may account for the anger involved in abusive patterns.\textsuperscript{225}

In many instances, when children are abused or neglected by their mother they are often removed from home and put into foster care.\textsuperscript{226} Environmental factors can change a child’s insecure attachment pattern and it appears that the internal working models of the foster mother are a significant factor in supporting change.\textsuperscript{227} Bowlby maintained that insecurely attached children can develop trust in their counselor or caretaker. He wrote:

> The course of subsequent development is not fixed; changes in the way a child is treated can shift his pathway in either a more favorable direction or a less favorable one. Although the capacity for developmental change diminishes with age, change continues throughout the life cycle so that changes for better or for worse are always possible. It is this continuing potential for change that means that at no time of life is a person invulnerable to every possible adversity and also that at no time of life is a person impermeable to favorable influence. It is this persisting potential for change that gives opportunity for effective therapy.\textsuperscript{228}

The goal of foster mothers as professional treatment providers for children is to promote attachment style change.\textsuperscript{229} Children placed in foster care have typically experienced problematic care giving and disruptions in their relationships with caregivers.\textsuperscript{230} Bowlby concludes that the therapeutic task involves providing experiences that cause the children to explore working models of attachment.\textsuperscript{231} The task of the foster mother is to provide experiences that encourage children to behaviorally explore alternative working models of the caregiver’s availability.\textsuperscript{232} Mary Dozier and Christine Tyrrell report that when first placed in foster care children develop coping strategies that serve to alienate caregivers.\textsuperscript{233} Foster mothers need to see the children’s attachment needs even though the behavioral evidence may suggest otherwise.\textsuperscript{234} The internal working models held by these foster mothers are the basis of their effective work with unattached children.\textsuperscript{235}
Solmon and George maintain that secure attachment to the caregiver promotes the child’s normal development. However, when the child’s attachment pattern is one of the three insecure patterns, (avoidant, ambivalent, disorganized) development is retarded. The child’s development is affected negatively on a social, emotional, behavioral and cognitive level. Change in attachment patterns occurs when the child’s internal working models change. Siegel adds that internal working models are often held unconsciously and are resistant to change. The task of an effective foster mother is to aid the child in developing a secure pattern of attachment. Siegel’s research indicates that the caregiver’s internal working models mediate if not direct the development of secure attachment. Jude Cassidy and Phillip Shaver conclude that an internal working model of the effective foster mother forms the basis of their ability to promote secure attachment in insecurely attached children.

To summarize, Bowlby states that a child needs a primary caregiver in order to develop. The child must also be securely attached to fully develop. Kobak and Scerey found that internal working models of attachment developed in childhood interpret adult relationships and influence relationship expectations. Rothbard and Shaver discovered that mothers have representational models of themselves in relation to their children. The child responds to the mother’s representational models and develops a similar model of insecure or secure attachment. Richard Delaney points to the professional foster mother as the attachment figure that is most readily available to help support a secure attachment process.

Much is known about the attachment process between mother and child.
However, there is no research on the attachment process between foster mothers and the children in their care. The foster mother deals with a child with a preexisting attachment pattern. Often the foster mother must attempt to attach to a child with an insecure attachment pattern.

**Neurobiology of Attachment**

Siegel’s findings from cognitive neuroscience have recently revealed the processes of the brain. From the longitudinal studies in the field of Attachment Theory researchers have gained knowledge of the brains processes in memory, emotion, and the regulation of behavior. Ainsworth and her colleagues studied primary caregiver and attachment patterns with a systematic research design. They were able to differentiate the various attachment styles of children separated from their primary caregiver. Siegel defines “interpersonal neurobiology” as the interaction of the brain and interpersonal experiences.

Bowlby maintained that the infant is genetically programmed to connect with the mother (caregiver) who becomes the “attachment figures” in their life. Allen Schore states that though this attachment system is “hard wired,” an individual’s experiences organize this system. Experiences activate neurons in the brain that respond to incoming information from the environment. But neurons can also respond to internally generated images created by the individual’s own brain recalling past events.

Siegel describes the brain as being made up of cells called neurons. These cells are long with a central nucleus communicating with other neurons. Communication between neurons occurs by electrical activity that passes down the neuron releasing neurotransmitters (chemicals) into the space between neurons (synapse). Within the
brain this forms a pattern of neural connections that are complex. This complex brain system forms patterns of interconnected neurons that are called a “neural map.” Siegel further states that this “neural map” of specific brain activity forms specific pathways in the brain creating mental images. Thus the mind is understood as patterns of energy and information. The ways in which this energy flows within the individual or between individuals creates the experience of the mind. The brain itself is part of the central nervous system, which connects to the entire body.

Siegel depicts the brain as plastic and is shaped throughout one's life time by information from the environment. This could explain how attachment patterns changes when the child’s environment changes.

However, adds Siegel, before birth there is an overproduction of neurons and from one to three the child has an over supply of synapses. This forms the materials in which the neurobiological foundation is formed. Experiences of the infant carve out the neural connections governing perceptions and motor activity. The brain will prune (selective elimination) excess neurons that are not being used. Schore points out that stress and neglect can cause the loss of existing synapses.

Also, there is a process in which new neural connections are formed in response to experience. Siegel writes, “Experience, therefore, can alter brain structure by leading to either maintenance and strengthening existing synapses, or by the experience driven creation of new synaptic connections.” Schore maintains that a normal amount of sensory stimulation will allow the brain to develop and over stimulation does not effect development. Siegel suggests that collaborative interpersonal interaction with the caretaker is what allows the brain to develop in a functional manner. He suggests that
patterns of interpersonal communication may have a powerful effect on how the neural circuits grow and develop during the early years of development.\textsuperscript{276} Score describes maturation of the infant brain as follows:

Attachment interactions impact the experience-dependent maturation of prefrontal cortical circuits of the early developing right hemisphere, the locus of the highest levels of affect regulation of the brain.\textsuperscript{277}

Schore states that during the first year the infant develops circuits that are responsible for emotional and social functioning.\textsuperscript{278} Interpersonal communication influences the development of the orbit frontal region of the brain responsible for a number of processes, which include emotion regulation, empathy, and autobiographical memory.\textsuperscript{279} Siegel emphasized that interaction with attachment figures during the early years is essential to create the communication necessary for proper emotional and social development.\textsuperscript{280} The collaborative and attuned interactions between the attachment figure and the child establishes patterns of interaction by which the attachment figure can regulate the child’s positive and negative emotions (Appendix 2\textsuperscript{2}).\textsuperscript{281} The mother provides the first external regulating mechanism for a number of the infant’s physiological mechanisms that do not self regulate.\textsuperscript{282}

Siegel describes past experiences as encoded in the brain forming memories that shape past and future functioning.\textsuperscript{283} There are two types of memory \textit{Implicit} and \textit{Explicit}.\textsuperscript{284} Implicit memory includes emotional, behavioral, perceptual and perhaps bodily forms of memory.\textsuperscript{285} In the implicit memories are also generalizations of repeated experiences, called \textit{mental models}.\textsuperscript{286} Schore, adds that when implicit memories are activated there is no sensation that some thing is being remembered.\textsuperscript{287} C. Chiron et al. found that when implicit memories are activated they influence behaviors directly in the
Implicit memory develops in the infant during the first years of life.\textsuperscript{289} Between one and three years of age, the blood flow shows a right hemispheric predominance.\textsuperscript{290} Asymmetry moves to the left hemisphere after three years old.\textsuperscript{291} However, throughout one’s life the right hemisphere is dominant in the expression of intense emotions.\textsuperscript{292} Siegel proposed that impaired self-awareness seems to be mostly associated with dysfunction of the right hemisphere.\textsuperscript{293}

Daniel Siegel adds that the right hemisphere has been linked to implicit processing as the left hemisphere has been linked to the more explicit conscious processing.\textsuperscript{294} Schore states that explicit memory includes two forms: factual and auto-biological.\textsuperscript{295} Both types of these forms have recollection associated with internal sensations.\textsuperscript{296} This memory provides the sensation of “I am recalling something now.”\textsuperscript{297}

Siegel writes that infants cannot remember directly experiences and events.\textsuperscript{298} The maturation of the hippocampus in the medial temporal lobe does not occur until the third year of life.\textsuperscript{299} It is this maturation that is responsible for the development of explicit memory.\textsuperscript{300} Daniel Stern states that as adults we cannot recall explicitly what our early experiences may have been, implicit memories directly shape our emotions and perceptions.\textsuperscript{301} Attachment research, combined with other research suggests that specific types of communication that relates to an emotional connected relationship are the most important experiences to promote the development of the child’s mind.\textsuperscript{302}

Stern formulated that the brain develops in stages during the first years of life.\textsuperscript{303} Siegel outlines that from birth to two months the infant takes in sensory data through the body starting to organize the world from direct experience.\textsuperscript{304} Stern found that from two/three months to seven/nine months the infant starts to develop a core self, one in
which the infant’s body sensations, emotions and sense of self across time in the form of memory, become central features. The core self is the neural mapping of the infants changing in response to interaction with the caretaker in the external and internal world. By nine months to eighteen months there is a sense of self and self with other that involves shared attention, intention, and emotion between the child and caregiver. Siegel maintains that by the second year the child has started to use words, which communicate between the self and other. The sense of self-awareness may be influenced by early experiences in early infancy before explicit autobiographic memory is on-line.

According to Siegel, stating a neurological view, secure attachment of the infant is created by the caretaker’s interpersonal communication. The transaction within the collaborative relationship allows the core self to have a sense of coherence. It is within this neural development due to interpersonal connections to the caregiver that the infant’s core self is created. The ways in which caregivers foster attachment and neural development include: collaboration, reflective dialogue, repair, coherent narratives, and emotional communication. Schore adds that collaboration involves the signals sent between the infant and caretaker that are responsive in quality and timing with each other. Reflective dialogue involves the verbal sharing of focus on the internal experience of the mother and child. This experience allows for the communication of subjective experience. Repair occurs when the child’s and the caretaker’s attuned communication is ruptured. There must be repair in order to help the child make sense of disconnection and possible pain. Siegel describes coherent narratives as connecting the child’s story into a central process including the past, present and future. Finally,
emotional communication is the sharing or the joys of life. When heightened moments are shared they create a positive attitude that can reduce negative states and soothe the child. Examination of an adult narrative represents a state of mind towards attachment, not an attachment to the individual adult parent. Siegel proposes that autobiographical narratives of individuals with secure attachment patterns demonstrate an internal connection to the past, present and future. Siegel further states that the external expression of one’s life events through narratives allows different forms of interpersonal resonance to occur. Right hemisphere-to-right hemisphere resonance with the speaker and listener involves the nonverbal aspects of communication. Also left-to-left and bilateral to bilateral communication occurs, creating a highly complex form of collaborative communication. In individuals with insecure attachments this complex form of communication often does not occur. Siegel writes that external expression of narrative thought is a form of communication that is influenced by the listeners.

Siegel continues to describe the mind of a child as developing a pattern in which the mental states of the mother become represented within the neural maps of the brain. In childhood emotional interactions with attachment figures are of primary importance in shaping the here and now (core) and autobiographic senses of self. The child develops the neural map to create representations of the mind of oneself or of the caretaker. This process has been termed “mentalizing,” reflective function or social cognition.

During the first two years the brain is growing at its most rapid rate according to Lorraine Granit. In the first year of life the right hemisphere is functioning but not the neo-cortex or the left hemisphere. The primary caregiver’s attunement, thought, touch,
vocalation, eye contact, and facial expression develops the neural connections between the limbic system and the orbital-frontal cortex, mostly in the right hemisphere.\textsuperscript{334} This interaction is between the right brain of the caregiver and the right brain of the child.\textsuperscript{335} Granit states that in essence the right brain of the caregiver becomes the pattern for right brain of the infant dealing with non-verbal communication, social and visual information.\textsuperscript{336}

Granit describes the right orbital-frontal cortex as sitting at the apex of the limbic system and is considered the primary affective regulatory center of the brain.\textsuperscript{337} This structure also connects with every other part of the brain.\textsuperscript{338} The early attachment experiences between the infant and caregiver become symbolically represented in the right orbital-frontal cortex.\textsuperscript{339} These symbolic representations are available to the left hemisphere when the infant becomes eighteen months old.\textsuperscript{340} The connection of the brain hemispheres is through the corpus callosum, which allows for verbal thinking and development of a sense of oneself.\textsuperscript{341} Victor Carrion and others found that often abuse impairs the development of the corpus callosum leading to impaired development of the entire brain.\textsuperscript{342} Also the neural maps of representations of one's own mind and that of another requires integration of the right and left hemispheres.\textsuperscript{343}

Siegel describes that when the caregiver emotionally overwhelms the child there is a flood of adrenaline, cortisol and other stress hormones putting the child into a state of hyper-arousal.\textsuperscript{344} When the infant is left in such a state too long, the parasympathetic nervous system shuts down the system creating a state of numbness.\textsuperscript{345} This is a mechanism of dissociation forming a dead spot in the child’s memory.\textsuperscript{346} This dissociation is credited to the lack of coherence in the narrative stories of adults.\textsuperscript{347} The
weakening of infant fear is effective within the context of an empathic, modulating caregiver, which engages the regulatory capacity of the right orbital-frontal cortex. Strengthening connections between the right orbital-frontal cortexes creates a capacity to keep fear responses in check, while the child expands the capacity to trust and rely on others. Siegel states that an internal working model is a form of neural map or schema. These mental models are a fundamental way in which implicit memory allows the mind to create generalizations of past experiences. These models are then used to influence present cognition for rapid analysis of perceptions and anticipate what might happen next.

To conclude, Siegel states that attachment research has been convergent with scientific findings regarding the social nature of the developing mind. The findings of interpersonal neurobiology yield a biological view as to the importance of attachment experiences in the development of the human infant. This process continues throughout an individual life span.

**Culture and Attachment**

Attachment Theory and imaginal structures have an aspect of cultural integration that effects individual attachments. Culture is used to refer to the entire body of society inherited; past human accomplishments that serve as resources for the current life of a social group or ordinarily thought of as the inhabitants of a country or region.

For example, culture defines the meaning given to attachment behaviors. Some approaches generally maintain that social science is unlike natural science, inasmuch as it involves the interpretation of contextually meaningful human behavior rather than universal laws. Robin Howard et al. states, “To study the individual in culture may
thus involve an examination of culturally constituted or shared psychological processes.”

As a result, there are two claims made by Attachment theorists: one is that the results of the Strange Situation study are universal and, in contrast these results are not universal and are subject to cultural influences. Although Attachment Theory, as postulated by Bowlby, contends that attachment behaviors are instinctual and promote survival of the infant. Robin L. Harwood, Joan G. Miller and Nydia Lucca Irizarry question the results to the Strange Situation research. For example, Marinus H. van Ijzendoorn reports that few researchers doubt the accuracy of the ‘Strange Situation’ research when applied to middle class, Caucasian, U.S. citizens, however the application to other cultures and ethnic groups is debated. As a result, two sharply opposing views have emerged concerning the universality of Attachment Theory. When Ainsworth conducted attachment research in Baltimore and rural Uganda, she made the claim that Attachment Theory is universal to all ethnic groups and cultures. These findings are supported by Bowlby’s view that for millions of years, the mother-child attachment system was an instinctual survival behavior that is universal to all members of the human species. Consequently, Jude Cassidy and others maintain that attachment behaviors are universal, and culture has only a minor influence. However, F. Rothbaum is a critic of the universality theory and contends that attachment research has been conducted primarily with middle class children in Western cultures and lacks validity when expanded to other cultures. Attachment theory maintains that the mother serves as a secure base while the infant explores their environment, the mother’s sensitivity to the infant’s communication and her responses promote social skills that are appropriate for
Parents from other cultures do not value or promote the same behaviors.\textsuperscript{369} For example, Harwood, et al. found that Japanese parents value dependence on others, self-restraint in emotional expression, and collective harmony.\textsuperscript{370} This is in contrast, according to R.A. Le Vine and P.M. Miller to the emphasis of Western parents on self-expression and individual achievement.\textsuperscript{371} Also, Hardwood et al. found that Anglo mothers emphasized their child’s self-maximization as an autonomous unit.\textsuperscript{372} These North American Anglo mothers wanted, “their children to grow up self-confident, independent, happy, and able to fulfill their inner talents and potential.”\textsuperscript{373}

In addition, Le Vine and Miller found that Porto Rican mothers in Porto Rico emphasized proper behaviors in interpersonal relationships.\textsuperscript{374} They valued behaviors that were calm, courteous, attentive to others and respectful. They valued capacity for warmth, affection, trust and intimacy.\textsuperscript{375}

Accordingly, K. E. Grossman et al. have found that the three attachment types found in the ‘Strange Situation’ research have different distributions in different countries. In Japan and Germany the distributions differ from those identified in children in the United States.\textsuperscript{376} These differences have been attributed to differences in cultural values.\textsuperscript{377} However, a large cross-cultural study correlating parental acceptance-rejection with personality traits in children demonstrated that these patterns are universal. In a meta-analysis of studies based on the ‘Strange Situation’ study, van Ijzendoorn and Pieter M. Kroonenberg noted the distribution of attachment patterns in eight countries.\textsuperscript{378} They found that there are considerable differences within countries and across countries in the distribution of attachment patterns.\textsuperscript{379} The avoidant attachment pattern was more frequent
in Western Europe. While in Japan and Israel there were more ambivalent attachment patterns. Critics of the universality of Attachment Theory point out that there is limited research to compare attachment patterns across racial or ethnic groups within the United States.\footnote{380} Although, Kenneth G. Rice, T. J. Cunningham, and M. B. Young found that, African, North American, and Caucasian North American college students reported no differences in attachment to their parents.\footnote{381}

On the other hand, researchers studied university student’s adult attachment across four ethnic groups: Asian, Americans, Hispanic Americans, Caucasian Americans and African Americans. Findings of Derald Wing Sue and David Sue’s study reported greater attachment anxiety experienced by Asian and Hispanic students than Caucasian students. Caucasian students were less anxious about acceptance from others and were more independent. Asian and Hispanic cultures valued interdependence and family orientation.\footnote{382} As the debate over the universality of Attachment theory continues there is agreement on the need for further research on culture and attachment.\footnote{383} Harwood, et al. suggests that the dominant US culture’s development of the self as an autonomous unit maximizes chances for success in a mobile competitive society.\footnote{384} However, Christopher Larch has described, this excessive individuation, as narcissism, and spiritual emptiness.\footnote{385} Larch writes of individuation:

The culture of competitive individualism, which in its decadence has carried the logic of individualism to the extreme of a war of all against all, the pursuit of happiness to the dead end of narcissistic preoccupation with the self.\footnote{386}

Also, individualism being a value in mainstream western society has often isolated families from the community and the extended family.\footnote{387} Robert N. Bellah et al.
use the term “Culture of Separation,” which describes a sense of fragmentation as characteristic of popular modern culture in the United States.  

Hillman believes that there is little support for maternal care from the extended family, community or country in Western culture. Neuman, contends that modern Western culture is in peril, partly from the patriarchal development of the male intellectual consciousness, which is no longer balanced by female matriarchal values. Monica Sjoo and Barbara Mor write that the Western patriarchal system provides that all life is created for mans use and that contempt is shown of that which cannot be used. Christianity supports this extreme patriarchal view by its emphasis on male God and his son. As a result, Christianity with its exclusive identification with the father has scorned the dependence of the mother and ultimately Mother Earth.  

In conclusion, culture is used to refer to the entire body of society inherited; past human accomplishments that serve as resources for the current life of a social group or ordinarily thought of as the inhabitants of a country or region. For example, culture defines the meaning given to attachment behaviors. Some approaches generally maintain that social science is unlike natural science, inasmuch as it involves the interpretation of contextually meaningful human behavior rather than universal laws.  

There are two claims made by Attachment theorists: one is that the results of the Strange Situation study are universal and, in contrast these results are not universal and are subject to cultural influences. Harwood, et al. suggests that the dominant US culture’s development of the self as an autonomous unit maximizes chances for success in a mobile competitive society. In reviewing the literature, I found that there are no
studies that relate culture, to the vocation of the professional foster mother or their imaginal structures.

To summarize the Attachment Cluster, Bowlby states that a child needs a primary caregiver in order to develop. The child must also be securely attached to fully develop. Kobak and Sceery found that internal working models of attachment developed in childhood interpret adult relationships and influence relationship expectations. Rothbard and Shaver discovered that mothers have representational models of themselves in relation to their children. The child responds to the mother’s representational models and develops a similar model of insecure or secure attachment. Delaney points to the professional foster mother as the attachment figure that is most readily available to help support a secure attachment process.

Representational models of caretakers and children were found to form attachment patterns. Ainsworth and her colleagues studied primary caregiver and attachment patterns with a systematic research design. They were able to differentiate the various attachment styles of children separated from their primary caregiver. The patterns noted by Ainsworth are avoidant, secure and anxious-resistant attachment.

Secure children were able to use the attachment figure as a secure base. They could explore the environment and were not upset by the presence of a stranger. When the primary caretaker returned these children could easily reattach to them. When toys were available these children felt free to explore them. They sought proximity and were easily comforted by the caretaker. The children with the avoidant style showed little distress upon separation and avoided proximity to the caretaker upon reunion. The anxious-resistant or ambivalent children demonstrated ambivalence in regards to
proximity to their caregivers. They would push the caregiver away while trying to establish contact. These children were unable to explore in the presence of the caregiver, were alarmed by the stranger and could not be comforted by the caretaker upon reunion.

Siegel found that external expression of ones life events through narratives allows different forms of communication providing insight into attachment patterns. Siegel concludes that narrative and story provide insight into the attachment patterns of individuals. Siegel and Solomon noted that attachment stories stimulated by a projective test have demonstrated theoretically predictable associations between the story content and attachment styles. Schore states that though this attachment system is “hard wired,” an individual’s experiences organize this system. Experiences activate neurons in the brain that respond to incoming information from the environment. But neurons can also respond to internally generated images created by the individual’s own brain recalling past events. Siegel terms “interpersonal neurobiology,” as the interaction of the brain and interpersonal experiences.

There are two claims made by Attachment theorists: one is that the results of the Strange Situation study are universal and, in contrast these results are not universal and are subject to cultural influences. Harwood, et al. suggests that the dominant US culture’s development of the self as an autonomous unit maximizes chances for success in a mobile competitive society.

The literature reviewed on attachment provides an understanding of the attachment process of children to their primary caretaker. There is little to no research on the attachment process of children to a foster mother. Gaining information of the
imaginal structures of foster mothers will add information as to the internal working models of foster mothers.

The use of narrative and story has been used to infer attachment patterns of individuals. The use of images created through individual creative art projects and the use of music has not been used to infer internal working models or attachment patterns of individuals.

Although attachment has been studied biologically, individually, and between parent and child there have been very few studies involving the group interactions of peers. Pat Allen emphasizes that most important part of the creative process is to bear witness to one’s own story, and the stories of others. He adds that self-created images are signposts that points one in a direction to discover aspects of the self that need nurturing. Siegel writes that external expression of narrative thought is a form of communication that is influenced by the listeners’. The use of group participants in attachment studies is an area that has not been explored. Also in reviewing the literature there are no studies that relate culture to the vocation of the professional foster mother.

Foster Care and the Mother

Meadowcroft and Thomlison define foster mothering as an older and stronger woman that is not the child’s biological mother who has nurturing and protective duties toward the child. As society changes so do the objectives and goals of the foster care system. The needs of the foster child population and the roles of the foster mothers reflect changes in society. Therefore, a historical overview looks to the role of the traditional or non-professional foster mother. Meadowcroft and Thomlison report that
modern trained professional foster mothers deal with children who have severe issues of attachment and separation more than natural parents or traditional foster mothers.\textsuperscript{429} The professional foster mother faces unique challenges with unprecedented demands on her maternal skills.\textsuperscript{430} She must mother children with insecure attachment patterns for a shorter period of time, with little or no support from her culture of community.\textsuperscript{431} Professional foster mothers are defined as trained caregivers that afford parental care for non-related (legal or blood ties) children.\textsuperscript{432} These foster children have special needs that require the fostering mother to have training and agency support.\textsuperscript{433} The professional foster mother is provided extra remuneration for her care giving skills.\textsuperscript{434} Professional foster mothers deal with children with mental health issues for shorter periods of time.\textsuperscript{435} The professional foster mother is challenged in dealing with feelings of grief and loss as well as the children’s extreme behaviors.\textsuperscript{436} Her foster children stay in her home for a shorter time period, have come from extremely neglecting and abusive environments that they may return to and the foster mother often has no time to grieve before the next foster child is placed.\textsuperscript{437}

\textbf{Historical Overview and Current Trends in Foster Care Services}

Bronwyn Fees et al. define foster care as including licensed single-parent households, multiple parent households or group homes. These households care for children who can no longer live with their birth parents. The objectives of foster care services include, preventing further child abuse or neglect, supporting the child’s biological family, and school attendance.\textsuperscript{438} Susan Edelstein, Dorli Burge and Jill Waterman report that in recent years, success in family foster care has focused on two goals of the child welfare system: permanency and safety.\textsuperscript{439} Foster homes may care for
children on a short-term or long-term basis. In some cases foster parents can adopt foster children placed in their home.\textsuperscript{440}

Larry Friesen surmised that recent changes in family foster care reflect the movement toward specialized and professional care, which parallels changes in other aspects of domestic life. Historically, family foster care modeled itself after the common mode of household organization in society.\textsuperscript{441} When apprenticeships were a common feature of domestic life in the eighteenth century, many dependent and neglected children were placed out to families who provided care in exchange for the children’s labor. This arrangement was an early form of foster care.\textsuperscript{442} Friesen continues that with the demise of apprenticeships after the Civil War, child protective agencies started offering monthly reimbursements to foster families looking after dependent and neglected children.\textsuperscript{443} These amounts were kept modest because farm families could continue to make use of the child’s labor. However, placing agencies stressed that family altruism should be the primary motive for becoming a foster parent.\textsuperscript{444}

Gaetana Diaberto Wolf adds that at the beginning of the twentieth century foster care was initially used to supervise the indigent and neglected children of the streets.\textsuperscript{445} During this period, child labor laws started to limit children’s working hours and promote school attendance. Friesen observed that child-placing agencies responded by emphasizing the volunteer aspects of foster parenting.\textsuperscript{446}

Florance Lieberman wrote that eventually, these services evolved into foster homes managed by local community and government agencies, and subsequently by local and federal agencies.\textsuperscript{447} Monthly boarding compensations were supplemented with
county and state funds. Family foster homes were investigated (later licensed) to ensure that funds went toward meeting the needs of public wards in private family care.\textsuperscript{448}

Friesen notes that initially the recruitment of public and private licensed foster homes were able to keep up with placement demand well into the 1970s.\textsuperscript{449} However, with the advent of women entering the labor market the number of voluntary family foster homes dwindled.\textsuperscript{450} The shortage of foster homes reached a crisis in the mid-80s as the number of children in out-of-home care rose from 280,000 in 1986 to 4000,000 in 1990.\textsuperscript{451} The 1980s also brought about a demand for professionalized helpers and the improvement of practices to meet the changing foster child population.\textsuperscript{452} The need for professional foster homes continued into the twenty-first century.\textsuperscript{453} In 2000, the U.S. population of children in out-of-home care was estimated at more than 5,000,000 with 70 percent of child welfare funds spent on children receiving foster care services.\textsuperscript{454} Wolf states that the focus in foster care has changed from moral development to providing services and treatment for children with severe emotional and behavioral problems.\textsuperscript{455} Legislation has in part contributed to this shift. The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 mandated increased efforts to maintain children in their own homes.\textsuperscript{456} This was in part due to public and professional criticisms of foster care services. Harold Martin and Paul Beazley provided the following description of foster care in 1976:

\textquote{Recently, the institution of foster care has been the object of increasing critical scrutiny. Numerous authors have drawn attention to the potential damage done to the child resulting from separation from biological parents, prolonged foster placement, inadequacies of the foster parents, lack of permanency inherent in foster placement, and the disturbingly high frequency of foster home “breakdown.”}\textsuperscript{457}
Finally, by the 1990s, according to Larry Gay et al., there was an organized attempt to keep children in their own family households rather than place them out of the home.\footnote{56} This resulted in an increased number of damaged children being placed in foster care as the home situation needed to deteriorate badly before the child was removed.\footnote{459} Laurel Leslie et al. noticed that children began to enter the foster care system with more physical, developmental, and psychological needs than ever before.\footnote{460} Lieberman adds that foster care, by necessity, became a mental health treatment facility for children in addition to providing food, shelter, clothing, and moral development.\footnote{461} Children were also increasingly receiving parenting from group homes.\footnote{462} Friesen describes group homes as households consisting of trained staff working as part of a team to provide foster care.\footnote{463} As the roles of women in society changed, child-placing agencies began to face new difficulties in recruiting a sufficient number of families to become foster parents.\footnote{464} More women were entering the labor force and as a result fewer women wanted the responsibility of extra children.\footnote{465} To meet the demands for foster mothers, additional funds were provided to support the care of foster children.\footnote{466} This was done indirectly by placing children in need of specialized foster care with foster parents, or directly by hiring paid professional staff to work for group homes.\footnote{467} Eileen Mayers and Elyse Burgess wrote that professional or specialized foster care was developed for children with behavioral, developmental, emotional or medical needs above and beyond those traditionally found in foster care.\footnote{468} To deal with these treatment issues, according to Meadowcroft and Thomlison, professional foster care programs have used interventions with various approaches in which all treatment professional foster parents are trained.\footnote{469} There is little research as to the effectiveness of these approaches.\footnote{470}
To conclude, Lorraine B. Fox provides that other terms for professional foster care includes specialized foster care, treatment foster care, therapeutic foster care or group home care. The movement toward professional foster care has been accelerating since the early 1990s and is expected to continue, forecasts Friesen.

There is limited current research about characteristics of professional foster mothers; however, a review of research on the traditional homemaker foster mother may provide insight into future research with professional foster mothers.

**Traditional Foster Mothers**

Currently, Cassidy and Harrup have posed that it is within the development of close relationships that children form their notions of self and the world. This is thought to occur by means of the child accepting the caregiver's views by direct contact, observation and learning. Katherine Easrlack Norgard and Pamela Mayhall contend that the remediation of a foster child’s cognitive, emotional, and behavioral problems most effectively occurs in the context of the foster family and specifically in relationship to the foster mother. Most, if not all, research cited has been gathered from traditional foster care programs with results, which shed light on the effectiveness, motivations and characteristics of foster parents in general and foster mothers in particular. Although there is limited research available in regard to traditional foster care there is even less in regard to professional foster care. Meadowcroft and Thomlison note:

On one hand, limited research is available on treatment foster parents compared to that which exists on traditional foster parents or other child care providers. Initial efforts to discover those characteristics of treatment parents that predict success with children served have been proven fruitless, which can, in part, explain the lack of interest in this area.
An example of research gathered regarding traditional foster care includes Louis Guernery’s review of the literature concerning the effectiveness of foster mothers. She found that successful placement depended on the following factors: (1) selection of foster mothers with prior experience, who will function as a loving caring substitute parent; (2) tolerances of children by a foster mother, who allows children to function as individuals, and whose motives for becoming a foster parent are altruistic; and (3) the foster mother is a reliable caretaker, bonding figure, and a stable figure in the child’s life when the child might have had no such person available in the family of origin.\textsuperscript{479}

Demographic data gathered in Lee Titterington’s study of foster mothers indicated that there was no typical foster mother. There was as much variety among foster mothers as there was among parents in general. This included variety in terms of age, educational background, income, religious convictions, and other demographic variables.\textsuperscript{480}

Further studies, by Charlotte G. Babcock and others have also gathered demographic information by survey. These surveys found that foster mothers generally come from a large family. They had relatively few biological children, tended to marry early, and had a brief education. The foster mother was the central figure in the foster family and was dominant in the home.\textsuperscript{481} These mothers were the initiators, managers, and promoters of plans for the home and the foster children in the home.\textsuperscript{482} David Rowe’s results indicated that parental attitudes were related to successful foster parenting, while social class was not. Other factors such as age of foster mother, number of siblings, and the presence of natural children were unrelated to success.\textsuperscript{483}

In addition to the analysis of demographic data, Louis Murry conducted interviews to study the motivation of foster mothers.\textsuperscript{484} Why do these women decide to
foster children? Interviews with foster mothers found a significant relationship between the mother’s motivation for becoming a foster parent and the success of the placement. David Fanshel, Stephen J. Finch and John F. Grundy reported in their survey that the most often stated motivations of foster mother applicants was the love of children, social consciousness and financial reward. In Babcock’s interviews, foster mothers talked about the pleasure of intimacy. They used descriptive words regarding enjoyment from the handling, touching, holding, and protecting of children. They often mentioned that watching children develop was rewarding. Additionally, they regarded playing with children as a part of their responsibility. Their foster children were seen as a source of pleasure and generated protective concern if they became ill or if they had difficulty in development. There were frequent expressions of interest in watching the children grow.

Similarly Friesen’s survey of foster parents concluded that it was the foster mother’s commitment to her role and her vision of what was entailed in foster parenting that enabled her to remain strong and motivated. In the foster mother’s responses within his survey there was a strong sense of commitment to their foster children. Foster mothers desired as much information as possible to help them understand the child and their family of origin. Furthermore, foster mothers saw themselves as advocates for the needs of the child and their family of origin. Interviews conducted by Kathleen Proch found that most foster mothers stated that they became foster parents primarily because they wanted additional children in the family.
Mary-Anne Tinney studied the role perceptions of foster mothers. From her study group of foster mothers, the most frequently selected descriptive terms were “substitute parent,” “homemaker,” “team-worker,” and “child advocate.”

In addition to the study of motivation and role perception, emotional characteristics of a successful foster mother have also been researched. Jason Brown and Peter Calder described the characteristics of a successful foster mother as reported by the foster mothers themselves. Three themes were apparent in their answers: (1) the ability to form good working relationships, (2) the ability to be culturally sensitive, and (3) the forming of harmonious-and-stable-family relationships. Personality characteristics identified included such traits as caring, patience, understanding, calmness, consideration, fairness and persistence. Norman Stone and Susan Stone attempted to assess the most pertinent variables related to foster placement outcome. Their results demonstrated that successful foster placements occurred when the foster mothers were highly motivated and there was good rapport between the foster home and the agency caseworker. W. Ann Duclos recognized the development of empathy as essential to successful foster parenting.

In a rare qualitative study of foster mother’s stress levels, conducted by Elizabeth Soliday, Kathleen McCluskey-Fawcett and Nancy Meck, it was found that these mothers scored in the normal ranges on parenting stress levels. Survey results indicated high parenting satisfaction. These mothers felt like their foster child would have a positive future if provided an appropriate environment. Their advice to other foster mothers included: persist, give love, be patient, provide attention, and prepare to let go.
In conclusion, the research on traditional foster mothers indicates that they demographically are a varied group. Successful foster mothers however, share motivations to experience the emotional rewards of parenting. They see their roles as being the keepers of the home but they are also able to use support systems in the community. Most report that they became foster mothers because they love children and want to have them around.\(^{495}\) The findings about the characteristics of traditional foster mothers help to understand the professional foster mother, as there is little to no research on the latter group. Examination of the modern foster child population can also contribute to the understanding of the role of the professional foster mother.

**Modern Foster Child Characteristics**

Foster care since the 1980s, observed Meadowcroft and Thomlison, became increasingly a treatment service as the child population has suffered increased neglect and abuse.\(^{496}\) Legislation, social and economic issues, and increased substance abuse has contributed to this situation.\(^{497}\) Minority children are requiring foster care in record numbers.\(^{498}\) While extreme behaviors have increased, the average length of foster care placements has decreased.\(^{499}\) The professional foster mother has less time to address foster children with extreme needs.\(^{500}\)

The alarming trends in the modern foster care populations are reflected in the following statistics. Lynne Marsenish presented the current trend of children coming into foster care are younger. In 1997, 33 percent of children in out of home care were below five years of age.\(^{501}\) Over the last two decades a trend has been for the ethnicity of foster children to change. In the year 2000, children of color accounted for 70 percent of
California’s foster care caseload as reported by Leslie et al. This is an increase from 54 percent in 1983.\textsuperscript{502}

Furthermore, Lynne Marsenish estimated that up to 84 percent of children currently entering foster care have significant mental health problems.\textsuperscript{503} The prevalence of emotional, behavioral, and developmental problems among children in foster care is six times greater than a comparative group of children with their natural parents.\textsuperscript{504} One estimate, reported by Lita Linzer Schwartz, states that approximately 70 percent of the children in the United States are placed in foster care because of physical abuse and neglect. About half of these children have experienced sexual abuse.\textsuperscript{505} Marsenish adds that as of 2001 about 75 percent of children entering foster care in California were removed from their homes due to reported neglect. These cases most likely also include various types of abuse.\textsuperscript{506}

Changes in the foster care population reflect the devaluing and lack of protection provided for these children prior to placement.\textsuperscript{507} As stated by Leslie et al, many of the children in foster care are members of minority populations and share a background of chronic poverty with associated family disruptions, medical stresses, and social problems.\textsuperscript{508} Marsenish adds that a history of in utero and environmental drug and alcohol exposure is common to children entering the foster system. There is evidence, that drug exposure may predispose these children to cognitive and emotional problems.\textsuperscript{509}

The social welfare system, states Joyce P. Brockhaus and Robert H. Brockhaus, is not always sensitive to the foster child’s attachment needs.\textsuperscript{510} Brockhaus and Brockhaus and other researchers have commented on the effect that both preplacement and placement experiences can have on the mental health and social functioning of foster
children. Sometimes children become neglected in the social welfare system by having multiple foster placements. In addition, to the losses involved with biological parents, there frequently are other attachment losses involving siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, neighbors, peers, other foster parents and foster siblings. As well as interpersonal losses, the child experiences loss of attachment to home, community, and other familiar surroundings. Sometimes, adds R. Molin, the child loses cherished personal belongings and objects that would provide a sense of identity and roots. Such behavioral difficulties according to Marcus include serious oppositionality, temper tantrums, sexual acting out, running away, substance use, withdrawal, suicidality and other attachment issues.

To conclude, as stated by Norgard and Mayhall, traditional foster mothers often were able to foster the same children over a matter of years. They were able to watch their charges grow up and become adults with extended contact with the family. In the past two decades, there have been clear trends in the changing demands put on the foster mother as the foster population has changed. For example, the modern foster mother will deal with children that may be different from her racially or ethnically. These children are often victims of chronic poverty. Modern changes in law and society have contributed to foster children having more extreme mental health and attachment problems, as reported by Norgard and Mayhall. The increase in drug use has resulted in an increase of birth defects that effect the cognitive and emotional development of children. As the number of foster children in the welfare system has increased the system more often neglects the needs of foster children. These children may be moved into numerous foster homes, with little regard for attachment issues. These trends have
resulted in the modern professional foster mother needing to deal with children with extreme behaviors for shorter periods of time.\textsuperscript{526}

There is a limited amount of research on the attachment experiences of professional foster mothers. Given the changing nature of foster mother duties it is important to gain insights into the attachment processes of professional foster mothers.

**Professional Foster Mothers and Grief and Loss**

Professional foster mothers, according to Helen Gardnet, take into their care a child, who has been abused, neglected and suffered significant separations.\textsuperscript{527} They invest emotionally and physically in the child.\textsuperscript{528} Professional foster mothers nurture the child, cope with and help the child through emotional, educational and medical difficulties.\textsuperscript{529} Then, after deep commitment and love, the foster mother must separate gracefully when it is time for the child to move on.\textsuperscript{530} All natural parents or traditional foster mothers must face loss as they help their children move through childhood toward adulthood.\textsuperscript{531} However, Elelstein, Burge and Watrman point out, that for the professional foster mother, the child will most likely separate before the child has grown up.\textsuperscript{532} Often children are removed from foster homes or group homes with very little notice to the child or foster mothers.\textsuperscript{533}

Currently, as reported by Mary Anne Mica and Nancy R. Vosler, it is considered desirable that professional foster mothers and children attach to one another in order to promote healthy future attachments for the child.\textsuperscript{534} Even if the child has to separate later from the foster mother, experts believe that a child who is securely attached will be able to transfer this attachment to other parental figures.\textsuperscript{535} It is now policy for some professional foster parents to pursue adoption.\textsuperscript{536} It is considered beneficial because
adopter foster parents have established a continuing relationship with the child. This situation is called concurrent planning. Although, Edelstein, et al. reports that concurrent planning involves often-painful risks for the foster mother in terms of possible loss of the child, the potential benefit for the child is the formation of stable attachment relationships. In concurrent planning the foster mother is to attach to the child as if they were their own but there is the chance the child will be returned to their natural parents or relatives. When the foster child returns to their family of origin in concurrent planning the foster mother is left with high levels of grief and loss to assimilate.

In addition, Edelstein, et al. find that professional foster mothers deal with grief in many other guises: the grief of the parents whose child they are caring for; the grief of the child in their care: their own grief upon losing a child to reunification, other placement, or adoption: and the grief of other family members as a foster child leaves.

Edlestein maintains, that the need for foster homes is so great that often another child is placed in the home immediately with little time for the foster family to deal with the loss of the child who has just moved out. Because there are no shortcuts through the painful process of grief, states Urquhart, the foster parent is deprived of the grief work necessary to separate and deal with loss. In some instances, the foster child is returned to the natural parent and the child’s new environment is not considered safe or healthy by the foster mother, yet she has little of no influence on the placement and mustrieve that loss as well. Additionally, Margaret Burke and Tuesday Dawson wrote, that feedback on the progress of the child after leaving the home is often not available to the foster mother. Lita Linzer Schwartz contends that this element of transition is the most
emotionally draining, upsetting, and discouraging aspect of professional foster care.\textsuperscript{546} Often professional foster mothers are in a situation of dealing with loss and have very little support.\textsuperscript{547} Bernice Madison and Michael Scupper document the need for foster parent support, by training, agency contact, and improved case management.\textsuperscript{548}

To conclude, according to Meadowcroft and Thomlison, the increasing number of neglected, abused, and abandoned children entering the foster care system has led to the recruitment and training of professional foster mothers.\textsuperscript{549} Professional foster mothers deal with children who have had attachment disruptions.\textsuperscript{550} These disruptions result in the child having behavioral and emotional problems.\textsuperscript{551} Meadowcroft and Thomlison add that the professional foster mother must be able to deal with these troubled children.\textsuperscript{552}

Fox provides that other terms for professional foster care include; specialized foster care, treatment foster care, therapeutic foster care or group home care.\textsuperscript{553} The modern movement toward professional foster care has been accelerating and is expected to continue, forecasts Friesen.

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Current research about characteristics of professional foster mothers is also limited.\textsuperscript{565} Gaining information as to the imaginal structures of professional foster mothers is vital to the care of children in our foster care system. As the literature review demonstrates there is a gap in the research on professional foster mothers. There is no research on the attachment process and imaginal structures of professional foster mothers.

**Imaginal Perspectives on Attachment and the Mother**

Aspects of Attachment Theory in part relate to imaginal structures.\textsuperscript{566} The definition of imaginal structures in use stated by Omer is:

Imaginal structures are assemblies of sensory, affective, and cognitive aspects of experience constellated into images: they both mediate and constitute experience. The specifics of an imaginal structure are determined by an interaction of personal, cultural, and archetypal influences. These influences may be teased apart by attention to the stories that form personal character and the myths that shape cultural life. During the individuation process, imaginal structures are transmuted into emergent and enhanced capacities as well as a transformed identity. Any enduring and substantive change in individual or group behavior
requires a transmuting of imaginal structures. This transmutation depends upon an affirmative turn towards the passionate nature of the soul.\textsuperscript{567}

Aspects of Attachment Theory deal with the personal influences that determine “internal working models” which in part relates to “imaginal structures.”\textsuperscript{568} Bowlby proposed that infants develop “internal working models”, or “mental representations of attachment relationships that form the basis of expectations in close relationships.”\textsuperscript{569} Robert R. Sears states that each participant, in a relationship, has an “internal working model” of the relationship and accordingly behaves in a manner that reflects and maintains the relationship in various ways.\textsuperscript{570} In addition, Goldberg, et al state that “internal working model” plays a part in the development of the child as these models are subject to experience and change.\textsuperscript{571} However, the existing model shapes the way new experiences are integrated.\textsuperscript{572} The developments of aspects of models are not accessible to consciousness, and are resistant to change.\textsuperscript{573} These models shape the way information is interpreted and processed as to the nature of social and individual interactions.\textsuperscript{574}

Internal working models activate behavior automatically and are accessed easily.\textsuperscript{575} If a model is used often it may become outside of conscious awareness, and in time, habitual.\textsuperscript{576} Bowlby contends that some aspects of internal working models, such as unconscious patterns, are resistant to change.\textsuperscript{577} These working models contain each individual’s pattern of their concept of self and other, which influences the individual’s relationship expectations.\textsuperscript{578} Another reason that internal working models may be resistant to change is that they are likely to be self-fulfilling.\textsuperscript{579} When individuals expect to be rejected, they act in ways that reinforce their working model. Relationships offer the opportunity for internal working models to change and modify as new experiences replace previous realities. With a consistent and responsive caregiver the child’s internal
working model becomes strengthened through repeated experiences. Children who have sensitive caregivers on a consistent basis develop models of themselves as worthy of care and they trust their caretakers will care for them.

Attachment research suggests that by three years of age the child has developed more stable internal working models. These models are more available at the symbolic level. One research design studied the organization of internal models by observing children’s symbolic play. They have also developed and used story scripts regarding attachment related situations, doll-play enactments of attachment, and related story exert. Teresa Jacobsen, Wolfgang Edelstein and Vollker Hofman used picture projections in an attempt to capture children’s internal working models. Natalie Rogers writes that when the individual fantasizes and writes, integration begins to evolve. This union of the conscious and unconscious leads to a new level of being by creating energy into constructive action. Sibylle Birkhauser-Oeri writes that the story is the product of the imagination just like a dream, and is the path to the unconscious. Omer contends that imagination amplifies sensory and affective life. Connie Zweig writes that creative imagination via writing develops a creative relationship with the shadow, which offers redemption. Imagination is the deepest voice of the soul and can be heard clearly only through cultivation and careful attention. A relationship with imagination is a relationship with the deepest self. The most important part of the creative process is to bear witness to one’s own story, and the stories of others. Self-created images are signposts that points one in a direction to discover aspects of the self that need nurturing.

Accordingly, Jung believed that man has always had a collective unconscious and within this unconscious there are instinctual models of behavior called archetypes. An
individual’s response to archetypes is called complexes. A complex provides for instinctual drives to arrive in the personal here and now. The purpose of the complex is to be integrated into one’s life from a conscious point of view, which creates more flexible boundaries and allows growth. Robin Robertson describes a complex as an archetypal image surrounded by a cluster of images, which are from individual’s experiences.

It is at these points, Jean Knox contends, that a complex relates to Bowlby’s “internal working model.” Both structures evolve from the instinctual needs of the individual, to meet the requirements of social adaptation and the ability to meet that challenge. The contents of these structures are held in the individual’s conscious and unconscious in the form of images. Omer states that another aspect of Imaginal Psychology deals with the soul and the nature of the soul. June Singer writes that scholars, theologians, artists and romantics have written about soul for centuries in various ways. The soul defined by religious and philosophical traditions has been defined as: a self-aware ethereal substance particular to a unique living being. In these traditions the soul contains the inner essence of each living being. Singer in her writings of modern woman’s search of the soul, describes soul as follows:

The soul, as I understand it, functions to balance us, to urge us into the fullness of our being, to guide us toward realizing out potential and making our gifts available to others and, most of all, to finding the inner peace that comes only from congruity between who we are and what we do. The soul knows who we are, no matter how much we attempt something other.

In addition, soul is connected to images. Images are orienting patterns through which an individual experiences one self and one’s sense of the world. Robert Sardello writes of soul and images: “Images, then, are not what we ‘see’; they are what we ‘see through.’ We experience a sense of soul when we feel the sense of these deeper patterns
working through our sensing, thinking, feeling, and acting.” Rogers writes, that when the individual fantasizes and writes, integration begins to evolve. This union of the conscious and unconscious leads to a new level of being by creating energy into constructive action. Birkhauser-Oeri adds that the story is the product of the imagination just like a dream, and is the path to the unconscious. Omer contends that imagination amplifies sensory and affective life. Zweig writes that creative imagination via writing develops a creative relationship with the shadow, which offers redemption. Imagination is the deepest voice of the soul and can be heard clearly only through cultivation and careful attention. A relationship with imagination is a relationship with the deepest self. Allen emphasizes that the most important part of the creative process is to bear witness to one’s own story, and the stories of others. He adds that self-created images are signposts that points one in a direction to discover aspects of the self that need nurturing.

As well, Hillman writes about an alienation in which not only the soul is lost, the idea of soul is lost to modern mainstream western culture. There is a concern that the family in mainstream modern Western culture has become the center for consumerism alienated from other aspects of life. For example, Hillman noted a trend in mainstream Western culture of increased pressure to consume goods. The mother’s role is that of the consumer manager. Campbell writes, “We’re so engaged in doing things to achieve purposes of outer value that we forget the inner value, the rapture of being alive…” Consequently, Woodman states that the lack of the societal care of the soul in modern Western culture has led to the development of addictions and compulsions. The individuation found in Anglo-American children in attachment research has been
described as a symptom of increased alienation from others.\textsuperscript{622} Hillman contends, in modern mainstream western culture, there is an “extraordinary fascination with the self.” \textsuperscript{623} Hillman states, “the self can only be known as it interacts with the community.” \textsuperscript{624} Ellen Dissanayake describes contemporary mainstream western culture as follows:

Observations of contemporary Western society have described the “ismitis” that affects us—our secularism, materialism, instrumentalism, consumerism, narcissism, skepticism, and cynicism, along with our increasing alienation from each other and our overfilled, fractionated, and frantic lives.\textsuperscript{625}

Omer refers to secularism as another facet of mainstream Western culture.\textsuperscript{626} Hillman contends that religious practices are set apart from the everyday lives of most modern families.\textsuperscript{627} These families are lacking in deep meaningful rituals and even consider the acts of ritual taboo.\textsuperscript{628} Ritual is defined as body’s ceremonies and rites that provide meaning to life.\textsuperscript{629} Tom Driver writes that “rituals are part of the human condition, and their health and disease affects everyone.”\textsuperscript{630} Hillman states that without rituals in society there is a lack of soul.”\textsuperscript{631} Ritual connects an individual to the community and heals the soul.\textsuperscript{632} Moore writes about mainstream western culture as follows:

We do not have to look far to find a world without soul. It is all around us. On one hand we find gross materialism in economics, politics, values and lifestyle. On the other we see vast educational systems for people of all ages and a large segment of the population involved in religious institutions. Yet the two spheres seem separate, joined only when serves the limited purpose of the other. In the universities the liberal arts, only swelling schools of business are squeezing studies in explicit expressions of soul.\textsuperscript{633}

In addition, Omer describes the soul as arising through enduring patterns that form the archetypal foundation of the unconscious as the basis of a creative, expanding consciousness.\textsuperscript{634} Mainstream modern Western culture’s lack of images and
personifications represses the Mother from being expressed archetypally. Hillman adds that the soul requires adequate archetypal containers to hold imaginal figures that are sublime and intolerable. Penny Lewis writes of the expression of archetypal images:

> Since mythology and folk tales are a culture’s externalization of the unconscious of its societal members, they can both address the individual in his or her quest toward their developing wholeness and connect them with all humanity through the universality of their messages. Thus, creation stories reflect the origin of consciousness of the peoples who compose them. What is selected to be said about gods and goddesses reflects the issues that culture needs to address archetypal images, movements, sounds and themes emerge from the imaginal realm, and they can influence and help facilitate transformation.

Also, Sardello and Hillman write about attachment in mainstream Western culture in terms of care of the soul and cultural support for maternal images and functions. Imaginal Psychology refers the archetypal images as well as cultural and individual influences. Although, Attachment Theory draws on archetypal structures, there is very little, if any of such structures described in attachment theory or research.

To conclude, Jung describes archetypes, as representing the typical experiences incurred by mankind universally. There are mother archetypal structures that are personified in figurative senses and have appeared in religion, myth, fable, and art from primeval times. Examination of the various goddesses provides a collective image that is beyond the individual personal mother of attachment figure. Robert Powell points out, that Sophia stands out as a figure that through the course of history, as the mother of humanity, has appeared in different cultures, traditions and religions. Sophia’s dark face is expressed as the goddesses, Lilith or Black Madonna, described by Kathleen Damiani. They, like Sophia, have appeared in many cultures under different names during the course of history.
The Maternal Archetype

Kalsched states that the archetypes of the mother provide images for all individual experiences of the mother. Archetypal images of the maternal, writes Jung, represent the typical experiences of the maternal incurred by mankind universally. For the child, the personal mother appears in a variety of figures such as the mother, grandmother, foster mother, or governess or other caretaker. The personal unconscious rests upon a deeper layer of consciousness that is inborn and does not develop through personal experience. Jung called this deeper level the collective unconscious. According to Jung, the contents of the collective unconscious contain archetypes, which are universal. Jung further described archetypes as organizing structures, which are filled out by the external world. These archetypes are constant elements of the unconscious that tend to be expressed in metaphors, rather than through direct dialogue. Metaphor substitutes one word for another to convey a meaning that is not literal but communicates a feeling that is evoked by the implied word. Jung described archetypal expression as follows: “The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and being perceived.”

Additionally, Robertson observed that, “All animals beyond a certain level of complexity appear to have an archetype for Mother.” During the early development of the human race, adds Shari L. Thurer, motherhood was the only recognized parental bond. Joseph Campbell and Charles Muses share that early man did not understand the nature of paternity and the connection between sexuality and birth was unknown. All of the early mythologies attribute creation to the feminine. For example, many of the earliest known creation stories are of the Great Mother who is the giver and nurturer of
Patricia Reis asserts that images of the Great Mother have been found in multiple cities across Europe. She dates these findings as spanning over a period of twenty thousand years. Thurer explains that during this time the Great Mother existed in human consciousness as the symbol of birth, death, and rebirth. She was the symbol of the creation and destruction of life.

One aspect, continues Thurer, describes the archetypal experience of the “good mother” as occurring when the child receives experiences of positive care that outnumber the negative experiences of lack of care or abuse. Ann Casement states that these archetypal experiences become transformed into human experiences, and thus the internal world of images begins to exist regardless of external reality. Similarly, mothers of securely attached children are described as psychologically assessable, accepting, emotionally expressive, and sensitively responsive to their infants. Bowlby suggests that the experiences of secure attachment, form images that create an internal working model, which predicts future attachment behaviors, with trust in security and safety. As well, Benjamin Sells attributes individual acts, thoughts, dreams, gestures, experiences, and impulses as mediated by the soul’s image of the mother. The intensity of the child’s collective archetypal feelings is so great they cannot properly attach to the individual mother. Frances G. Wicks predicts, that when the mother is imagined as fantastic and magical there are archetypal characters influencing these images. This gives rise to joy, which manifest in symbolic expression, according to Casement. Lewis emphasized the importance of a child internalizing the image of the good mother in order to support and hold the child’s self-esteem. It is this internalized mother that supports the individual’s care of the self throughout the life span, contends Knox.
Other authors also agree that if the child cannot become secure in the maternal matrix they will always be in fear of abandonment. 674

In contrast, Jung provides another aspect of the mother archetype, which appears as negative and rejecting. 675 When repeated, sequences of maternal neglect and hostility occur the infant forms negative archetypal images that affect the infant’s perceptions of the world and relationships according to Casement. 676 When childhood experiences are negative the inner world of the individual becomes persecutory with internalized self-defeating behaviors that are repeated throughout ones life. 677 Kalsched writes of the negative aspects of the maternal archetype as follows:

What gradually became clear to me through the analysis of these patients’ dreams was that they were in the grip of an internal figure that jealously cut them off from the outer world, while at the same time attacking them with merciless self-criticism and abuse. Moreover, this inner figure was such a powerful “force” that the term daimonic seemed an apt characterization. 678

Also, parts of the personal aspects of the mother, Omer proposed, are patterns held in the personal unconscious. 679 Jung called these structures complexes and they constitute the personal side of psychological life. 680 Complexes are not known to the conscious mind and are stored in the unconscious, which is the organizing system that anticipates the needs of the conscious system. 681 The contents of the complex represent unresolved problems of the individual and arise from the clash between internal needs and the resources available to meet those needs, according to Omer. 682 Consequently, a complex contains memories, wishes, fears, images, views or needs with which the child never comes to terms with, so they interfere with their conscious life, usually in negative ways. 683 Campbell reports that there are a small number of primary patterns that appear in early childhood. 684 The first form of complex according to Omer and others deals with
the mother (caretaker) because the mother is the first reality with which a child comes into conflict. Knox compares the complex to Bowlby’s “internal working model.” Also, Omer has compared “internal working models” to personal myths. One writer compared all mythology as a sublimation of the mother image.

These collective aspects of the mother archetypes, according to Hillman, provide an image that is beyond the individual habits of the personal mother. It is in this deeper understanding that Jung wrote, “The concept of the Great Mother belongs to the field of comparative religion and embraces widely varying types of mother-goddess.” This symbol is obviously a derivative of the mother archetype.” The archetype of the Great Mother does not refer to any concrete image existing in space and time but the universal image of the mother. Neumann adds that many of the earliest creation stories refer to the Great Mother, which likens the female to the giver and nurturer of life, the creator of the animals, plants, humans, waters, earth and sky. For primitive humanity a divine maternal power was undeniably acknowledged. Jean Markale writes of the concept of the divine mother as follows: “…the concept of the divine mother that belongs naturally to human thought, no doubt because it touches the very depths of being, that is, the emotional as well as biological ties between mother and child, Here is a basic principle that even if resisted and suppressed, constitutes on of the components or being human.”

In the course of history continues Markale, the combination of the words “mother” and “great” create a group of symbolic images that surround a great number of images of the Great Mother. These symbols are of goddesses, fairies, and female
demons, nymphs that all express the archetypal famine of the Great Mother, described by Neumann.  

For example, Neumann depicts Sophia and the Great Goddess as the same feminine side of God and represents the divine. The divine Sophia has been described as the mother of humanity being present from the beginning of creation. She is connected with survival and the development of all life. Sophia appears in nearly every culture and is visible by her unique qualities and symbolic representations.

An overview, provided by Kathleen Damiani, states that Sophia is described from three perspectives: religion, archetypal psychology and historical anthropological writings. In the Old Testament, Sophia is depicted by Thomas Schipfinger as a female image of God who shares the male God’s throne and is co-creator. Barbara G. Walker writes that Sophia once represented God’s female soul and was considered to be the source of this power. She was described by Jung and Hull as an independent being that existed side by side with God. Sardello asserts that Sophia stands out in the world of soul and is the archetypal figure for the creation of all sectors of existence. Schipfinger identifies Sophia as having activities of healing, comforting, caring for the poor and afflicted, and guiding reflect the archetypal feminine and maternal qualities. Woodman states that through Sophia that mothering shifts from unconscious to conscious. Schipflinger suggests, “If the Father and Son exist, it is natural to inquire about the existence of the Mother.” Powell states that there is a relationship between Sophia and the Virgin Mary, the Virgin being the incarnation of the Divine Sophia. Jung concurs when writing about the Virgin Mary, “As the Bride of God and Queen of Heaven she holds the place of the Old Testament Sophia.”
Damiani states that Sophia is the Greek word for Wisdom and she is associated with wisdom and understanding. 712 Jeffrey Raff adds that philosophy or Philos-Sophia means, “love of Sophia.” 713 Damiani describes Sophia as personifying a deeper knowledge that is alive and moving leading one into mysteries of life. 714 Singer states that she is able to see through the visible world into the invisible world of inspiration and new connections that can sense the relatedness of all that appears to be separate in the visible world. 715 The invisible world has been called: the unconscious, the Kingdom of the spirit, heaven and hell, Eden and the world beyond the senses. 716 Historically, continues Damiani, Sophia has been excluded from mainstream Christianity, as she did not fit into the exclusively male dominated doctrines of Judaism and Christianity. 717 However, she figured prominently in the writings of early Judaism. 718 Powell describes Sophia as one who upholds justice and righteousness as revealed by King Solomon. 719 Powell writes of Sophia’s teachings as expressed by King Solomon as follows, ”Divine Sophia also casts her light of understanding upon the mysteries of human relationships.” 720 Jung found that Sophia appears in the five “Wisdom Books” of the Bible, however, in the New Testament an effort was made to identify Jesus with Sophia. 721 Christ’s love of mankind connects him to the legend of Sophia. 722

Writings of Sophia appeared in the Near East, connecting her with a knowledge that revealed her connection with integrity, character, and conscience. 723 Markale continues to trace that Gnostic sects throughout the Eastern Mediterranean gave full justification to the concept of a feminine divinity, which the entire East, venerated under many different names. 724 The term Sophia, in the Gnostic tradition, described the feminine component of the divine. 725
Matthews states that it was the Gnostics that identified Jesus with Sophia. Sophia is the essence of creative wisdom and the essential breath through which all living matter moves through in order to acquire its form. Damiani sees Sophia as an uncompromising presence that disappeared during the development of Christianity. Although Sophia was exiled from mainstream theology in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, she remained a central figure in the teachings and symbols of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

In the Middle Ages, continues Damiani, Sophia re-emerged as the Black Madonna and other underground wisdom traditions. She was the image of the Liberal Arts and was the inspiration for the Grail Legend during this period. She appeared in philosophy, poetry, mystic and philosophical writings. In the field of archetypal psychology, Jung encountered Sophia from the writings of alchemy and Gnosticism. Neumann, Sardello, Woodman, and other writers have examined Sophia’s archetype in terms of the psyche. Neumann writes about Sophia in the following manner:

The duel Great Goddess as mother and daughter can so transform her original bond with the elementary character as to become a pure feminine spirit, a kind of Sophia, a spiritual soul in which all heaviness and materiality are transcended. Then she not only forms the earth and the haven of the retort that we call life, and is not only the whirling wheel revolving within it, but also the supreme essence and distillation to which life in this world can be transformed.

It is the self-reflection of wisdom that is imperative according to Jung, when he writes, “…God must also learn to know himself,” and the wisdom of Sophia is needed for this to occur.

Woodman describes another aspect of the maternal, Sophia as the emerging archetypal pattern that helps cultures understand the properties of spirit and matter. Matthews describes Sophia as having unique qualities. She is distinguished from many
other forms of the Divine Feminine by the fact that she keeps her glory veiled. In the last decade Sophia has become the mother of the abandoned and excluded. Sophia is present when the soul is being hurt; she is the companion and friend. When a child is hurt, abandoned, and unsafe, it is Sophia that will support movement. Sardello writes of the soul wisdom of Sophia as follows:

By soul wisdom I mean the development of a capacity for Self-knowledge in conjunction with an objective of the inner qualities of the outer world. The capacity for this conjunction leads to a new image of consciousness that “sees through” events both inner and outer, finding circulation going on between them in which a constant reaction of both the human and being whole takes place.

In the last several decades, Damiani reports that spiritual seekers have turned to Sophia as the feminine personification of wisdom. The absence of the archetypal feminine in Western religions has driven spiritual seekers to rediscover this divine feminine figure. In the story of creation in the West, little attention is paid to the creation story in which Sophia assists Yahweh in the creation of the world. A female divine that depicted creation stories and the natural world on equal footing could not be reconciled with the creation story of Genesis that put nature below man and God above all.

As stated, Sophia (wisdom) is one aspect of the Great Goddess. Damiani adds that various goddesses personified wisdom before Sophia entered the religious literature of Judaism. Anne Baring and Jules Cashford identify Isis in Egypt and Demeter in Greece as standing out for exploration. Powell maintains that an example of Sophia’s role as the ideal mother is found in the story of Demeter and Persephone. Demeter was worshiped in ancient Greece as the goddess of fertility and the harvest. The word Demeter means simply Earth Mother. Demeter’s daughter Persephone was beautiful
and this attracted the attention of the God of the underworld. The underworld God, Hades or Plato carried Persephone into his domain as the earth opened up. When Demeter learned that her daughter had been stolen, she became full of grief and set out to find her. Baring and Cashford conclude that the divine Sophia inspires this quality of mother love. The story of Demeter and Persephone reveals an outpouring of motherly love that is found in the relationship of the Virgin Mary and her son Jesus. Demeter searched for her daughter in the disguise of an old woman. Demeter eventually came to the land of Eleusis and was invited to care for the Kings son, Demophon. Demeter as the nurse, assumed the role of the divine feminine by helping the child develop. She held the child into the flames each night in order for him to become immortal.

As the story continues by Baring and Cashford the mother of Demophon, Queen Metaneira, saw her child being held in the flames and became frightened, interrupting Demeter’s work. Demeter’s work of creating immortality stopped and she decided to no longer bring forth the harvest, the Earth going into famine. Zeus sent Hermes to plead with Hades to release Persephone.

Hades agreed to release the daughter, however, he gave her a pomegranate to eat. When Persephone ate the pomegranate, she swallowed a seed of the underworld and could not fully leave. When returning to the upper world to her mother, she had to spend part of the year in the underworld with Hades.

One way, Baring and Cashford interpret the story of Demeter and Persephone is for Persephone to represent the human soul falling into darkness and for the mother to lead the soul into the world of light. Powell’s interpretation is as follows:
On one level, Persephone represents the human soul who, through incarnating upon the Earth, falls from the divine world, becomes lost in the realm of darkness, and has to be found again. Demeter, the mother, as an aspect of the Divine Sophia, calls to the human soul to lead it back from the kingdom of darkness into the living light of the world of spirit. 

Also, Damiani reveals that the spirit of Sophia can be found in Isis, who personifies the life force and the living mystery of nature. 

Merlin Stone wrote of Isis, “In the beginning there was Isis, Oldest of the Old. She was the Goddess from whom all becoming arose.” Damiani defines Isis as personifying the life force of nature and is the essence of the four elements. Walker adds that she was the wife of Osiris and mother of Horus, and was worshipped as the archetypal wife and mother. She is the feminine archetype for creation, the goddess of fertility and motherhood. The origins of Isis are uncertain but she may have come from the Nile Delta. She became prominent late in Egyptian history and eventually spread outside. Egypt Damiani revealed that Isis worship spread throughout the Middle East, Europe and Great Britain. She could be found in Christian Europe as late as the 6th century. Like Sophia, Isis was thought to be the goddess of life and wisdom.

The wisdom of Isis contains the sense that gods come into power, wane, and die. Walker compared Isis’s wisdom to the creator of a God. A legend tells about her desire to know the secret name of Re, the sun god. When Re grew old his mouth would shake and drool. When his salvia fell to the ground Isis gathered it up. She mixed the salvia of the god with earth, forming a snake. Walker continues that Isis arranged for the venomous snake to bite Re. When bitten Re fell ill and Isis offered to cure him. First Re had to tell Isis his real name. Re tried to trick her giving her fake names, as he grew more ill. Finally close to death he whispered to Isis his real name and
she restored his health and vitality. Now Isis not only used the words of God, she had the knowledge to pronounce them.

An example, states Walker, Isis, the mother is contained in the myth of her child Horus. Isis swallowed Osiris the savior and reincarnated him as the child Horus. Osiris was annually torn to pieces and reassembled except for his lost penis. Isis made him a new penis and gave it to him. Osiris stood up and mated with Isis, and life went on. Isis became the mother of the child Horus. She fled with the newborn to escape the danger of Seth, the murderer of her husband. Much danger faced Horus. Isis healed Horus from a scorpion sting. She performed miracles to straighten Horus until he became old enough to fight Seth. Horus defeated Seth and became the king of Egypt. Walker writes that Isis was known as the *Lady of Life* and held the Egyptian symbol of life. Pharaohs on the throne of Egypt sat on Isis’s lap with her arms and wings protecting them. Her name literally means *female of the throne*. Some scholars state that the worship of Isis influenced Christianity in regard to the Virgin Mary and her relationship to her son Jesus. There are resemblances between early Christian images of Mary and those of Isis. The story of Mary’s Egyptian journey with her child speaks to the Christian identification with Isis as mother. Both Isis and Mary are the images of the loving and protective mother. Powell contends that the spirit of Isis and Mary runs throughout the mythos of Sophia. Ean Begg believes that the Black Madonna is a durative of the Egyptian goddess Isis, due to her dark skin. The shadow, writes Roberts, appears when the conscious mind has accepted a limited view of human potential.
In conclusion, archetypal images of the maternal, writes Jung, represent the typical experiences of the maternal incurred by mankind universally. For the child, the personal mother appears in a variety of maternal figures. One aspect, continues Thurer, describes the archetypal experience of the “good mother” as occurring when the child receives experiences of positive care that outnumber the negative experiences of lack of care or abuse. These collective aspects of the mother archetypes, according to Hillman, provide an image that is beyond the individual habits of the personal mother. It is in this deeper understanding that Jung wrote, that the concept of the Great Mother belongs to the field of comparative religion and embraces widely varying types of mother-goddess. For example, Neumann depicts Sophia and the Great Goddess as the same feminine side of God and represents the divine. Powell maintains that an example of Sophia’s role as the ideal mother is found in the story of Demeter and Persephone. Both Isis and Mary are the images of the loving and protective mother. Powell contends that the spirit of Isis and Mary runs throughout the mythos of Sophia.

**Shadow Feminine**

Campbell contends that, whether negative or positive, the personal mother is the carrier of the first archetypal structures because of the child’s complete participation with her. From this early interaction adults hold negative and positive aspects of the archetypal mother. This positive and negative interaction with the personal mother could give rise to the presence of good and evil in human interactions.

To elaborate, Michael Shermer writes that: “Humans are by nature, moral and immoral, good and evil, altruistic and selfish, cooperative and competitive, peaceful and bellicose, virtuous and not virtuous.” Marie-Louise von Franz states that it takes great
courage to accept an individual quality that has been repressed. Rogers adds that accepting the shadow is the personal task for each person in order to become an individual. If the individual faces their dark side, they learn to transform the energy fused in those shadowy parts into constructive action. To know, accept, express, and release the dark side in nonhurtful ways is essential to prevent powerful forces from being acted out. Rollo May concurs, that by accepting the evil part of oneself, rather than projecting it on to others makes for good deeds. May writes that, “The innocent person in religion, the one who lacks the ‘wisdom of serpents,’ can do considerable harm without knowing it.” It is breaking through the pseudo-innocence that stops the one-dimensional thinking that feeds the capacity for evil. Adolf Guggenbuhl-Craig states that the individual has the potential for both good and evil that cannot be disowned, as life consists of good deeds not apart from evil deeds but in spite of them. The term evil defined by Scott Peck is any force that seeks to kill life or liveliness, “Goodness is that which promotes life and liveliness.” Evil people refuse to acknowledge their own failures and project their evil onto others. Children exposed to this evil often misinterpret the process and hate themselves. Guggenbuhl-Craig describes that in addition to the personal and collective shadow there is the archetypal shadow. The archetypal shadow draws energy from the personal and collective shadow but is different. It is independent in that it is more than just the shadow of good. The archetypal shadow is also associated with evil. This evil, continues Guggenbuhl-Craig, is inherent to human behaviors and evil gods and goddesses represent an archetype. Adolescents must enter a relationship with the archetypal shadow in order to further their own development. Adolescents, who have experienced highly destructive environments as
children, often project this evil onto the environment. Siegel reports that 80 percent of children in foster care have a disorganized attachment pattern. This adolescent comes to blame others and events as containing the destructiveness that is their own. James states that foster parents are often bombarded with feelings of resentment, anger, betrayal and hurt as they attempt to parent foster children. It is essential that foster parents find ways to deal with these feelings in the context of their relationship with the child.

Although, the archetypal shadow is inherent in youth, Guggenbuhl-Craig maintains, that it continues to exist in the lives of adults. The average healthy adult can fall victim to its destructive tendencies. May asserts that the individual must acknowledge that good and evil dwells within every person. Guggenbuhl-Craig writes that it is the dedicated helper that falls victim to the shadow. Neither the positive nor the negative aspects of the helping work touch the indifferent helper.

Guggenbuhl-Craig observed, that individuals who deal with the archetypal shadow on a daily basis are exposed to excessive demands. As they attempt to provide good will, a roughly equal amount of evil intent is generated. For these individuals who seek to help with destructive behaviors, the archetypal shadow is often experienced outside of themselves in the environment. As the helper strives to conquer the shadow archetype outside with good intentions, the dark counterpart is increasingly constellated inside. May asserts, that the individual must acknowledge that good and evil dwells within every person, and those humans have the capacity to hold both sides. The helper is never free of the shadow archetype but must admit to it and acknowledge it. Guggenbuhl-Craig writes: “We must refrain from playing the part of someone who never falls into the shadow and must be prepared to admit our mistakes in this regard.”
Robert Bly wrote: “Every part of our personality that we do not love becomes hostile to us.”  When the shadow is integrated the human being becomes playful in a new way and humor develops. Hillman contends that the act of loving the shadow is a cure for the self. The care given to the humiliating parts of oneself is essential to loving oneself. However, the individual must do more than just acknowledge the shadow and keep it close. There must be a breakthrough of laughing at one’s folly with a joyful acceptance of the shadow. Hillman writes: “Thus is cure a paradox requiring two incommensurables: the moral recognition that these parts of me are burdensome and intolerable and must change, and the loving laughing acceptance which takes them just as they are, joyfully forever.”

Jung attributes the negative traits of the trickster to being aspects of the shadow archetype. Ironically, when the work of the trickster creates calamity or disaster a longing for a savior can arise. It is at this point that the calamity can be consciously understood and the shadow integrated through relatedness to the savior.

Jung describes the archetype of the trickster as the clown and mischief-maker. The trickster often provides relief from tension and can keep things in proportion. However, the trickster is more than a fool because he calls into question fundamental assertions about how the world is organized. He reveals the possibility of transformation, either positive or negative. Lewis Hyde describes the trickster as a “contradiction or paradox.” It is the trickster who demonstrates the uncertainty of life.

An aspect of the feminine shadow concerns envy, as elaborated by Ann Ulanov and Berry Ulanov. They maintain that although envy is experienced by both sexes, it is
more of a problem with females. The presence of envy occurs when the mother frustrates her daughter’s need for nurturance and safety. For the daughter, her mother embodies the symbol the goodness and wholeness. The negative mother requires her daughter to stay out of her reach by denying her female biological self. In addition, the daughter spends her energy trying to destroy goodness instead of being able to take it in. The envier sees only part of the individual and aims to hurt and spoil that, which is good. Those who envy only see the envied part of the other and seek to destroy that part. Envy operates as a projection putting its destructive feelings onto others. The experience of being envied is similar to that of the envier. Both parties are reduced and emptied of goodness.

Another shadow archetype, appearing in fairytales, is that of the Stepmother. Jacqueline Schectman notes that in fairytales the natural mother is seldom the maternal figure that is harmful to children. Almost always the child faces mistreatment from the stepmother, who bears the image of the dark mother. The stepmother arrives to parent the child after the child has suffered the loss of the natural mother. In fairytales the Stepmother often brings the evil, which forces the child to take action on their own behalf. Through her dark machinations the stepmother moves, “shadow into light.” As the child gets to know the stepmother, she is no longer a formless shadow and she loses her dark unconscious power. As one takes the stepmother’s darkness into oneself they are free from her dark shadow.

As in Attachment Theory, Hillman contends that it is vital for the child to gain a sense of belonging and safety. It is when these instincts are disturbed, proposed Jung, that the archetypes constellate affecting the child’s images of the mother. Historically,
the mother archetype has been personified in a figurative sense in arts, myth, religion, and philosophy. The ways in which the mother archetype appears in religion, myth, and folklore is universal but differ in the ways it appears in the individual consciousness and unconscious as images. Jung further adds that examination of the various goddesses provides a perspective of mother that occurs in all peoples and places. When the individual deviates too far from what Jung termed the “Self,” compensatory mechanisms go into effect and the shadow will appear. The shadow has the function of moving the individual towards their potential. Until the shadow is taken into the individual’s personality, the unconscious projects itself onto others who have different views and lifestyles. Also, adds Gershen Kaufman, when parts of the self are disowned they become split off; one part of the self can undermine other parts of the self. This split off archetype, according to Moore, occurs when there is no union of imaginal realities. When previously denied character traits are owned, choices of possible behaviors are expanded, explains Robertson. The shadow is an archetype that appears in all people and involves accepting parts of one’s unique personality. Thus most shadow experiences arise out of personal experiences. When the personal characteristics hidden in the shadow appear as part of the whole personality the individual is free to acknowledge the needs of the body and soul. Sophia in the guise of the Black Madonna and Lilith is often the bridge out of the dark mother’s influence, as proposed by Woodman.

In addition, Damiani describes that Sophia lives and moves between two worlds of dark and light. She has another side that is not only light and goodness but has a
Kali aspect, Lilith and the Black Madonna. He described Lilith as Sophia’s Hebrew shadow and has been termed the Semitic version of Hecate.

In Jewish folklore, writes Damiani, Yahweh created Adam and Lilith to populate the earth. Schaup states that Yahweh fashioned Adam out of pure dust but Lilith was fashioned out of impure sediments. Adam claimed that he was superior to Lilith and she should be submissive to him. Damiani reported that Lilith claimed equality and refused to lie beneath him during sex. She considered the position demeaning and sought to be on top. When Adam tried to force her, Lilith flew away to the heavens to seek help from God, but he cast her out. She went to the desert, by the Red Sea, the home of demons, where Lilith indulged with them in endless sex bearing hundreds of demons a day. Lilith’s desert haunt was described by Koltuv as a wasteland, drenched with blood, the haunt of pelicans, hedgehogs, owls, ravens and jackals.

God had to create a new wife for Adam, out of his own rib, continues Koltuv. Damiani states that God created Eve, not being a creation in her own right, she was willing to be subordinate to Adam. Myth tells of Lilith’s jealously and rage generated by Adam’s rejection, so she came in the night to seek revenge by strangling babies and giving men wet dreams to sap their strength. Koltuv adds that Lilith disagreed with Adam on many other matters as a function of her dark, fiery, female lunar nature.

Fred Gustafson reveals that images of humiliation, diminishment, flight, desolation, and revenge are part of Lilith’s mythology. She is organic, earthy, seducing, murderous, raging and the killer of infants. Also, her need for freedom and instinctually is a Mythic theme. Begg writes, “Repressed gods take their captors captive.”
In addition, reports Damiani, the Eve-Lilith figure is a split in the female wholeness, which has been supported by rabbis, clerics, and monks throughout history. John Phillips writes, “The story of Lilith thus seems to embody the deepest male fears of impotence, weakness, and isolation in the face of unfettered female sexuality, assertiveness and independence.” A legend, as shared by Jung, maintains that the snake in the Garden of Eden was Lilith, who is the satanic side of Sophia.

Phillips concludes that, Sophia, Isis, Eve and the Virgin Mary are the life giving nourishing side of the instinctual feminine, while Lilith, Kali and Hecate are the death dealing opposite. The self-destructive split between the child nourishing Sophia and the child-killing Lilith is seen in women who are cut off from their own bodily needs. They drive themselves when they are tired. They nourish themselves poorly and attempt to override nature. Modern women attempting to meet the needs of her children, her work, and herself can suddenly feel the fiery energy of Lilith’s murderous rage. When Lilith is denied and cast out of the feminine, Woodman maintains that feminine rage is felt. Lilith is also connected with the healing powers of the Black Madonna, as she appears in modern literature.

The shadow of the divine mother, according to Woodman, is the devouring mother or the dark mother. The image of the devouring mother can literally paralyze people, during the healing process. This represents the wisdom of Sophia, which connects the head to the heart. The Black Madonna brings the grip of the devouring mother into the light. Woodman describes the relationship of the dark goddess to the abandoned child as follows:

For a woman without this positive mother, this “dark” side of the Virgin can bring freedom, the security of freedom, because she is the natural home for a child: for
the rejected child. The child born from the rejected side of the mother can bring their own rebel to rest in the outcast state of Mary. The Black Madonna is the patron saint of the abandoned daughters who rejoice in their outcast state and can use it to renew the world.  

Woodman elaborates that in Europe there are many shrines that depict the ancient devotion to the Black Madonna. In fact a large proportion of the world’s images of the Madonna are black. Some scholars account for the black Madonna’s as being a result of some form of damage such as candle smoke, burial or water damage. Many theologians simply accept the Black Madonna’s presence as being a mystery with no logical explanation. Sjoo and Mor see the blackness as an unconscious representation of the dark nature of reality. John Yungblut connects interest in the Black Madonna as a willingness to search for the darkness for the secrets of the soul. Cedrus N. Monte writes of the Black Madonna: “She carries the dark pole of the feminine archetype. As such, the Black Madonna is the religious expression of one aspect of the Godhead, revealing its dark, unconscious, mysterious, and unpredictable side.”

The Black Madonna, according to Gustafson, has been compared to the personages of other Goddesses such as Kali, Lilith and Persephone of the underworld. As archetypal energies within the psyche, the dark goddesses break down and mutate toxic forms fueling individual growth. Primitive energies become transformed by fully being acknowledged by the presence of the Black Madonna. Monte asserts that: “Only when we are willing to fully and deeply acknowledge the presence of these dark forces can the angel-our redemption-come.”

**Conclusion**
Karen writes that the concept of attachment includes components that are social, emotional, behavioral and cognitive. As the child develops the relationships between these components change, as well as the nature of these components. However, Karen adds that attachment remains a relationship in which a weaker, less skilled person relies on a more powerful person for protection. The child’s relationship to the caregiver will stimulate the child to develop a specific attachment pattern. Secure attachment helps the child develop normally while insecure attachment will impede the child’s age appropriate development. Goldberg wrote about various types of insecure attachment patterns. Bowlby termed these attachment patterns ‘working models’ or ‘internal representations’ of the attachment relationship. This relationship changes with development, but also remains stable in some cases. The internal working model of the caretaker influences the development to the child’s internal attachment representations. Bowlby and others contend that when attachment is insecure the child needs help to prevent perpetuation of this pattern.

Bowlby observed and noted that attachment behaviors differed from other aspects of human interaction. Signaling behaviors of a young child become more intense when the child was under stress and at the same time exploring behaviors were inhibited. Bowlby considered the attachment process to be a developmental process that continues throughout ones life cycle.

Bowlby found that children developed internal working models as representations of relationship patterns that were somewhat stable throughout ones life cycle. Bowlby also made the connection between early insecure attachment patterns and the development of psychopathology in adults. Ainsworth and her colleagues studied
primary caregiver and attachment patterns with a systematic research design. They were able to differentiate the various attachment styles of children separated from their primary caregiver. Main and Kaplan postulated that for attachment patterns to change there must be a shift in the child’s internal working models and this can only happen through the images held by a greater source or the caregiver.

Attachment research has been convergent with scientific findings regarding the social nature of the developing mind. The findings of interpersonal neurobiology yield a biological view as to the importance of attachment experiences in the development of the human infant. Schore states that though this attachment system is “hard wired”, an individual’s experiences organizes this system. Experiences activate neurons in the brain that respond to incoming information from the environment. But neurons can also respond to internally generated images created by the individual’s own brain recalling past events.

There are two claims made by Attachment theorists: one is that the results of the Strange Situation Study are universal and, in contrast these results are not universal and are subject to cultural influences. Harwood, Miller, and Irizarry suggest that the dominant US culture’s attachment development is that of an autonomous unit in pursuit of selfinterest.

According to Meadowcroft and Thomlison the increasing number of neglected, abused and abandoned children entering the foster care system has led to the recruitment and training of professional foster mothers. Professional foster mothers deal with children who have had attachment disruptions. These disruptions result in the child
having behavioral and emotional problems. Meadowcroft and Thomlison add that the professional foster mother must be able to deal with these troubled children.

Fox defines other terms for professional foster care which includes specialized foster care, treatment foster care, therapeutic foster care or group home care. He adds that the modern movement toward professional foster care has been accelerating and is expected to continue. Norgard and Mayhall report that traditional foster mothers, unlike modern foster mothers, were able to spend years with their charges. They were able to watch their charges grow up and become adults with extended contact with the family. In the past two decades there have been clear trends in the changing demands put on the foster mother as the foster population has changed. For example, the modern foster mother will deal with children that may be different from her racially or ethnically. These children are often victims of neglect, abuse, and chronic poverty. Modern foster children have more extreme mental health and attachment problems, as reported by Norgard and Mayhall. The increase in drug use has resulted in an increase of birth defects that effect the cognitive and emotional development of children. As the number of difficult foster children has increased it has taxed the modern welfare system. These children may be moved into numerous foster homes, with little regard for attachment issues. These trends have resulted in the modern professional foster mother needing to deal with children with extreme behaviors for shorter periods of time. Solomon and George report that in the United States foster children are in professional foster homes for a shorter period of time than in the past. Professional foster mothers often lose contact with the children who are moved from their home. Edelstein, et al. found that the necessity for modern foster mothers to deal with grief, loss and shame has increased from
the time of the traditional foster mother. Foster mothers who are able to process their
grief and loss are thought to be more effective in the promotion of secure attachment in
their foster children.  

Omer contends that examination of the foster mothers’ imaginal structures of
attachment is an expanded view of the internal representations or internal working
models described by Bowlby. Omer further states that within the imaginal orientation,
the individual’s enhanced capacities promote contact with the soul. Omer defines soul as
the “mysterious stillness, aliveness, and otherness at the core of being.” The soul
provides the individuation that allows the foster mothers to promote attachment in their
foster children. “Individuation is the emergence of human capacities in a unique and
connected way,” as defined by Omer. The foster mother has developed the capacity for
self-knowledge in conjunction with a deeper knowledge of the world, which promotes the
enhancement of her attachments. The definition of imaginal structures in use is:

Imaginal structures are assemblies of sensory, affective, and cognitive aspects of
experience constellated into images: they both mediate and constitute experience. The specifics of an imaginal structure are determined by an interaction of
personal, cultural, and archetypal influences. These influences may be teased
apart by attention to the stories that form personal character and the myths that
shape cultural life. During the individuation process, imaginal structures are
transmuted into emergent and enhanced capacities as well as a transformed
identity. Any enduring and substantive change in individual or group behavior
requires a transmuting of imaginal structures. This transmutation depends upon an
affirmative turn towards the passionate nature of the soul.

The archetype of the mother, according to Sardello, has been recognized since the
early development of the human race and has appeared in all cultures. Jung adds that
the mother figures have been the symbol of life, death and rebirth. Campbell and
Muses report that the mother archetype has appeared in religion, myth and folklore in
various forms. The Great Mother or Great Goddess is associated with the birth of
children and the nourishment of plants, life and the earth.\textsuperscript{982} The archetype of the foster mother best appears in the form of The Great Mother as Sophia.\textsuperscript{983} Sophia often becomes the mother of the abandoned and excluded child.\textsuperscript{984} The shadow side of Sophia is contained within the image of the Black Madonna.\textsuperscript{985} This archetype serves as a bridge between the good mother and the rejecting mother.\textsuperscript{986} It is through contact with the shadow that the mother is in touch with her soul. Phillips concludes that, Sophia, Isis, Eve and the Virgin Mary are the life giving nourishing side of the instinctual feminine, while Lilith, Kali and Hecate are the death dealing opposite.\textsuperscript{987}

Meadowcroft and Thomlison found that there is limited current research about characteristics of professional foster mothers.\textsuperscript{988} They state that gaining information about professional foster mothers is vital to the care of children in our foster care system.\textsuperscript{989} As the literature review demonstrates there is a gap in the research on professional foster mothers. In the United States there is currently a shortage of foster parents. The recruitment and training of foster parents is not keeping up with the necessity for children to be in out of home care.\textsuperscript{990} Professional foster mothers deal with children who have been abused and abandoned, while developing insecure attachment patterns.\textsuperscript{991} Given the changing nature of foster mother duties it is important to gain insights into the attachment processes of professional foster mothers. Research on professional foster mothers will be helpful in the selection and training of effective professional foster mothers. Reviewing the research conducted on all aspects of foster mothering provides grounding for this additional research. The examination of imaginal structures provides information as the images and capacities of effective professional foster mothers. To capture the foster mothers’ images and meaning making the
methodology used was qualitative. There have been few research designs using a qualitative methodology using professional foster mothers as subjects. There has been no research using music and art to reflect attachment experiences. There is limited research on how caretakers might promote change in a child’s attachment pattern. There is no research on the images held by the caregiver who attempts to change insecure attachment patterns. There has been no research done with professional foster mothers using a group setting. The use of a group setting deepens the attachment experiences as described by Siegel. In studying the attachment processes of foster mothers and their imaginal structures new information will be added to the literature.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Overview

Research Problem, Hypotheses, and Design

As explored in the Literature Review, the imaginal structures of foster mothers influence their children’s attachment patterns. Childhood secure attachments aid the individual’s development throughout their life span. Children that are insecurely attached require a special kind of mothering to help them attach securely. The hypotheses of this research study is that: the imaginal structures related to attachment are activated among foster mothers, through awareness, access, acceptance, and a working relationship to negative affects, insecure attachment patterns can be transmuted into capacity for secure attachment.

In order to capture the foster mother’s experiences images and meaning making a qualitative methodology was used. The qualitative design is both descriptive and analytic. The data collected consisted of discussions, images, writings, and observable behaviors. Qualitative studies are not directly generalizable to other populations or settings. Therefore, the collected data was specific to a particular population, time and place. The data of this research will reflect the in-depth experiences of a select group of foster mothers.\(^1\) The researcher, using this methodology, created a new knowledge that was not available in ordinary social interactions.\(^2\) Qualitative research methodology is situated within the participatory paradigm.
Included as part of the participative inquiry was the interaction between the researchers and participants. A fundamental quality of the participative worldview is that it is self-reflective and allows the individual to explore the whole rather than be separated from the living world. John Heron and Peter Reason state:

The participatory worldview allows us as human persons to know that we are part of the whole rather than separated as mind over and against matter, or placed here in the reality separate creation of a transcended god. It allows us to join with fellow humans in collaborative forms of inquiry. It places us back in the living world.³

A participatory methodology created by Meridian University is entitled “Imaginal Inquiry” and was used in this study. “Imaginal Inquiry draws on Active, Heuristic, Phenomenological, and Naturalistic research methods.” ⁴

The methodology of Imaginal Inquiry is divided into four phases. In the first phase, the researcher evokes an experience. The specific experiences evoked in my investigation were experiences of mothering, which enable an insecurely attached foster child to attach. This mothering helps the child to develop a secure attachment pattern. New knowledge was collected through evoking experiences. The validity of this research rests on the authenticity of this evoked experience.⁵ The evoked experience occurred through the use of story, art, pictures, discussion, and music. Lewis writes: “…sound permeates through the body boundaries and intellectual defenses, it is often considered the most basic form of connecting and communing with the imaginal world.” ⁶ Dissanayake adds that language, art, and other kinds of performance share features of the mother-child engagement.⁷ It was through this drawing out of the foster mother’s maternal experiences that imaginal structures were explored. When images are evoked then authentic experiences can be expressed. Omer states: “Mental and physical
phenomena are mediated by imagery. That is why imagery is the core of affects, thoughts, and actions.”

In the second phase, the evoked experience was expressed. These experiences were expressed in a collectable manner. For instance, the foster mothers journaled about their evoked experiences, created art, shared stories, and participated in taped discussions. The foster mothers were also asked to answer specific questions, which were written and taped when verbalized. The researcher and co-researcher also expressed their experiences through the medium of journal writing. The researcher facilitated the deepening of evoked experience, as well as gathered the data. The evoked experiences deepened through the making of art, discussion, sharing of stories, and pictures. The data was recorded in the form of journaling, audiotaping and, photographing.

In the third phase, the expressed experiences were interpreted. This phase took place after the primary data was collected. The participants, co-researcher, and the researcher made meaning of what had been evoked and expressed by the participants. This phase also addressed the theories of Attachment and Imaginal Psychology, which were drawn upon to interpret the data. Meanings were expressed by moving through the data in four specific steps: identifying key events during the data collection; identifying expressed passages and images from the data that were the most significant and meaningful; exploring the commonalties and differences between the researcher’s, participants’, and co-researcher’s responses; and identify the theory and myth that is the backdrop of the dissertation. The approach used in this study identified events using a combination of intuitive and narrative approaches. For instance, the examination of passages that leapt out, metaphorical phrases, and turning points in response were
identified in participant dialogue. It was through this interpretation the researcher
organized the data and addressed the research question. The research question was: what
is required psychologically from the maternal side of the attachment process to transmute
insecure attachment patterns into secure attachment patterns?

The last phase was to integrate the interpreted experiences into the lives of the
participants and co-researcher. The foster mothers were provided with a summary of the
findings of this study. The information gathered in this study was also integrated into the
existing knowledge of foster mothers, attachment, and Imaginal Psychology. The
integration into foster care was achieved by providing the summary of findings to a
teacher of foster parents at Butte Collage, California. Also, a summary of the findings
was made available at various foster parent conferences. In the field of psychology, this
dissertation is available for students attending Meridian University.

Co-Researcher

The co-researcher, Cheryl Scholar, is a graduate of Meridian University, with a
MA degree in psychology. My co-researcher has experience with the methodology of
Imaginal Inquiry. Cheryl and myself were co-researchers for Mary Fullwood’s
dissertation, Re-imagining Beauty: An Exploration of the Female Grotesque. Cheryl has
worked collaboratively as a school board member and city council elected official. She
has a high degree of self-knowledge and awareness. The utilization of a co-researcher
throughout the research process enhanced the study’s validity due to the sharing of
observations and insights.
Limitations and Delimitations

My research design has several limitations. The participants of this study live and work in a small rural community comprised of primarily white Anglo-Saxon Protestants. The participants were professional foster mothers and received training and education in psychology. All of the participants had a BA degree and some had MA degrees. There was a relatively high level of psychological awareness in this group. The participants may encounter each other professionally, as the child welfare system in Butte County is small. This may have caused some hesitation in sharing or being open during the research weekend.

The group consisted of seven foster mothers. This provided enough data for a qualitative research design that allowed for the depth of inquiry required for validity in a participatory research paradigm. One possible limitation could have been that the study was not generalizable to all foster mothers.

There was a tendency for the participants to socialize, as the foster mothers had much in common. This familiarity may have provided the safety allowing for a deeper sharing, but at times it was hard to collect the data as they were all talking at once. Some verbal data may have been lost but perhaps the depth of the communication was enhanced.

The foster mothers, except one, had only worked with adolescent children. This was not anticipated in the research design but, as it turned out, only the foster mothers of adolescent children could spare a weekend to do the research study. This may have limited the nature of the data, thus skewing the results.
Prior to sharing experiences, the participants journaled. In this sequence, they avoided being influenced by others’ comments and captured the immediacy of their experience. However, some group members may not have expressed themselves well in the written form and may have lost the clarity of immediate verbal expression.

There were also limitations when the participants used verbal dialogues to address their art. This avoided data analysis on the visual aspects of the artwork. The visual aspects of the data were included in the data but not interpreted. The participants’ dialogue, however, was rich in content that was incorporated into the research findings.

Using the Literature Review for interpretation has limitations because the Literature Review discusses only briefly the cultural aspects and cultural implications of mothering.

The participants shared at deep levels that were similar to a therapy group. The strong affects became part of the research data but may have deepened if the participants and researcher were assured of the safety of a long-standing therapeutic relationship.

**The Site and the Participants**

Qualitative studies are not generalizable to other populations or settings. The basis of qualitative research is that human experience is not subject to random samples but is particular to time and place. Therefore, the subjects in this study were limited to seven women. These women have been professional foster mothers for ten years or more. They were currently working with children within the welfare system. “Professional” was defined as foster mothers who have been trained and paid to be in a maternal role with children not their own. The foster mothers were of different ages, same ethnic group, same socio-economic status, and all college educated. The participants all worked in
Butte County, California in various child welfare agencies. The professional foster mothers had some psychological training from workshops and individual supervision. Personal and professional contacts were used to post flyers in agencies providing care for foster children (Appendix 4 and 5). When the foster mothers called the researcher, they were informed about the research project (Appendix 6). The researcher attempted to motivate the foster mothers by sharing with them what they would be contributing to the field of child welfare and foster care. They were introduced to the concept of gaining new learning. The experienced foster mothers who responded to this type of motivation were considered appropriate for this study. The foster mothers that were appropriate to participate in the research study received a follow up letter with further information (Appendix 7).

Participants were screened as to the length of their experience in foster care, their level of psychological awareness, willingness to work with images, and share their experiences with other foster mothers. Every experienced foster mother responding to the flyer was selected.

At the first meeting, confidentiality was reviewed with the participants. The names of the foster mothers were confidential and fictitious names were used in the dissertation. The foster mothers were invited to ask questions about confidentiality and other concerns. At this first meeting, the foster mothers signed an informed consent form after it had been reviewed (Appendix 9). The participants filled out, The Foster Mother Participant’s Information Sheet, choosing the fictitious name they wanted to be used in the dissertation (Appendix 10).
The research weekend meetings with foster mothers were conducted at a private residence. Only the researcher, co-researcher, and participants were on the premises during the study. The house and yard provided enough space for the participants to sit comfortably, journal and create art. Various art supplies were provided and the participants were free to choose the materials they wanted to work with (Appendix 11).

Lunch on Saturday was catered and the caterers left after providing bag lunches. There was a large group room, areas to create art and eat lunch in. Also there was a large back yard and patio with participant stations for the private creation of art and story.

The study was described to the participants five times: during the phone interview, the start of each day of the research weekend and in the research Summary of Learnings (Appendix 12).

**Four Phases of Imaginal Inquiry**

**Evoking Experience: Phase One**

In this study, the goal of an evoked experience was to create an immediate and significant experience of mothering a foster child and, specifically, an insecurely attached child. The first evoked experience in this study could occur during the telephone interview. The interview could have potentially evoked experience as the topic of foster mothering is discussed.

The first morning of the research weekend, each participant lit a candle to recognize the foster children they have worked with. They said the names of foster children as they lit the candle.
The song, “This is to Mother You,” from *Gospel Oak* by Sinead O’Connor was played. The song was played again to help the participants focus on the words. They briefly meditated to help the foster mothers to recall and coalesce in their minds their own childhood vulnerabilities in regard to attachment. Participants introduced themselves and told about their self as a child, especially at a time when they did not feel safe and nurtured. Participants’ journaling and verbal data was collected on audiotape. At a silent break, drinks and snacks were provided. I played the song, “Sweet Side,” from the tape *World Without Tears* by Lucinda Williams to keep the research process going.

After break, participants shared a story about their attachment process with their own caregiver. They passed a picture of their mother around the group, as they talked. Without direction the participants put their mother’s pictures on the alter. After their stories the participants wrote a letter to their respective mothers. While they ate bag lunches they read their letters to the other participants. This was part of the research plan to keep the process going.

The co-researcher read to the participants the book, *Love You Forever* (Appendix 13). Participant’s had their own copy of the book and looked at pictures as the story progressed. This story has pictures that depict the process of the stronger person looking over the weaker person as if to protect them, which is the basic foundation of attachment according to attachment theory. The participants were asked to share a memory of her having a positive interaction with a foster child. They then shared a memory of a negative attachment experience they have had with a foster child.

In the last evoked experience of the day, participants were asked to create an art piece that reflected the image or images of what interferes with the maternal attachment
process. They conducted a dialogue with their art piece and shared their results with the group (Appendix 14). The art pieces were put up around the room to further evoke experiences.

The last day, the co-researcher chimed in and each foster mother lit a candle in memory of the children they had mothered. The group shared images, memories or experiences that came up during the night. The co-researcher read a story about the mother-child attachment process. The story depicted the child’s imagination of being cared for and, in reality, not being cared for. The story was *The Little Match Seller* by Hans Christian Anderson (Appendix 15). The participants were instructed to write an original story or myth about attachment between mother and child or children. The stories were creative and the foster mothers sharing the stories further evoked the experience of maternal attachment (Appendix 16). The use of story, art, and music were used to evoke experiences in this study. The telling and listening to stories and narratives strongly evoked the foster mothers’ experiences.

**Expressing Experience: Phase Two**

As stated, often the expressing of an experience will evoke further experience. These two experiences are not as entirely separate as they are presented. However, the foster mothers’ experiences of activities and processes were expressed in a collectable manner. The data collection was done as close to the evoked experience as possible. The participants were presented with open-ended questions, allowing for a wider range of responses and a deepening of the learning experience.10 The sequence of activities allowed for both verbal and written data. The researcher generally presented the sequence
of: an attachment story (verbally and in song), an artistic activity, journaling, and verbal sharing with the group.

The researcher, co-researcher, and participants transcribed their impressions throughout the weekend in a journal. It was through this journal writing that the participants captured their experiences.

The first evening of the research weekend, the participants shared memories of their experiences with foster children. The researcher also shared memories and talked about confidentiality in order to build safety and trust within the group. This discussion was audiotaped. After this process, participants were asked to journal about what had come up for them. They were directed to pay attention to thoughts, images, feelings, and memories. An art activity was introduced in a non-threatening manner in order to create a safe and creative environment. The foster mothers were provided time to express their concerns and fears in regard to art making. Art making was used to symbolically express their immediate imaginal experiences. The participants wrote in their journals after dialoguing with the image. They shared their journal writings with the group. A variety of art materials were provided to encourage participant self-expression. This sharing was taped and the art pieces were photographed. The foster mothers were instructed to conduct an imaginal dialogue with the artwork while recording the interaction in their journals. The foster mothers and researchers were provided time to journal. The last day of the research weekend, the participants were given time to write an original story about attachment. This story was written in their journals. The participants read their stories to the group and this activity was audiotaped.
The final ritual was audiotaped to collect the foster mother’s meaningful memories from the weekend. Two weeks after the group meeting, participants and the co-researcher were asked to reflect in writing their experiences since the weekend meeting. The foster mothers, researcher, and co-researcher were asked to list in chronological order the ten meaningful events, memories, or images evoked by the study. This was audiotaped. The data that was collected was mailed to the participants with a Thank You Letter (Appendix 17).

**Interpreting Experience: Phase Three**

The methodology of Imaginal Inquiry consists of four stages to interpret experience. The four Interpreting Experience stages include: identifying the moments, responding to the moments, exploring the differences and parallels, and contextualizing with theory and myth. This approach was used to glean imaginal structures and their personal, cultural, and archetypal influences. The design of this research moved the analysis of the data through these four specific stages.

The identification of key experiences during the data collection was accomplished through a combination of two approaches. This section discusses the means in which the researcher approached the meaning-making from the collected experiences and what interpretative tools the researcher will utilize to carry out the analysis. This meaning-making process included the foster mothers and the co-researcher. The interpreting experience process occurred several times during the research weekend. During the closing ritual each day, the foster mothers were asked to share important memories and experiences of the day. After two weeks, the co-researcher and foster mothers listed the ten key moments or memories that stood out for them relating to the experiences from the
research weekend. The co-researcher and researcher responded to their own and participant key moments by employing the capacities of reflexivity and collaboration.

The researcher and co-researcher read the transcripts, journals, original stories, and art from the research weekend in order to review the scope and terrain of the participants’ responses and experiences. These interpretive approaches helped yield multiple interpretations of the data. The goal was to select the most significant and meaningful passages. Initially, all the data was reviewed to identify any passages that stood out for any particular reason. Next, the data was reviewed for passages that were turning points in the narrative or story. Cheryl Scholar, the co-researcher reviewed the data and provided feedback as to the researcher’s bias. The length of the research project lent itself to narrative analysis as trust and safety developed allowing the participants to tell their stories.

Marshall and Rossman wrote:

Narrative inquiry requires a great deal of sensitivity between participant and researcher. The inquiry should be a mutual and sincere collaboration, a caring relationship akin to friendship that is established over time for full participation in the storytelling, retelling, and reliving of personal experiences. It demands intense active listening and giving the narrator full voice.\(^\text{12}\)

The second step required the researcher and co-researchers to be aware of their reactions to the data. The researcher and co-researcher reflected, discussed, and collaborated in regard to their intersubjective responses.

In the third step the researcher explored the parallels and differences in the participant identification of key events or moments. The results were shared with the co-researcher to evaluate the trustworthiness of the interpretations. By reviewing and
addressing the discrepancies, the researcher’s interpretations captured the deeper multi-faceted meanings of the complex research data.

The final step reviewed the theoretical and archetypal structures in which the foster mothers’ experiences were embedded making final meaning of the data. The Literature Review discusses the theory of attachment and the role the mother plays in this process. The archetypal mother is discussed in Chapter 2, Literature Review, as well as the archetypal mother for the abandoned and lost child. The archetypal backdrop for the research study required use of the myth of, *The Abduction of Persephone*, to provide a deeper meaning to the interpretation of maternal experiences. The mythological interpretation is elaborated as to its significance in Chapter 5, Reflections.

**Integrating Experience: Phase Four**

The Integrating Experience Phase attempts to assist the participants in the integration of new knowledge. This new knowledge gained revealed the complexities of foster mothering and hopefully increased appreciation the maternal role. The sharing of imaginal activities with other participant foster mothers supported the integration of the archetypal mother among the maternal community. The foster mother co-participants integrated their attachment experiences as the research weekend progressed through the interweaving of imagery, memories, reflections, and resonance with other participants.

At the start and end of each day, participants engaged in an opening and closing ritual, which invited them to identify and share images and key moments of the evening and day. This supported their focus, identification, and integration of their significant experiences.
The foster mothers were provided with a written summary of Chapter 4, Learnings. This summary communicated the research findings and further questions, left unanswered. In the cover letter provided with the Summary of Learnings the participants were encouraged to call or e-mail the researcher as to their questions and reactions to the research experience or the Summary of Learnings (Appendix 12).

The schedule for the research weekend provided time for discussions, journal writing, art making and movement which facilitated the integration of experience (Appendix 19 and 20). The group provided a container to assist in holding the individual integration of experience. In the final ritual, the participants were gifted with a small silver acorn as a transitional object to carry the experiences of the workshop into their daily lives.

Participants that expressed a desire to continue their exploration of attachment were provided a Therapist Referral List of qualified therapists to facilitate their continued integration and psychological work (Appendix 21).

The use of imaginal processes was part of my research design. The research design employed the use of ritual, imaginal dialogues, imaginal stories, and forms. The purpose of my research project was to reveal the imaginal structures that support the attachment process of foster mothers. Meridian University supports the healthy expression of soul. Exploring the imaginal structures of foster mothers supported the archetypal maternal and care of the soul. Meridian University also values the development of community. Effective mothering forms the basis of a child’s successful interaction with community.
CHAPTER 4

LEARNINGS

Introduction and Overview

In this inquiry design the Research Problem explored is: In what ways does exploration of imaginal structures related to attachment among foster mothers provide insight into the foster mother’s attachment process with adolescent foster children? It was hypothesized that imaginal structures related to attachment are activated among foster mothers through awareness, access, acceptance and working relationship to negative affects, insecure attachment patterns can be transmuted into capacity for secure attachment. Attachment principles are central to the study, with the foundation being that attachment patterns change when there is a shift in the child’s internal working models, which can only happen through the images held by the greater source of the personal mother and the archetypal mother. The cumulative learning supported by the data states: Bringing negative affects related to attachment failures to consciousness through shared meaning-making and imaginal activities facilitates the integration of these affects, expands one’s capacity to recognize one’s own maternal shadow, and lessons the possibility of unconscious enactment.

Five Learning’s were derived from the research data. Learning One, “The Good Mother,” was derived from the analysis of the participant’s negative affects of fear, distress and shame. The data was collected from participant writings and sharing a recollection of their own unsafe childhood experiences. Learning One states that those unable to confront and metabolize the negative affects of shame, distress, and fear that
arise in response to an exploration of attachment failure, defend against these affects by internalizing responsibility for these failures and over-idealizing and/or caretaking neglectful or abusive parents.

In Learning Two, “Resonance,” the majority of foster mothers articulated cogent narratives including comprehensive descriptions of their own caretakers. Learning Two states that the narrative sharing of adult over-idealization of neglectful or abusive parents, as well as challenging the cultural taboos against expressing grief and anger towards one’s mother breaks down the dissociation from one’s affective experience allowing for an interpersonal resonance associated with secure attachment. Learning Three, “Good and Evil,” is based on the data collected from the participant’s self-created images and dialogue with the negative mother. Learning Three states that expression of affective experiences of negative mothering may inhibit unconscious enactment of those experiences by bringing them to consciousness and allowing their integration. Learning Four, “Positive and Negative,” is based on the participant’s writing and the oral sharing of a positive and negative attachment experience with their foster children. Learning Four states that working with adolescents who have experienced significant attachment failures require the ability to embody the trickster archetype and to transmute the negative affect of anger into appropriate fierceness. Learning Five, “Attachment Story,” presents data on participant creation and witnessing of attachment stories. Learning five states that the creation and witnessing of an attachment story allows for the expression of unconscious internal representations of attachment patterns, putting one in relationship with aspects of the self that need nurturing, thus providing relief from unconscious defenses.
The Learnings presented in the following six sections includes the following:
A description of what happened, how the researcher was affected, researchers’ imaginal structures, theoretical concepts in the interpretations, interpretations of what happened, and validity considerations. The Imaginal Inquiry research methodology was created by Omer and is inside the participatory research paradigm.¹ Researchers using Imaginal Inquiry give special attention to marginalized and taboo experiences.²

Learning One: The Good Mother

Individuals unable to confront and metabolize the negative affects of shame, distress, and fear that arise in response to an exploration of attachment failure, defend against these affects by internalizing responsibility for these failures and over-idealizing and/or caretaking neglectful or abusive parents. The participants’ non-verbal communication, expressed affects, body posture, verbal content, writings, and mutual attunement provided data for this Learning. As the participants reported the memory of being unsafe the negative affects of fear, distress, anger and shame were evoked. Shame was the affect the participants were most defended against feeling during their recollections.

What Happened

The data collected were from the evoked experiences from participants listening to a song about secure attachment, and shared personal childhood experiences of an insecure attachment process. This sharing was followed by participant journaling to capture how they were individually affected by this evoked attachment experience. Participants then wrote a letter to their respective mothers.
After chiming in and lighting candles, participants listened to a song by Sinead O’Connor entitled “This is to Mother You,” which is a song about a mother sharing a secure attachment experience with her child. While the music was playing, the participants bowed their heads and appeared to meditate on the words of the song. When the song was played twice, three participants shed tears and another had her eyes closed. At the end of the song the participants were sitting straight in their chairs with their shoulders squared. They raised their heads and immediately interacted visually and verbally. Neither diminished interest, conversation withdrawal, nor the reduction of the muscle tone in the neck and body were noticed during or at the end of the song.

After the music was played, participants were provided quiet time to recall and coalesce their childhood vulnerabilities associated with attachment. Each participant then introduced herself and shared a childhood experience of not feeling safe or nurtured by her caregiver.

During this introduction “Linda” (pseudonym) shared that she had not been protected from her father’s anger while he was drinking. Linda stated, “I remember thinking, where is my mother?” Her voice was raised, child-like, and angry sounding. Linda journaled encouraging statements to herself to work on her relationship with her mother, admonishing herself to “show up for her mother.” In her letter to her mother, Linda wrote that she has become content being alone and that she has made bad choices in her relationships. She depicted her mother’s childhood attachment failures rather than her own; she wished that her mother’s life had been better.

“Cher” (pseudonym) had three brothers who terrorized her until she stayed in the bathroom in order to find safety. She realized at an early age her mother was not going to
protect her. Cher indicated that she wondered about her mother, “does she not see
what is going on in the house?” When stating these words Cher’s voice rose with the ring
of angry conviction. She looked into the participant faces and smiled slightly. In her
journal she wrote that she rarely allows herself to feel vulnerable. “As I feel vulnerable, I
immediately go into strength mode.” In her letter to her mother, Cher wrote, “I
remember as a child, feeling like I had to protect you from any negative feelings because
you couldn’t handle your own-so I didn’t want to let you see mine.” Cher apologized to
her mother for having an agenda and expecting too much of her.

“Mary” (pseudonym) shared that an uncle had sexually abused her and her mother
would not believe her when she reported the situation. Mary wondered out loud why her
mother left her with her uncle and would not believe she was being sexually abused.
Mary spoke while looking down, with her body appearing stiff and rigid. She talked
fast; looking up and smiling each time she finished a sentence. While looking up and
smiling Mary did not look into the faces of the participants or researchers. In her journal
Mary wrote that she was flooded with emotions and expressed surprise at her own
emotional response. She did not name her emotions. Mary’s words did not seem to go
with her affect. As she talked about sexual abuse she was smiling. She was the one
participant who did not express feelings verbally but she wrote that she was flooded with
emotions. She did not elaborate on her emotions. While writing to her mother she
thanked her for being a great and perfect Mom. She then wrote, “I wish you had allowed
us to be ourselves no matter what we had done. We would have not worried to tell you
the truth because you would judge us.” She further wrote, “I wonder how many people
I have missed out on because I thought they were flawed.”
“Dolly” (pseudonym) shared that she loved to play outside, but her mother berated her for being messy and not taking care of herself. She indicated that she felt her mother was disappointed with her. Dolly’s voice got very soft and it was hard to hear her. Her body posture softened as she continued to look into participant faces. Dolly described her mother as “slamming” her for walking in rain puddles and returning home wet and dirty. At this point Dolly had an edge of anger in her voice. Dolly did not mention the affect of shame but in her letter to her mother she was able to express how hard it was for her as a child knowing that her mother saw her as someone who did not measure up. She wrote, “As a kid, I remember feeling like I was a constant disappointment to you.”

“Jessie” (pseudonym) stated that she was sexually abused as a child and her mother was not available to talk to or notice the abuse. Jessie’s voice was soft and childlike. While speaking she had several hesitant starts and stops stating, “It is hard to share with so many strangers.” Jessie wrote in her journal that she wanted to cry while talking, but was too embarrassed to do so. She also wrote that she caught herself going into her role as protector of her mother. She wrote that she felt anger towards her mother and caught herself trying to, “protect my mother at all cost.” In her letter to her mother Jessie was able to express anger and detail why she had such feelings as her needs had not been met.

“Frieda” (pseudonym) described herself as being in a threatening situation with her mother who showed no empathy towards her. Frieda reported thinking, “can’t you just be there for me, and can’t you make it about me just for once?” The situation she shared was as an adult giving birth to her own child. Frieda’s body posture was straight
and rigid. Her voice was loud and angry, her eyes half closed and teeth together while looking into the faces of the other participants. In her journal Frieda expressed resistance to “looking at issues with my Mom.” She elaborated by writing that she could not allow herself to wish for a nurturing Mom. In her letter to her mother, she expressed anger. Frieda acknowledged that her mother’s lack of approval caused her grief.

“Jenna Lee” (pseudonym) shared memories of when her father was drinking and her parents were fighting. During these times Jenna Lee was fearful and hid under the kitchen table. As Jenna Lee talked she looked into the faces of the other participants with wet eyes. Her voice became very soft and she appeared to relax into her chair. In her letter to her mother, she wrote, “I wish you had been able to allow my hesitations, my sadness, and my need for your comfort as a child.” While writing in her journal, Jenna Lee wrote about fear, “fear of judgment, fear of not being valued, fear of being rejected, abandoned, and unlovable.”

In general, the participants shared their unsafe experiences through long pauses, changes in voice tone, sighs, choking, and restarting of sentences. Five participants looked into the faces of the others, making eye contact while talking. Mary looked up and smiled, but did not make eye contact and Jessie looked down talking in a soft voice with tears in her eyes.

**How I was Affected**

I felt like crying during the song, “This is to Mother You.” Music releases affects and allows the imagination to develop with the sound. I was surprised at the depth of my emotions. I felt a lump in my throat and tears behind my eyes. My body felt limp and I wanted to withdraw from the group. The song was about a securely attached, attuned,
nurturing mother. In attachment terms the mother was available and attuned to the child.\textsuperscript{37} My childhood experiences of maternal disgust and rejection provided the basis for my feelings of shame. Adults shamed as children often feel flawed and imperfect.\textsuperscript{38} I felt insecure that I might not be able to collect the data. I also experienced shame and sadness when I allowed myself to desire a secure attachment figure.

**Imaginal Structures**

The participants’ sharing of unsafe childhood experiences evoked for me the image of myself as an abandoned child. The affect that I experienced was that of shame. It is the desire for maternal attunement and caring that brings up the shame.\textsuperscript{39} Nathanson writes: “It is to protect ourselves from the pain of love sought and love refused that we will ourselves to withhold interest, to remain aloof and immune to the entreaties of the possibly loving but possibly shaming other.” \textsuperscript{40}

In therapy I have often held the image of an abandoned child sitting alone on a street curb. This affect related script stored in my memory magnifies my shame and associated pain. When I accepted this image and the affect associated with it I decided to restrain myself from my accustomed pattern of avoidance. I faced the psychological crossroad of choosing avoidance patterns or secure attachment patterns with the participants. The pain associated with the experience of shame slowly dissipated as I chose not to defend myself against the experience.

I noticed that the participants were attuned and supportive to one another, making it safer to express negative affects towards their mothers. I was aware of the cultural taboo associated with the exposure of the negative mother and associated affects. I experience hatred towards my mother and often hold the image of her as a witch. I felt
some frustration thinking that the participants were holding back negative affects. The strength and intensity of my own negative affects towards my mother were influencing my expectations of participant responses.

I assured myself that I could continue with the research weekend and function while allowing my affects to emerge. As I calmed myself and allowed my sadness, anger and shame to emerge, I felt a relief from anxiety.

Because I allowed myself to experience the need for a secure attachment, I was able to feel safe and secure, sensing that I was in the presence of mothers. Letting go of my defenses allowed me to be more open.

While each participant shared unsafe memories, I observed that other participants’ attunement and mirroring supported the process. I imagined a supportive mother and I also felt the participants’ support and encouragement as I introduced each activity and guided the group.

**Theoretical Concepts**

Securely attached individuals have patterns of engaging in frequent self-reflection. Main noted that individual differences in adult self-reflective observations predict their attachment patterns. Modulation of infant affect by an attuned and responsive mother aids the child in developing the capacity for self-reflection. In contrast attachment insecurity is identified on the basis of a tendency of the individual to deny negative experiences and avoid self-reflection. Consequently, insecurely attached individuals present an over-idealized image of their parents.

Miller contends that, when adult children cannot remember and express feelings about the abuses they have suffered at the hands of their parents they are destined to a life
of delusion, compulsion, pretense, and self-deception. Firestone observed that the emotionally deprived child attempts to alleviate pain by fantasizing that their parent is good. As adults, these children continue to idealize their parents, take responsibility for attachment failures, and avoid satisfying relationships. Feeney and Noller note that adults who are termed “insecurely attached” present a continued preoccupation with their parents, which is associated with incoherent expression and confusion, and are unable to help their own children develop self-reflective patterns.

Hughes notes that insecurely attached children have internal representations that promote habitual shame, which they frequently defend against. Nathanson defines shame as an affect that throws the individual into a painful experience of tension by attempting to reduce the possibilities for positive affects in situations that are stimulating them. The affect state of shame is a parasympathetic-dominant state characterized by depleted energy, which is manifested by the individual’s withdrawal from significant others. Most individuals will want to convert the experience of painful shame into something more pleasant. Nathanson arranges these defensive scripts into four affect management systems, which function to reduce the effects of shame. Withdrawal and avoidance are movements away from the uncomfortable situation. Mild withdrawal and mild avoidance are normal reactions, but insecure attachment patterns encompass extreme remoteness or self-aggrandizement. Another defensive management system involves attacking the self with a number of techniques in order to avoid shame. This unhealthy technique recreates the earliest relationship with the parent and change involves giving up identification with a shaming parent. Another unhealthy aspect of
the attack-self technique is the attack-other technique, which halts any tendency to look within the self thus fostering a system of externalization.\textsuperscript{54}

Caretakers who are not conscious of their own affects do not have the ability to mentally contain their child emotionally, thus promoting an insecure attachment pattern. Only caretakers who can experience affects freely can have the freedom to be present emotionally in order to help the child mediate affects.\textsuperscript{55}

**My Interpretation of What Happened**

Individuals unable to confront and metabolize the negative affects of shame, distress, and fear that arise in response to an exploration of attachment failure, defend against these affects by internalizing responsibility for these failures and over-idealizing and/or caretaking neglectful or abusive parents.

When the participants reported the memory of being unsafe the negative affects of fear, distress, anger and shame were evoked. Shame was the affect the participants were most guarded against feeling during their recollections. Jenna Lee, Dolly, Frieda, and Jessie were able to express their affects of shame and anger towards their caregivers. Three participants did not express negative affect towards their respective mother or describe clearly what they needed as children. Linda and Cher alluded to wanting to take better care of their mothers.\textsuperscript{56} Mary was not congruent when presenting her mother as great; she also regretted that she could not be herself with her.

As each participant shared their unsafe experience, the other participants were attuned to the shared affect and content.\textsuperscript{57} They positioned their bodies towards the speaker, passed tissue around, listened, made soothing sounds and positive comments reducing negative affects and increasing the comfort of the speaker.\textsuperscript{58}
Linda’s voice was angry and sad while sharing; however, she did not write or speak about being angry at her mother’s failure to protect her. On the contrary, in her reflections she wrote about wanting to take better care of her mother. Miller contends that the adult must be able to express negative feelings about their abuse as children. She further states that this expression must have a witness in order to free the adult from the grasp of denial. Linda was defended against her own needs, instead of stating what she might need from her mother she proposed that she take better care of her mother. This could be the result of avoidance defense associated with the affect of shame.

Cher sounded angry while talking, but transformed her face into a smile as she looked at the other participants. Like Persephone, Cher needed to be led out of the world of darkness into the light. Cher however, does not express anger or shame and in her letter, she apologizes to her mother for putting an agenda on her and expecting too much of her.

Mary struggled to remain consistent with her content and affect. The defense against her shame involved an attack-other, technique as she experiences others as flawed. Mary struggled to reflect on her childhood experiences and acknowledged that she had not done so before. Mary could not express her childhood needs distinctly.

Jenna Lee did not express her affect directly towards her mother, but expressed shame in describing her fear of judgment. She was clear about what she wanted from her mother as a child.

Jessie’s body posture and voice reflected the presence of the affect of shame. Jessie was able to acknowledge her shame and anger. She could also reflect on her desire
to use the attack-self defense and rejected its use. Jessie was clear in expressing the ways in which her mother had failed her as a child.

Dolly’s body posture, voice tone and content described the affect of shame. Dolly expressed her desire for her mother to have reflected her differently. Dolly was not defended against her experience of shame, being able to acknowledge and describe her pain as well as asking for what she might have needed as a child.

Frieda acknowledged her affects and wrote about insights into her former defensive techniques. She was able to express what she needed from her mother. Her verbal and non-verbal communications were consistent.

The preceding four participants were clear about what they wanted from their mothers and were able to express negative feelings towards their mothers. They mentioned shaming behaviors on the part of their mothers and their reactions to such maternal behaviors. Their verbal and non-verbal communications were consistent.

Validity Considerations

I established validity by the examination of my reactions and imaginal structures. Occasionally, I was fearful that I would not be able to reflect the affects of the participants as I experienced the intensity of my own affects. Being aware of my affects aided me in becoming attuned to the participants providing enhanced awareness of their non-verbal communications. Validity in the participatory paradigm is assured by inter-subjectivity and this was accomplished through sharing and collaboration with my co-researcher. The participants were also invited to identify key happenings, which were consulted while developing my interpretations. Five of the participants reported that a key moment was dealing with issues in relation to their mothers. All five commented on
how this process had evoked uncommon feelings. Many were surprised that the activity was so hard for them, as well as hard for others in the group. They expressed difficulty in confronting negative affects that arose in response to an exploration of attachment failure.

Learning Two: Resonance

The narrative sharing of adult over-idealization of neglectful or abusive parents as well as challenging the cultural taboos against expressing grief and anger towards one’s mother, breaks down the dissociation from one’s affective experience allowing for the interpersonal resonance associated with secure attachment. The content of the narratives were not as important as how the narratives were organized, presented and received. The participants presented descriptions of their past, present, and future attachment relationships. Their interactions with the other participants created complex forms of interpersonal resonance.

What Happened

Each participant’s attachment narrative is referenced through the sharing of maternal photographs and by writing a letter to her Mother. Participants shared a negative and positive childhood attachment experience while passing around a picture of their mother. Each recounted a memory concerning an attachment experience. Many talked about their mother’s attachment experiences with their own mother. Without discussion, participants wrote a letter to their own mother, stating how their trust or lack of trust in the caregiver affected their relationships. In addition, participants were instructed to write what they might tell their mother in order to improve the relationship. They shared their
letters with the other participants and later journaled about their reactions and reflections regarding the letter.

Cher showed a picture of herself being held by her mother with two brothers standing by. She shared that her mother would withdraw and fall apart. She would stay in her bed for a week at a time, shut down and depressed. Cher summed up saying “…and that’s how my Mom does things. She kind of goes away, and looks to her children for comfort and care.” Cher described her challenges with regard to trusting others to meet her needs. She also stated that she fears others will not be able to deal with her negative emotions. Cher continued to relate that her grandmother was cold and stern towards her mother. Cher concluded by sharing, “My Mom kind of did the opposite. She was almost overbearing with her love.” In her letter to her mother, Cher wrote:

Anyway—I know that while I can and do trust you will always love me no matter what, that in and of itself is enough. I also know it is enough because I know I am capable of getting any and all of my needs met in other places—and I am now even learning there are trustworthy people who care and I can care for me, all of me, even the negative stuff.67

While sharing the letter to her mother, Cher’s voice was hesitating and soft, almost child like. In her journal Cher wrote, “That was tough. Again I think what a struggle it is to be a mother. I sure appreciate everyone’s honesty and willingness to share. It helps me not feel so alone.” 68

Linda, while talking about her mother’s childhood and her relationship to Linda’s grandmother, mused, “My mom was pretty invisible as a child, she didn’t get her needs met by her mother, emotionally, at all; her mother was very self-centered and in her business.” Linda reflected in her journal writing, “Being a mother is so powerful, more powerful than any mother really knows.” 69 She also wrote that she had felt nurtured and
loved by her mother as a child. She continued to write to her mother that from her she has learned to be a good friend, sister and caretaker. She wished she felt closer to her mother as an adult. In her reflections Linda wrote: “How wonderful and blessed I feel to have the wonderful women in my life to help me sort out the generational bullshit. I continue to still long for closeness with my own mother and I strive to work on this for myself.”

Linda shared her mother’s attachment history as well as her childhood relationship with her mother. Linda is very clear about how her mother’s attachment history has affected her mother’s current relationships; however, she is less reflective regarding how her own attachment history has influenced her own relationships. She states: “I didn’t learn to trust the decisions I have made in my life. This has brought me to a place where I have made bad choices in relationships and have found myself content to be alone.”

While Linda is reading her letter to her mother she is weeping but did not explore this sadness. There was understanding of this non-verbal communication, as all the participants except one had tears in their eyes. When reflecting on this experience Linda stated that no matter how hard one tries to be happy, family insecure attachment patterns seep through. In her four-week follow-up e-mail, she expressed that a key moment was the writing and sharing of the letter to her mother, as she does not allow herself to feel such emotions. The overall key moment that stood out for her was that all the women in the group shared common issues about their attachment to their mothers. At the end of the day participants were asked to talk about key moments. Linda stated that she was
resistant to writing a letter to her mother, but it was powerful. “It helped me see my mother in a different way.”

Jenna Lee wrote that her mother worked and had several children to tend to, “And she was always around, cooking and making sure we were dressed. It’s not that I knew her as a person.” While reading her letter Jenna Lee shared that she had learned not to expect others to be supportive in difficult times. She felt like she had to hide her vulnerable and needy parts. In her letter she wrote, “I wish I had been able to allow my hesitations, my sadness, and my need for your comfort as a child. I thank you for our relationship as adults.” As Jenna Lee read her letter she stopped, caught her breath and said, “This is hard, just reading it.” Jenna Lee wrote in her journal, “This group is quite amazing, courageous, caring and smart. How lucky I am to be part of such a group.” Jenna Lee described her mother’s background as having an “emphasis on self-sufficiency.” She was born when her parents did not have a stable relationship and her father was drinking. Jenna Lee wished that her mother had allowed her to show her hesitations, sadness and need for maternal comforting. However, Jenna Lee owned that she had the courage to explore and challenge herself and share more of her “soft side, the ugly and imperfect aspects.” Jenna Lee referenced her mother’s attachment patterns, but did not go into detail as to how her mother’s experiences might have led to their development. She was; however, clear as to how her own childhood experiences have influenced her past and present relationships. Jenna Lee also wrote of her desire to develop stronger relationships in the future. In her narrative she referenced the past, present and future. In reflecting on her own state of mind Jenna Lee wrote, of her “fear of judgment, fear of not being valued, fear of being rejected, abandoned and unlovable.”
In her journal Jenna Lee wrote that she felt lucky to be part of the group of participants in the research weekend.\textsuperscript{78} While Jenna Lee was sharing, the group was attuned and focused on her, as she was while others shared. Jenna Lee was succinct and complete in her narrative. In the four-week follow-up e-mail of key moments, Jenna Lee wrote that a liberating experience for her was writing and reading her letter to her mother aloud to the group.\textsuperscript{79}

Mary shared a picture of her mother stating, “She was a fabulous mom.” However, she writes that she did not think her mother had a concept of herself other than that of a homemaker.\textsuperscript{80} In her letter Mary writes that she wishes her mother would have shared more with her and not have worried so much about what others thought.\textsuperscript{81} She wishes that she had trusted her mother enough to show her real self. As Mary read she looked up and tried to smile, but with anger said, “Stupid Moms.” In writing about her reaction and reflections Mary states that she wants to leave the workshop: “I can’t just sit in this room with these women that I don’t know and talk about my feelings and let my feelings out. I am trying to keep the emotion in because I am afraid it’s all going to sweep out and eventually the walls that I have built are going to break and the flood of emotion will run like a river.”\textsuperscript{82}

As Mary talked she looked down and then looked up with a big smile seemingly out of touch with the other participants. Mary had a great deal of trouble reflecting on her own childhood experiences and understanding her own mental states. While reporting the key moments of the day, she said, “I’m not alone and we’re all there and we all have the same feelings and wounds.” Mary did not do her four-week post research reflections although I left her numerous phone and e-mail messages.
While sharing with the group, Dolly stated she thought her mother and grandmother were two peas in a pod. She described them both as being talented women who were burdened by being mothers. She recalled her mother by saying that she was very depressed when she was pregnant with her fifth child. When her grandmother retired to Hawaii she told her family that the happiest years of her life were away from her children. Dolly wrote to her mother:

> For some reason complimenting, praising or encouraging your children is so counter to your nature. Your biggest fear when we were growing up was that we would get “swelled heads”. I wish you could bring yourself to give words to your positive feelings about me. As I know you have them. It would make such a difference. \(^{83}\)

Dolly read her letter very fast, but as she read along her voice began to shake and she paused to compose herself and blink the tears away. In her journal reflections Dolly wrote, “That was tough. Again, I think what a struggle it is to be a mother.” \(^{84}\) At the end of the day, Dolly said that a key experience was her letter to her mother. She stated that the raw pain one feels in relationship to childhood experiences struck her. She ended by saying, “I thought I was the only one who felt that way about my mom.” In the four week follow up of key moments, Dolly wrote that hearing the narratives of others and relating it to her own narrative was a key moment. \(^{85}\) Dolly refers to the development of her adult coping skills in her letter as follows: “It was rough being a kid growing up wanting caring approval and it always being out of reach. As an adult it’s different, I have enough sense of my own gifts and attributions that I don’t need too much to hear from you. Therapy does help, believe it or not.” \(^{86}\)

While Dolly read her letter to her mother, she cried, as did the other participants. Dolly referenced a resonance when she wrote that a key moment for her was “realizing
we all had similar stories of mothers who struggled with their own issues and how that interfered with their ability to nurture their kids.”

Jesse shared her mother’s picture, stating that her mother married and had four children very close together and then three more. Jessie writes:

I don’t remember you much, such a pregnant, illusory person, cooking dinner, yelling and above all else, making sure we knew we were trash, no good, ruined your life, dirty, filthy and ugly. All the cruel words, words, words, whose purpose was to negate us all, not let us exist in your psyche—but you couldn’t stop us and one day—oh happy day—the 7 of us grew bigger than the one angry hateful blob of you. On the other hand I, I survived bitch!

Her voice was very low and the tape recorder missed some of her words. Jessie wrote that she felt stronger and closer to the women in the room. In writing about her key moments of the weekend, Jessie wrote: “The first moment that stands out for me is ending the weekend and realizing the environmental energy and joy of being in a safe, comforting environment and talk about real stuff.” Jesse talked about her mother’s childhood as she shared her mother’s picture. Her mother was born during the depression and times were hard. Her family moved from the country into the city. Her mother was expected to be perfect. Her mother had four children very close together. Jessie stated, “I didn’t really have an identity, I was just another girl shoved in this slot.”

While reading her letter to her mother she began to cry. Jessie reported her reflections as follows, “I feel hopeful, and other weird feelings. Damn I hear my strength; I don’t feel like a piece of trash. I feel closer to the women in this room.” In her four week follow up e-mail of her key moments Jesse wrote that she felt a sense of trust and felt free not to “sugar coat” her narrative.

Frieda shared her mother’s picture and talked about her mother’s childhood. She stated that her mother had been very neglected because her own mother had been a single
mom working double shifts, leaving her children home alone all night. Frieda’s mother’s role was to clean and help the rest of the family. Frieda wrote in her letter to her mother: “My feelings of alternately being invisible or terrified of you left me with many years of feeling overly defensive and suspicious in my relationships. I wish I had let go of needing your approval years ago. It would have saved us both a lot of grief and useless conflict.”

Frieda related she now had women friends who provide her with positive attachment experiences. Frieda read her letter quickly and at times raised her voice. Her voice started in a firm tone, but tears came to her eyes. She said, “I am glad this is short!” In her journal Frieda reflects that she felt stupid losing control, and that she wished she did not still have such pain regarding childhood. In her four-week follow up of key moments, Frieda wrote that she was surprised that she felt such strong feeling while sharing her narrative. Frieda referred to her own state of mind when she wrote, “I really wish that I still didn’t have so much pain about my childhood. When does it ever get better? I am definitely glad I have gotten underneath the anger, but I want the pain to get better.” In relating another key moment four weeks after the research weekend Frieda, wrote that the environment and shared experiences enabled her to share more openly. Frieda acknowledged her affects and wrote about insights into her former defensive techniques. The verbal and non-verbal communications were consistent.

**How I was Affected**

As they read aloud their letters, the participants through their words and affects expressed their pain and anger in regard to their maternal childhood attachment
experiences. The depth of their sharing surprised me. Women in our culture do not generally express anger, and it is taboo to direct anger towards the mother figure.  

I felt myself cheering them on as I adjusted to their openness of expression.

**Imaginal Structures**

The expression of group support and attunement towards each participant throughout the weekend created an environment of maternal nurturing. While the letters were being read, a huge spider had made its way up the wall in full view of all the participants. A participant and co-researcher swiftly dispensed with this intruder as the rest encouraged them on. I was struck by how this unplanned event seemed to represent the group working together to create safety. The Spider Woman is often found in Native American mythologies and she consistently plays the dual roles of the helper and the creator of danger.

As many of the participants expressed their affects, they turned to the hope that their relationships with their mothers and children would be more secure. Some participants wrote and spoke of attachment reconciliation with their mothers. As the participants shared their current hopes and experiences with their mothers, I felt a sense of loss. My mother died before I had come to terms with our shared attachment experiences.

The amount of affect and content of the communication caused me to become anxious about doing therapy rather than research. The anxiety, I suspect, was the result of my own attempt to repress affect. I was able to respond with consideration and attunement to the sharing of others, but I was aware that I wanted to slow down the group process, as the feelings of loss and abandonment were becoming overwhelming.
In the development of my own personal narrative and myth, I have considered attachment relationships dangerous. My attachment style, developed in childhood, was that of an avoidant pattern. I am more comfortable alone and I have had images of others as being devouring monsters. I confronted these images in order to allow my co-researcher to support me. As I encouraged the participants to share their narratives and stories; I had the feeling that I was doing something wrong.

I drew on images of secure and safe relationships I have had in the past. I shored up parts of myself that felt safe and adequate to relate openly with others. My co-researcher shared that she felt extremely safe in the group and reflected that she thought the potential for discovery was unfolding.

**Theoretical Concepts**

The mother’s internal narrative directs her attachment style and influences her child’s attachment pattern. Bowlby stated that attachment images of oneself and of others enable one to trace the origins and understanding of what has led to their current attachment patterns. Rholes and Simpson conclude that there are numerous studies that predict that attachment styles are associated with the content and structure of the individual’s personal representations and narratives of attachment figures. Goldberg writes that this puts the individual in a position to reflect and see how old images are the product of past experiences, providing the opportunity to check them against current reality. Main proposes that differences in attachment organizations are linked to quality of metacognitive capacity, the ability to recollect and relate coherent narratives. The
capacity to maintain a coherent and cohesive autobiographical narrative and reflect on the mental states of oneself and others are capacities that promote secure attachments.\textsuperscript{102}

Hesse proposes that the verbal sharing of childhood experiences requires the speaker to perform dual tasks.\textsuperscript{103} The speaker must maintain communication while searching for memory. In this process the speaker must accomplish several tasks in order to maintain coherence in the narrative.\textsuperscript{104}

Examination of an adult narrative represents a state of mind towards attachment, not an attachment to the individual adult parent.\textsuperscript{105} Siegel proposes that autobiographical narratives of individuals with secure attachment patterns demonstrate an internal connection to the past, present and future.\textsuperscript{106}

Siegel further states that the external expression of one’s life events through narratives allows different forms of interpersonal resonance to occur.\textsuperscript{107} Right hemisphere-to-right hemisphere resonance with the speaker and listener involves the nonverbal aspects of communication.\textsuperscript{108} Also left-to-left and bilateral-to-bilateral communication occurs, creating a highly complex form of collaborative communication. In individuals with insecure attachments this complex form of communication often does not occur.\textsuperscript{109} Siegel writes that external expression of narrative thought is a form of communication that is influenced by the listeners.\textsuperscript{110}

\textbf{My Interpretation of What Happened}

The narrative sharing of adult over-idealization of neglectful and/or abusive parents as well as challenging the cultural taboos against expressing grief and anger towards one’s mother, breaks down the dissociation from one’s affective experience allowing for the interpersonal resonance associated with secure attachment. The content
of the narratives were not as important as how the narratives were organized, presented, and listened to. The participants presented descriptions of their past, present and future attachment relationships. Their interactions with the other participants created complex forms of interpersonal resonance.

Cher, Frieda, Jessie, Dolly, and Linda described their mother’s attachment process and reflected on how their mother might have developed such attachment patterns. Cher, Dolly, Frieda, Jessie, and Jenna Lee described how their own negative childhood experiences had influenced their attachment style as adults. They also referred to their adult selves as developing coping skills to get their needs met in the future. Four participants could describe the past, present and future in her narratives. All participants reflected on their own current state of mind. Frieda and Jessie shared that they had anger towards their respective mothers. All of the participants, except Mary, verbally and non-verbally expressed grief. While each participant was sharing, the group was attuned and very focused on the speaker.

Six participants were able to maintain coherence. In the four-week follow up, six participants wrote about how safe they felt while sharing. They also felt less alone while listening to the narratives of others. The resonance from the other participants provided the participants with an attunement that supported the sharing of their personal narratives.

Validity Considerations

I have considered my own experience of imaginal structures during the research process to uncover my perceptional lenses. Although, I encountered imaginal structures that were defensive to a secure attachment process, I was sensitive to my process and open to gathering data on secure attachment narratives and stories. I consulted with my
co-researcher as to the accuracy of my transcripts, journaling, and observations. In my interpretation I have considered the concepts and principles presented in the literature. Multiple sources help to ensure validity. The participants were also invited to identify key happenings, which were consulted while developing my interpretations. Five of the participants noted that that one of their key moments was hearing the narratives of other foster mothers. Linda wrote, “Over all memory that stands out for me about the weekend is that all the women in the group share common issues about their attachment to their mothers.” Other participants wrote about the safety they felt in the group as they heard others share narratives.

Learning Three: Good and Evil

Expression of affective experiences of negative mothering may inhibit unconscious enactment of those experiences by bringing them to consciousness and allowing their integration. The development of consciousness of one’s own potential for enactment of negative mothering allows one to move from pseudo-innocence to an awareness of one’s power do harm, and aids in the development of moral conscience. As the participants acknowledged the negative aspects of the mother, giving them form through art, they broke cultural boundaries, moving into new areas of expression. Art making on the theme of interference with secure attachment surfaced images of the negative and/or chthonic feminine. Dialogue with this created image provided the affective experiences of negative mothering.
What Happened

Participants were asked to create an art piece that reflected the participant’s image of what interfered with a secure maternal attachment processes. After creating an art piece they were to address the image and journal a response to the following questions: (1) When did you come into being? (2) How did you come into being? (3) What message might you have for me? (4) What might you want? (5) What stories do you know that remind you of me? Private stations for the participants to work at and a central area with various materials were provided.

After the introduction of the activity, there were a number of questions and some hesitation; however, once the participants started working at their stations, they became focused. After completing their art, the participants shared their art piece and journal writings with the group. While sharing there was some apologizing for possibly doing the activity incorrectly.

Linda’s art piece depicts the frustration of apathetic feelings toward a required project, which causes time to seem to pass slowly. Linda in her dialogue with her art piece wrote: (1) When did you come into being? “I think I started to understand this part of me when I started working with children. I noticed there were kids I really connected with and others I didn’t enjoy, or didn’t waste my time with because maybe I wasn’t getting anything out of the relationship;” (2) What message do you have for me? “To
look deeper and be more patient;” (3) What might you want? “To understand this part of me better.”

Jenna Lee, feminist in reaction to cultural sterility, narcissism, performance orientation, and the devaluing of individuality and genuineness, is dismayed by what she considered the “taming” of women. The impact of mixed societal messages for females on parenting and all relationships inspires both fear and hope. In her journal Jenna Lee wrote: (1) When did you come into being? “At the beginning of human existence.” (2) How did you come into being? “Thru my parents’ love and relationship.” (3) What message might you have for me? “Life can be confusing, constricting, and difficult yet there is hope” (4) What might you want? “More hope, more compassion, more generosity, more understanding,” (5) What stories do you know that remind you of me? “The story of Valley Oak trees that grow slowly and live on.”

Dolly’s picture is the result of her accessing her primordial fury, to which she feels [rational standards, standards of normalcy] are inapplicable. Dolly journaled the following: communication with her picture: (1) When did you come into being?
“Long, long ago when human beings first felt nature’s cruelty; (2) How did you come into being? “No-reason there are forces that mankind can’t control, that care not about his well being;” (3) What message might you have for me? “With the tremendous beauty in the world comes tremendous pain;” (4) What might you want? “For someone to reach out one more time, just to let me know they care, even if they can’t save me from the powerful forces of nature;” (5) What stories do you know that remind me of you? “Maybe just stories of the natural world, where things are destroyed and reborn.”

In Cher’s picture, the central core is healthy but becomes increasingly less so towards the “outside”; barbed wire encircles the heart as protection and the vine represents ability to resist, which results in either positive or negative growth. Cher’s journal writing revealed the following dialogue: (1) When did you come into being? “I have always been here, I will always be here. I surface usually when I haven’t taken care of myself very well-when I am emotionally exhausted I will certainly rise to the surface-sometimes when I feel hurt or betrayed. I will show myself as a way to defend or protect myself from further hurt or pain;” (2) How did you come into being? “I came into being because you needed me; it’s part of survival;” (3) What message might you have for me? “No mater how often I come out there will always be growth, so embrace this part of you along with the rest;” (5) What stories do you know that remind you of me? “Princess and the Pea, I see an image of the princess sleeping on top of many mattresses and there is one little pea underneath

Illustration 4 – Cher
them all and she feels it— even though there are multiple beds between her and the pea, this reminds me of you because no matter how much “stuff” you put between it or how hard you try not to feel, you feel it.”  

Cher wrote that the art activity was a key moment for her, stating:

When I started doing art things like it’s kind of like I almost black out. I just start doing it, it just kind of takes over. So I end up with something and then to have the questions and to have a dialogue with it was really interesting to me and kind of exciting in a way to look at it. I look at the questions and go OK, I am coming to grips with who I am and this is a good thing.

Jesse expressed surprise at her result, in that the mouth is diminutive and less ferocious, while the tail expressed terror then becoming rage. The small figure underneath represents powerlessness and grief. Jessie’s questions to her image were answered as follows: (1) When did you come into being? “I am an archetypal split of the wounded healer. I have not peripheral vision, and I only know myself one half at a time. I am the healer and I am the wounded, I am the wound and I have been around forever,” (2) How did you come into being? “I found Jesse crushed under the load, and when I realized the weight was going to increase, I shattered into these bits;” (3) What message do you have for me? “Thank you for looking at us we are not very pretty;” (4) What do you want? “I want to be your friend?” (5) What stories do you know that remind you of me? “Cinderella…The castle is the integration. She allows the wicked step sisters and mother to take up residence.”
Frieda shared that her picture was of a little impish person that came into being in her high school years. This is “when she discovered pranks made people laugh and were socially acceptable ways to get power and displace aggression.” Frieda’s questions to her image were as follows: (1) when did you come into being? ‘During high school;’ (2) How did you come into being? “When I discovered that pranks made people laugh and were socially acceptable ways to get power or displace aggression;” (3) What message might you have for me? “Don’t give your power away;” (4) What might you want? “To be loved, seen and heard, but not worry if someone is mad or doesn’t like me;” (5) What stories do you know that remind you of me? “The Unsinkable Molly Brown because she was resilient and not defeated by her circumstances.”

Mary’s picture of snakeheads and a woman’s head depicts her quandary about whether anger is protective or destructive. Mary did not dialogue with her picture.

How I was affected

While I was giving the instructions for the art activity participants asked a
number of questions. I felt irritable, wanting to yell, “Just go do it.”

When they finally went to their stations to work on their art I felt relieved to have a break from them. The irritable feelings resurfaced when I noticed two of the participants working together and talking. I felt vulnerable when the participants started to do things on their own without my direction.

**Imaginal Structures**

My imaginal structures were engaged as I became irritable with the participants. I imagined that the participants were starting to do things on their own and not listen to my directions. I pictured them not doing the art activity as instructed, and that the data might not be suitable if they went off on their own. My early attachment patterns were to distance myself from others and avoid letting my needs be known. It was difficult for me to consider what I might need from the participants and ask for it. I reminded myself that I could get support and help from others.

As the participants shared their art pieces and revealed their dialogue, I noticed that I was judgmental. I wanted the results to resemble my own ideas of what the image should look and sound like. As the participants revealed the negative side of attachment, I wanted to assume more control. The presence of the negative mother provided me with the image of the witch or the Lilith that needed to be controlled and avoided.

While the participants shared their pictures I noted how unsure they were. I was struck with how different the images and dialogues were from one another, in that previously, the data from each participant had been similar. This activity felt more individual and risky than previous sharing. I thought that this activity had moved the
participants into unknown territory. I was concerned because I also felt fear as to where this activity was leading the process.

**Theoretical Concepts**

Omer contends that there is a difference between cognition and imagery. Mental and physical phenomena are mediated by imagery. That is why imagery is the core of affects, thoughts and actions.\(^{119}\) Allen states that art cures, fixes and restores the connection or soul, which is always waiting to be reclaimed.\(^{120}\) Making images is a way of breaking boundaries, working out worn ideas, and making way for the new.\(^{121}\)

Schsverian states that when people get to know themselves through art-making they find a path to direct participation in life.\(^{122}\)

Jacobson states that one can visualize the disowned parts one self by making shadow images (unknown parts) conscious through the art of drawing.\(^{123}\) Seeing the images of others and your own images on a piece of paper can help one recognize shadow qualities helping with integration. Art is a natural medium for journeying into the shadow and bringing forth images that illuminate unknown aspects.\(^{124}\)

Shermer writes that: “Humans are by nature, moral and immoral, good and evil, altruistic and selfish, cooperative and competitive, peaceful and bellicose, virtuous and not virtuous.”\(^{125}\) Von Franz states that it takes great courage to accept an individual quality that has been repressed.\(^{126}\) Rogers adds that accepting the shadow is the personal task for each person in order to become an individual. If the individual faces their dark side, they learn to transform the energy fused in those shadowy parts into constructive action. To know, accept, express, and release the dark side in non-hurtful ways is essential to prevent powerful forces from being acted out.\(^{127}\) May concurs by writing that
accepting the evil part of one, rather than projecting it on to others makes for good deeds. May writes that, “The innocent person in religion, the one who lacks the ‘wisdom of serpents,’ can do considerable harm without knowing it.” It is breaking through the pseudo-innocence that stops the one-dimensional thinking that feeds the capacity for evil. The individual has the potential for both good and evil that cannot be disowned, as life consists of good deeds not apart from evil deeds but in spite of them. The term evil defined by Peck is any force that seeks to kill life or liveliness. “Goodness is that which promotes life and liveliness.” Evil people refuse to acknowledge their own failures and project their evil onto others. Children exposed to this evil often misinterpret the process and hate themselves.

The archetype of the mother provides for all individual experiences of the mother. Archetypal images of the maternal represent the typical experiences of the maternal incurred by mankind universally. One aspect of the mother archetype is dark, negative and rejecting. Kali, Lilith and the Black Madonna represent the archetype of the dark goddess.

My Interpretations of What Happened

Expression of affective experiences of negative mothering may inhibit unconscious enactment of those experiences by bringing them to consciousness and allowing their integration. The development of consciousness of one’s own potential for enactment of negative mothering allows one to move from pseudo-innocence to an awareness of one’s power to do harm, and aids in the development of moral conscience. The process of developing a whole integrated self, involves bringing opposing elements together into consciousness. As the participant’s integrated split off aspects of
mothering they opened themselves up to creative sources of energy and moved towards self-acceptance.

The participants acknowledged the negative aspects of the mother and gave them form through art; they broke boundaries, moving into new areas of experience. Jenna Lee wrote that she was “sort of shocked” when she understood what some of her images were depicting. Jessie also stated that she was surprised at how parts of her image had turned out. Mary said the she was struck by the image and what it brought up.

The dialogue and images revealed the participants’ maternal struggle between what Peck has termed ‘goodness and evil.’ Jenna Lee depicted our culture as sterile and narcissistic, a culture that causes women to be tamed; mothers are expected to be a certain way. Dolly talked about being in contact with a primitive rage when she created and dialogued with her art piece. Cher’s picture and dialogue addressed resistance to the attachment process and self-protection, but always growth. Jessie in her dialogue with her picture describes negative mothering as an archetypal split of the wounded healer. Frieda talked about the trickster aspect of mothering, stating: “I discovered that pranks made people laugh and were a socially acceptable way to get power or displace aggression.” Jessica, in her dialogue and picture, questions if maternal anger is protective or monstrous. By not protecting their own evil and facing their own maternal failures, the participants were able to acknowledge their own need to grow.

The archetypal images depict the experience of the dark, negative and rejecting mother. The shadow of the divine mother is the devouring mother or the dark mother. The dark maternal goddess represented in the guise Lilith lives in a wasteland drenched in blood. Images of humiliation, diminishment, flight, and desolation are part
of her mythology. She is organic, earthy, seducing, murderous, raging and the killer of children. All but one of the participant’s images and dialogues captures the primitive rage, cruelty, powerlessness and pain of Lilith. It is only when Lilith is denied and cast out of the feminine that her rage is felt. Begg writes that, “Repressed gods take their captors captive.”

Frieda’s image was that of a trickster acting out her aggression through a trick while attempting to be socially acceptable. Hyde describes the trickster as a being that crosses boundaries. Tricksters cross lines, breaking the boundaries between right and wrong. Tricksters can be both good and evil but the distinction is often blurred.

The participants through their images were able to represent the primitive and negative aspects of the archetypal mother. Through their art and dialogue they embraced the archetype of the maternal creator and destroyer.

**Validity Considerations**

Data collection, transcription and analysis are the three phases of validity that were considered. Three tape recorders were used to capture accurate dialogue during the research weekend. The transcriptions were gone over twice to capture accurate dialogue. Pictures were taken of the art pieces for further review as the participants took the originals home. In my analysis of the data, I checked with my co-researcher's observations and impressions. My co-researcher felt that there was a theme of good and evil presented in the art pieces and also in the sharing between participants. The key learnings presented by the participants reaffirmed their relief in being able to share with other foster mothers in a safe environment, “real stuff.”
My imaginal structures were especially strong during this activity. I became aware of the lenses I was looking through as I interacted with the participants and analyzed the data.

**Learning Four: Positive and Negative**

Working with adolescents who have experienced significant attachment failures requires an ability to embody the trickster archetype and transmute the negative affect of anger into appropriate fierceness. The negative experiences reported by foster mothers involved the foster mother’s behaving fiercely towards the adolescent or tricking them to gain attachment re-connection.

**What Happened**

The co-researcher read aloud to the research group the story *Love You Forever* (Appendix 13). The story is about a mother that relentlessly looks out for the safety of her child, who, when grown watches over the safety of his children and the safety of the aging mother. Frieda, Linda, Cher and Jessie resisted this story as they recognized it, and disliked the content. The resistance was about the story being an unrealistic depiction of the mothering process. The researcher called for the attention of the group twice to listen to the story.

The participants were asked to share a memory about their experience of a positive interaction with a foster child. All of the participants are or have been caretakers for teenage foster children. These teens were often violent and abusive and a larger in size than the foster mothers. Foster mothers working with teens are often cursed at and threatened.
Five of the participant’s positive stories were about containment of their foster child’s negative affects and the child’s responses to their interventions. Cher shared a story about dealing with an angry teenage boy: “I mean he did not show any emotion other than anger, really, and he just fell apart and I didn’t say anything. I was just there for him. I just held him and that was all he needed. I think he didn’t need me to say anything, be wise or make it better; he just needed me to be present. Um it was a good moment.”

Another example is Frieda’s story dealing with an angry teenage girl:

I remember one time with Marie who was going into her mean, scary and intimidating thing. I told her to leave the house. She stated that she wanted her shoes. I went to hand them to her out the back door and she tried to hit me. I just pushed her out and closed the door, while telling her to come back when she was calm. So she came back in and I met her at the outside of the front door. I started to tell her what she needed to do to be here and she broke down and sobbed and then I held her and she poured out all this pain and it was a great moment. One of those moments where you know why you do this.

With emotion in her voice Frieda says, “This is why we do this. It’s worth all the fuck off bitches that you get.”

Linda shared a story about a teenage boy who tried to push her away with his behaviors but allowed her to comb his hair. Two other participant stories were similar as they related to dealing with a child’s negative affect and then creating a trusting safe experience with that child.

Jenna Lee wrote about an experience that, as she states, “I go back and forth between two extremes.”

I think in the group home program there was a big time substance abuse problem and that’s when I was working alone on Friday nights. Judy would come home almost every Friday night under the influence of drugs, something. And one Friday night she came home and started cooking something in the kitchen or wanted to cook something until like two in the morning. And I said, ‘No you have
to go to bed because the whole house will wake up.’ She had a great mouth on her and started going on and on. I grabbed that frying pan out of her hand and said, ‘You are going to bed or I’m going to hit you.’

Jenna Lee went on to state that she developed a trusting relationship with the girl during the two years she was in the group home. They later laughed because the girl was much bigger than Jenna Lee. “I would have had to have her bend over to hit her.”

In contrast, Mary did not reference affect or the creation of a trusting relationship with a child. Mary reports her positive experience as follows: “I was thinking about this big stinky boy with brown stripes in his pants and he was um like when he sat on the bench at the softball games and you could see and smell it. He wanted to go to the prom and he did. I’m like getting him ready for the prom, cleaning him up and taking the pictures. It was a moment.”

The one story that did not reference containment of negative emotions was about a shared experience of participating in Ropes Training. Jesse and an adolescent were terrified, high on a rope, clinging to each other in their fear. From this shared experience of fear, Jesse reported a positive transformation in her relationship with this teen.

I invited the participants to meditate and write about a time when they did not want to mother their foster children. Jenna Lee says, “You wish they would run away.” The participants understand immediately the experience they have been asked to write about. Someone states, “This is easy”. The participants did not meditate and proceeded to cross-talk, laugh and whisper; therefore, the tape recorders picked up only parts of conversations due to the cross talk, whispering and laughter. The content that was recorded indicated that they were working out what they were going to write. The recorder picked up parts of shared events that were later written in their journals. They
continued to interact for ten minutes in spite of several prompts from the researcher. The researcher finally made the threat to separate them in order to get them to write. One participant cajoles, “OK I’m writing.” And another says, “Me too.” The laughter subsides and the participants write actively in their journals as if the stories are flowing from them. Frieda was one of the first to close her journal stating, “I feel guilty about this but I still think it is funny.” During this activity there were sixty-five notations of laughter during the hour.

The foster mothers’ stories of negative attachment experiences fall into three types of interaction. Three participants described situations in which they used anger in response to abuse and threats, and two described playing a trick on a child in response to teen negative behaviors. One foster mother talked about being too tired to provide protection for two teens. Six foster mothers have commented about how this interaction had affected their relationship with the foster child.

Jenna Lee’s story is an example of a foster mother using anger to set a boundary for her own protection:

When I was pregnant with my daughter I was working in a group home. I was about four months pregnant at the time just early summer. I can’t remember what caused the disagreement or the argument or conflict with Betty, a child at the group home. We were in the hallway and we were arguing. I wasn’t angry or even really frustrated. Betty stated that she was going to punch me in the stomach if she did not get her way. I became fierce without words and walked towards her backing her down the hall towards the front door. I quietly but adamantly clearly informed her that she needed to leave the house immediately, that she could not return until another staff member was there.

Jenna Lee pauses and says, “Our relationship did recover from that incident.”

Another interaction described by Mary is an example of extreme anger towards the foster adolescent while setting a boundary to protect others in the house:
There was a resident who had been sneaking out of the house constantly breaking screens on her way out. Every time she would return home she would be sure it was when the other kids were at home. She would work extremely hard to poke them and tell them how fucked up the program was and how fucked up all the staff were and all the kids should leave. One day she returned home, she started again: fuck this: fuck that: calling one of the staff a fucking cunt. I told her she was being a fucking bitch right now, then I moved about three inches from her face and told her to get the fuck out of my house.

Mary reported that she eventually developed a positive dialogue with this girl and helped her return to her birth mother.

Cher’s experience is an example of failing to care for a child due to exhaustion.

It was Emily’s first night at the group home. She shared a room with Renee who was the most scared little tiny thing in the world. Emily’s first night she came in late so she basically went straight to bed. I didn’t know anything about this kid really other than you know of course your supposed to be nurturing and help them but I was just exhausted. I go in the bedroom and Emily is lying on the bed twisting her hair and pulling it out. You could hear her. The voices were telling her to and I was just like you know I mean in my head I’m thinking she’s in a strange place, it’s night time, she’s scared. I just didn’t care, I was like whatever, pull your hair out. I didn’t have the energy to even deal with it. Whatever and I just totally ignored her and but the flip side I was taking care of Renee who was in the corner but even that was kind of apathetic cause I was just like OK, she is not going to kill you, what do you need to feel safe. Like I was just so done that I just couldn’t like really being there for either of them.

As a side note Cher indicates that she developed a supportive relationship with Emily and they both came to reminisce about that first night.

Frieda related a negative experience, which involved her playing a trick on a foster child. She had a smile on her face and twinkle in her eye as she related this experience:

I was picking up a boy from Karate. He had ridden his bike there and we put it on the bike rack on the back of the van. During the trip home he got aggressive with another child and cussed me out. While this was not an uncommon experience, for some reason, I felt totally accused. I pulled the van over and told him to find his way home. I knew he would want his bike. I waited for him to get to the back of the van and just as he was reaching for the bike I peeled out.
Frieda indicated the teenage boy was angry when he walked back to the group home, accusing her of being mean to him. Frieda reminisced that the boy reduced his acting out and through the years she developed a relationship with him.

**How I was Affected**

I felt nostalgic because the foster mother’s stories of positive attachment experiences reminded me of the warm experiences I had with foster children. However, the sharing of negative attachment experiences brought up for me the bizarre memories that I have collected as a foster parent. I thought of the time the residents were on the roof of the house tearing the heating and air-conditioning unit off, and waiting for several foster teens to pass batteries after swallowing them out of the smoke alarm. I thought of the girl who took her clothes off in K-Mart. I remembered the adolescent threats, the swearing and crazy behaviors. I could only laugh with the foster mothers, as it seemed like these foster mothers knew about this wild and crazy world.

After enjoying a moment of comradeship, I became concerned that I would not get the data recorded as the foster mothers were talking at the same time and laughing. I threatened to separate them in order to get them to stop and write in their journals. I felt like I was dealing with my adolescent foster children again, and became concerned that perhaps I did not set firm boundaries as a researcher.

**Imaginal Structures**

The imaginal structures pertinent in this learning brought up for me the image of Lilith. She is organic, earthy, murderous, and the killer of infants. I can perceive myself as Liltith, running away to the sea to spawn demons. I caught myself wanting to join the
group of foster mothers in their laughing and sharing. I felt the desire to be wild and free abandoning the task of conducting a research weekend. Concurrently, I felt a fear of getting caught doing something wrong. It is my observation that it is a social taboo within the child welfare system to speak of the negative feelings and behaviors that arise while caring for insecurely attached children. This could be due to the fact that extreme child abuse is prevalent within the system. I found myself having images of the extreme child abuse cases that I have encountered in my research. I reassured myself that I was not doing anything wrong.

Theoretical Concepts

Guggenbuhl-Craig describes that in addition to the personal and collective shadow there is the archetypal shadow. The archetypal shadow draws energy from the personal and collective shadow but is different. It is independent in that it is more than just the shadow of good. The archetypal shadow is associated with evil. This evil is inherent to human behaviors and evil gods and goddesses represent an archetype. Adolescents must enter a relationship with the archetypal shadow in order to further their own development. Adolescents, who have experienced highly destructive environments as children, often project this evil onto the environment. Siegel reports that eighty percent of children in foster care have a disorganized attachment pattern. This adolescent comes to blame others and events as containing the destructiveness that is their own. James states that foster parents are often bombarded with feelings of resentment, anger, and betrayal and hurt as they attempt to parent foster children. It is essential that foster parents find ways to deal with these feelings in the context of their relationship with the child.
Although, the archetypal shadow is inherent in youth development it continues to exist in the lives of adults. The average healthy adult can fall victim to its destructive tendencies. May asserts that the individual must acknowledge that good and evil dwells within every person. Guggernbuhi-Craig writes that it is the dedicated helper that falls victim to the shadow. Neither the positive nor the negative aspects of the helping work touch the indifferent helper.

Guggerbunl-Craig observed that individuals who deal with the archetypal shadow on a daily basis are exposed to excessive demands. As they attempt to provide good will, a roughly equal amount of evil intent is generated. For these individuals who seek to help with destructive behaviors, the archetypal shadow is often experienced outside of themselves in the environment. As the helper strives to conquer the shadow archetype outside with good intentions, the dark counterpart is increasingly constellated inside. May asserts that the individual must acknowledge that good and evil dwells within every person, and admit that human capacity is equally for both sides. The helper is never free of the shadow archetype but must admit to it and acknowledge it. Guggernbuhl-Craig writes: “We must refrain from playing the part of someone who never falls into the shadow and must be prepared to admit our mistakes in this regard.”

Bly wrote: “Every part of our personality that we do not love becomes hostile to us.” When the shadow is integrated the human being becomes playful in a new way and humor develops. Hillman contends that the act of loving the shadow is a cure for the self. The care given to the humiliating parts of oneself is essential to loving oneself. However, the individual must do more than just acknowledge the shadow and keep it close. There must be a breakthrough of laughing at one’s folly with a joyful acceptance
of the shadow. Hillman writes: “Thus is cure a paradox requiring two
incommensurables: the moral recognition that these parts of me are burdensome and
intolerable and must change, and the loving laughing acceptance which takes them just as
they are, joyfully forever.”

May asserts that there are constructive forms of aggression. This aggression
attempts to cut through the barriers of the relationship, and ward off the behaviors that
threaten one’s own integrity in a hostile environment. May writes that: “In fighting
there is a vivid intimacy, a closeness that partakes of both hate and love, an intimacy held
off by hatred but an intimacy never the less, and can bloom into affection or love.”

Christopher Bollas examines hate and destruction as it functions in the service of
love. There is one form of loving through hate that has been observed frequently in foster
care and group homes: the individual tries to make the helper angry in order to induce the
helper to hate them. Some of the individuals feel that until they can see evidence of
such hate they will not be known. It is through this evoked hate that the individual tries
to achieve intimacy with the helper. It is when the helper’s state of mind breaks down
under the weight of negativity that the individual takes hope because until this rapport is
achieved empathy and sympathy from the helper is experienced as rejection.

Consequently, the expression of hate or aggression may increase the possibility of
intimacy if expressed prudently by the helper.

Intensive emotional states have a special organizing role in the attachment
process. Stern suggests that, “past experience will have enormous weight in the
construction of present subjective experience.” Solomon and Siegel report that
research suggests that neglected children have difficulty recognizing emotion in faces,
and that physically abused children display a bias towards angry facial expressions. Daniel Nester adds that children that have been in abusive homes react to negative and positive stimulus without discrimination.

In his advice to foster parents, Hughes suggests that they employ periodic anger or scolding, in order to avoid habitual anger or annoyance with the child. Hughes suggested that foster parents use controlled anger to aid their attachment to their foster children. In a lecture to foster parents, Hughes elaborated that foster parents should match the intensity of the child’s affect with occasional short expressions of anger. Interactive repair provides for the reconnection of the mother and child relationship after a rupture in the connection. It is inevitable that all secure relationships will have sequences of connection, rupture and then repair of the disconnection. When there is a rupture in the connection between the mother and child, the child may become filled with a sense of shame. Repair is essential when a rupture in the communication occurs. This is especially true if the rupture involves strong negative emotions.

The mother-child interactive repair transactions provide for the child’s short and long-term socio-emotional development. This repair interaction is incorporated into the child’s interactive representations and can be drawn upon to auto-regulate shame states. If the mother does not repair ruptures in the relationship the child’s experience of shame remains unregulated.

Soloman reports that a child’s early-unregulated shame experiences develop into the core of various psychopathologies. However, negative emotions help the child make sense of their lives and the lives of other people. When there is repair of ruptures in the attachment experience it supports the attachment process. The archetype of the
trickster has been described as the clown and mischief-maker. The trickster often provides relief from tension and can keep things in proportion. However, the trickster is more than a fool because he calls into question fundamental assertions about how the world is organized. He reveals the possibility of transformation, either positive or negative. Hyde describes the trickster as a “contradiction or paradox.” It is the trickster that is the archetype of the boundary-crossover. It is the trickster who demonstrates the uncertainty of life.

Jung attributes the negative traits of the trickster to being aspects of the shadow archetype. Ironically, when the work of the trickster creates calamity or disaster a longing for a savior can arise. It is at this point that the calamity can be consciously understood and the shadow integrated through relatedness to the savior.

Sophia is an example of an archetype representing the wise mother of all. Lilith represents the archetype of the punitive and angry child killer. A mother who attempts to meet the needs of herself, her children and her work “can suddenly feel Lilth’s murderous rage.” When there is a destructive split between the child nurturing and child killing archetypes, the mother is often disconnected from her own needs. There is a psychological need for the mother to know and integrate the Lilith or Dark Madonna archetype in order to experience herself as whole.

**My Interpretation of What Happened**

Working with adolescents who have experienced significant attachment failures requires an ability to embody the trickster archetype and transmute the negative affect of anger into appropriate fierceness. While sharing negative attachment experiences with foster adolescents, the mothers laughed with joyful acceptance of their maternal shadow
qualities. They unanimously rejected the purified story *Love You Forever*. The foster mothers described various aspects of the maternal shadow as they dealt with negative acting-out adolescents. These aspects consisted of using anger, tricks and neglect to deal with the negative behaviors of teens, while the positive experiences shared with their foster teens involved reconnection after being abused by an adolescent.

While reporting their positive experiences the foster mothers smiled and described the foster child with great affection, even when, five of the foster children had directed their anger and aggression toward the foster mother. All the aggressive foster children were male and female adolescents who were often larger than the foster mother.

The foster mothers were able to reconnect in various ways: Linda combed the foster child’s hair, Frieda listened, Cher held the child, Jenna Lee used humor and Jessica was able to hold the foster child when they were both afraid. Mary reported dressing up a foster child to go to the prom, while Dolly reported that the foster child had positive statements about their relationship. The foster mothers described positive stories as situations in which they were able to repair ruptures in the foster child’s experience.

The foster mothers demonstrated a unique awareness of the shadow aspects of the maternal archetype. Five participants resisted the story *Love You Forever*, stating that they did not think it was realistic. They were rejecting the presentation of the attachment experience in a purified form. All participants were able to acknowledge the positive and negative aspects of their attachment experiences with the destructive behaviors of their adolescent foster children.

The foster mothers experienced an integration and acceptance of their negative behaviors. As they shared their negative experiences regarding their adolescent foster
children, the mothers laughed with joyful acceptance of their negative maternal behaviors. They were playful and humorous to the point that the researcher needed to set boundaries. Looking into the laughing faces of other participants as they bent forward to hear the entire story, the participants did not withdraw from the group, as the researcher had to prompt them to settle down and to write in their journals.

The six negative attachment experiences of each foster mother revealed three types of negative responses. Three stories described the foster mother’s responding with anger towards the teens negativity, two of the foster mothers played a trick in response to the adolescent’s negativity, and one story described the foster mother as too fatigued to respond to the adolescents safety needs.

The three stories that described the foster mother responding to an abusive teen in an angry, aggressive manner represent the mothers’ willingness to engage the teen at a level that promotes intimacy. It is when the foster mother responds to the negativity of the adolescent with prudent negativity that rapport is achieved. The foster mothers’ acceptance of the negative side of mothering increases the possibility of intimacy and attachment with troubled teens. As research has demonstrated, physically abused children connect with angry facial expressions and are underdeveloped in regard to discrimination between negative and positive stimulus. It is the foster mothers’ willingness to act out her anger prudently that makes the initial connection with the abused adolescent possible. It is when the foster mother connects with the intrapsychic split between the nurturing mother and the child-killing Lilith that she can be most effective with abused and troubled teens. The archetype of the trickster also creates the possibility of increased intimacy with abused and troubled adolescents. Two of the
stories involved playing a trick on the teen in response to negative behaviors. The irony of the trickster according to Jung is that through calamity a longing for connection can be consciously understood.\textsuperscript{222} When the foster mother creates an uncertain event the adolescent has the opportunity to transform negative behaviors.\textsuperscript{223} Although Jung describes the traits of the trickster as a shadow archetype, foster mothers were willing to assume this negative trait to challenge the adolescents’ organization of their world.\textsuperscript{224}

Another aspect of the shadow archetype of Lilith appeared when the foster mother was tired and needed mothering herself.\textsuperscript{225} One of the foster mother stories described a situation in which the she was so tired she did not tend to the safety of two adolescents. When the mother is disconnected from her own needs, the murderous rage of Lilith appears.\textsuperscript{226} Cher had shared that she had problems feeling anger, thus the killer rage of Lilith could have been present and repressed.

\textbf{Validity Considerations}

In this research investigation, affects were explored as they pertained to the ability of foster mothers to support secure attachment processes in insecurely attached children. One way to assess the validity of the research weekend data is to consider whether the phenomenon being investigated has actually been investigated by re-checking with the perceptions of the co-researcher about the laughter and joyful behaviors of the participants. The co-researcher wrote:

\begin{quote}
It isn’t hard for the women to come up with these stories of the dark side, in fact, it is really impossible to keep a lid on it, to get them to think and write a memory first before sharing it. Here these women can come together and share these stories that they can’t or wouldn’t share with anyone else. It seems like cathartic release, and a relief. The laughter is, so real, and the room just vibrates with the energy of life. Here today in this context it almost seems glamorous.\textsuperscript{227}
\end{quote}
The authentic acting out behaviors of the women brought them in contact with the domain of the trickster. They appeared to mirror the energy of their adolescent foster children.

Participant reflections also supported the validity of the learning. Linda wrote of a key learning as follows: “I also enjoyed the safety of the group to share the parts of the work we do with children, the special times as well as the dark moments we have had with children.” Jesse wrote: “So the moment that you asked us about our difficulties when dealing with our little folks was memorable.” Freida wrote of a key moment:

“The stories people told about their mean moment with a child in their care cracked me up because I know it is out of character for that group of people.”

Learning Five: Attachment Story

The creation and witnessing of an attachment story allows for the expression of unconscious internal representations of attachment patterns, putting one in relationship with aspects of the self that need nurturing, thus providing relief from unconscious defenses. The foster mothers wrote an original attachment story and read it out loud to the research group. Their attachment stories reflected the attachment patterns held by the participants. As the participants shared their stories they experienced a relief from the defenses that support insecure attachment patterns.

What Happened

The last day of the research weekend started with lighting a candle in recognition of difficult foster children they had worked with. The co-researcher read the story Little Match Seller (Appendix 15) that is a story about a child’s image of her caretaker.
Participants were instructed to write a story or myth about an attachment experience between mother and child. The participants went to their workstations and started to write. They worked without distraction for one hour. The participants returned to the group and read their stories. The participants made comments that they were surprised at their own creativity and that of the other participants.

Cher’s story is about a mermaid named Lilly for whom everyone had the deepest respect. Her story is told through an old sea turtle named Mack who shared his stories with a friend named Stone. Mack told Stone a story about Lilly.

You see Stone, Lilly never had parents, siblings or any family or friends who love Lilly for Lilly. Yes it is true many admired her beauty and talents but none saw her. No one saw Lilly—all of her, the good, the bad and the ugly. The ugly, said Stone. Yes, we all have a little ugly in us, even Lilly: but we can talk about that tomorrow.

Linda’s story portrayed her characters as supportive and loving, as follows:

Lucy loved her life with the Jones family. She lived in a small apartment with Mr. and Mrs. Jones and their two small children. Lucy loved her life of leisure. She slept, ate and played outside. She was very loved by her family. Lucy had a kitten named Dandy Lyon. With only one kitten Lucy was able to focus all her attention on her. However, the family already had one cat, so the family looked for six months to find a good home for Dandy Lyon. When Dandy Lyon left her mother and original human family, both cats were very sad. They both received consolation from their respective human families. During their transition period when the characters were stressed by separation, they found safety and consolation but could not be consoled.

Freda wrote about Freda the fox. The fox did not get along with her sisters at home. As she asserted herself, she also became unpopular with her mother. Freda’s mother became overly controlling. After the father fox and the sisters left the foxhole, so did Freda. Freda went out into the magical forest and was happy, but the characters in Freda’s story are mean and hostile. The father, who is nice, leaves the foxhole. When
Freda leaves the foxhole, she is happy to be away from negative relationships, but in the story she does not find supportive relationships.

Mary’s story is hostile with the strong characters being hurtful and rejecting: Her mother sends Megan to live with her father, who sells her to his friends for sex. There is a drive-by shooting and after Megan’s mother finds out that Megan’s father has been sexually abusing her, Megan then goes into a foster home. Megan never stays anywhere long and is moved from foster home to foster home.

Jenna Lee wrote a creative and original story about her mother’s family. The attachment story Jenna Lee wrote was that of her great grandmother. In her narrative entitled “The Hunter,” Jenna Lee stated that her mother was very self-sufficient in her relationships, even killing a bear after her husband had deserted her. Her grandmother, had a happy marriage with several children, and these secure relationships were described in the story.

Jessie’s story is about a crone who lives in a cave in the hills. The crone finds an infant under an oak tree. Jessie describes the interaction as follows:

She totters over and sees the infant, round mouth, big eyes. She knows that look of terror: without thinking, she picks that baby up, never mind the smell or the shit. She picks the baby up and feels the fine skin, peachy soft but cold. She wraps her long wool cape around the tiny thing, and a tear from her eye lands upon his cheek.

The crone continues to care for the child by providing a soft bed and food. The child grows into a man and the crone grows old and perishes. The man, after some time, no longer visits the cave, but the cave states: “The visits have ended eons ago, but the connections remain. The thread of me calls the thread of him and all his progeny through time. We are all still connected, no doubt about it...”
Dolly’s story was about a girl that had a single mother. The girl treasured her father’s bicycle, as that was what she had left of him after he left the family. A supportive neighbor helped the young girl get the bike working. The girl embarks on a long bike ride to find her father. The ride is long and hard, and her mother, with the help of the friendly neighbor rescues the girl. The characters in Dolly’s story face tough life events but find support from family and friends. The participants and I were amazed at the level of creative writing. While sharing a key moment of the research weekend Dolly stated:

I really appreciate the safety, the safety just to open up your creative concepts, which in real life I don’t get to do, and, I don’t know, I always feel some sort of judgment coming my way. I really appreciate you for creating this creative environment. I was able to have the freedom to express creative ideas in an atmosphere of no-judgment. Writing the story opened hopes and dreams that did not happen for others and me as children.

Jessie described a key moment as follows:

I loved writing the mother myth, and let it come up without interpreting it with interpretation of control. To me, each sentence was loaded, like a dream image. It scared me at first that I identified with the witch person: but I do, and things are what they are. and I felt free not to have to sugarcoat anything. I felt a sense of trust.

Jenna Lee shared a key moment, saying that creating the story was a great experience and what she put in her story surprised her. She felt like the safety of the group allowed her to bring all of the self to the creative process.

Mary, while sharing a key moment, stated:

I’ve never done anything remotely close to this. I probably wouldn’t have gone near it so for me there was so much, everything about the whole weekend, and sitting in a room with people who are feeling safe enough and comfortable enough to share the things that you think we are all afraid to talk about, and to allow other people to see just so much.
Linda wrote that she did not think she was a creative writer but the writing was really enjoyable. Frieda’s key moment was written as follows: “My favorite thing was writing the story of my childhood in fairy tale form. I felt strong and triumphant.”

**How I was Affected**

The story was the last activity of the research weekend and I was feeling burnt out, tired but pleased about the data I had collected so far. I felt surprised and relieved when the participants started writing so quickly and with such concentration. When the stories were shared in the group I was amazed at the story images and the creativity of the authors.

**Imaginal Structures**

As the participants shared their creative stories, I felt jealous of their ability to write so well. As a child I had problems with dyslexia and could not write or read well. My father would sit me down at a table and hit me in order to get me to write my name. Consequently, my writing is constricted and barren of creative energy. I am fearful of revealing myself in writing. It is my desire to write more creatively that brings up my jealously.

I was judgmental of the content of the stories in that I thought they should be more mythical in nature. I find that I often have problems accepting that others are different than myself. I am fearful that I will not be able to figure things out, revealing my stupidity. I was considered by my parents to be a stupid child due to my early problems with language.
Theoretical Concepts

Stories stimulated by the TAT projective test have demonstrated theoretically predictable associations between the story content and attachment styles.\textsuperscript{227} Rholes and Simpson write that the individual’s attachment style can predict the way people are portrayed in the stories they wrote in response to a picture.\textsuperscript{228} Several studies demonstrate that adults with different attachment styles are predisposed to write about and explain relationship events in story that is consistent with their individual expectations concerning relationships.\textsuperscript{229} For example, persons with an avoidant attachment style have a lower emotional investment in relationships, and view relationships as less positive.\textsuperscript{230} In their stories, individuals with an avoidant style contained more negative representations of close relationships, portraying them as threatening and harmful.\textsuperscript{231} Their characters demonstrated an affect tone of relatively low interpersonal investment.\textsuperscript{232} The parents were portrayed as less benevolent and more punitive.\textsuperscript{233} Their stories were more hostile with strong characters being hurtful, rejecting, distant and disapproving.\textsuperscript{234}

Rholes and Simpson further state that individuals with the ambivalent (anxious) attachment style wish for security, stability love, and respect from a significant other without being hurt in the process.\textsuperscript{235} Stories written by individuals with an ambivalent attachment style have conflictual themes centered on doubt about self worth, excessive seeking of closeness and reassurance, dependence, the inability to deal with interpersonal conflicts and develop coping responses.\textsuperscript{236} Their stories lack a sense of enjoyment and the characters lack the ability to handle separation.\textsuperscript{237}
Stories written by securely attached individuals have less anxiety, depression and hostility than stories written by the insecurely attached individuals. Their stories emphasize the importance of openness and closeness in relationships.

Rogers writes that when the individual fantasizes and writes, integration begins to evolve. This union of the conscious and unconscious leads to a new level of being by creating energy into constructive action. Birkhauser-Oeri writes that the story is the product of the imagination just like a dream, and is the path to the unconscious. Omer contends that imagination amplifies sensory and affective life. Zweig writes that creative imagination via writing develops a creative relationship with the shadow, which offers redemption. Imagination is the deepest voice of the soul and can be heard clearly only through cultivation and careful attention. A relationship with imagination is a relationship with the deepest self. The most important part of the creative process is to bear witness to one’s own story, and the stories of others. Self-created images are signposts that points one in a direction to discover aspects of the self that need nurturing.

My Interpretation of What Happened

The creation and witnessing of an attachment story allows for the expression of unconscious internal representations of attachment patterns, putting one in relationship with aspects of the self that need nurturing, thus providing relief from unconscious defenses. Upon examination of the participants’ written original stories about attachment, it can be determined what their individual expectations are in regard to relationships. These expectations can be categorized into avoidant attachment, ambivalent attachment and secure attachment.
Four of the participants created stories with the character development depicting insecure attachment patterns. Cher’s story lacked a sense of enjoyment, and the main character was excessively seeking closeness by going on adventures searching for love. The content of Cher’s story is associated with the ambivalent attachment style, which reflects Cher’s expectations in relationships. Linda’s story reflects expectations consistent with a secure attachment style however, there is a hint that investment in relationships could be less positive as the story ends with cats being inconsolable when separated. This characteristic of the story represents an avoidant style. Frieda’s story also depicts an avoidant style as the little fox went into the forest and found happiness alone. Mary’s story has an extreme avoidant style with numerous negative representations of close relationships being threatening and harmful.

The remaining three attachment stories contained characters finding support and developing trusting relationships. Jenna Lee’s characters were secure in their relationships with their family and Native American community. The story Jenna Lee shared demonstrated secure attachments and reflected her expectations in relationships. Jessie’s story lacks anxiety and hostility. The infant finds a secure attachment figure that protects and cares for him. The attachment figures in Jessie’s story are safe and secure, grounded in nature. This is a story written by an individual with a secure attachment style. Dolly’s mother is imperfect but manages to support her daughter when she needs it. Dolly’s expectations of relationships are that they will be supportive, especially in hard times. Dolly’s story and narrative demonstrates a secure attachment style.

When the participants witnessed their own stories and the stories of others, they contacted unknown parts of themselves. They expressed surprise and delight in the
stories they developed and shared. The writing and sharing of the attachment stories allowed the participants to share aspects of their insecure attachment pattern. An insecure attachment pattern hinders the individual’s ability to trust in the safety and nurturance of others. These attachment patterns are held in the unconscious and defend against the need for secure attachment relationships. As the participants shared their stories they were supported and nurtured by members of the group in ways that allowed unmet needs to be expressed and received by others.

**Validity Considerations**

The data collected was from the tape recording of the participants sharing their attachment stories as well as their writing the story in their journals. I checked with my co-researcher, and she thought that the participant stories were deeply held expressions of attachment patterns. The co-researcher wrote: “I was surprised at the focus of the women as they went about their writing activity on Sunday. The atmosphere felt very thick—not heavy, just thick. Everyone seemed so engaged in what they were doing, and a few seemed to lose track of time. It was hard for them to leave their work and share what they had written.”

One way to check validity is to consider if the phenomenon being researched is actually investigated. The attachment stories indicate that the participants were dealing with deeply held attachment patterns and their defensive structures. All of the participants except one expressed that a key learning was the writing of an attachment story and hearing the stories of the other participants.

**Conclusion**
The data when analyzed presented five learnings describing knowledge concerning the maternal attachment structures of foster mothers.

Learning One addresses the foster mothers’ ability to confront and metabolize the negative affects of shame, distress, and fear that arise in response to an exploration of attachment failure. When these negative affects are defended against, they are internalized, leading to over-idealization and emotional protection of neglectful or abusive caretakers.

Learning Two follows the narratives shared by foster mothers, and includes a comprehensive description of their maternal lineage. The narrative sharing of some foster mothers challenged the cultural taboos against expressing grief and anger towards the mother. When the foster mothers listened to and voiced their negative childhood experiences, they lessened their dissociation and increased the group’s interpersonal resonance associated with secure attachment.

Learning Three concerns the creation of and dialogue with negative maternal images. As the foster mothers integrated the unconscious aspects of negative mothering into consciousness, they were able to avoid acting out the maternal shadow.

Learning Four involves the foster mothers’ writing and sharing of negative and positive experiences regarding their adolescent foster children. The data demonstrates that working with adolescents who have experienced significant attachment failures requires the ability to embody the trickster archetype and to transmute the negative affect of anger into appropriate fierceness.

Learning Five provides for the participants to create original attachment stories. The stories revealed unconscious expression of internal representations of attachment
patterns. As the participants shared their stories, they were provided relief from unconscious defenses, and revealed aspects of the self that need care.

The learnings reveal that bringing negative affects related to attachment failures to consciousness through shared meaning-making and imaginal activities facilitates the integration of these affects, expands capacity to recognize the maternal shadow, and lessens the possibility of unconscious enactment. The data supports the hypothesis that because imaginal structures related to attachment are activated through awareness, access, acceptance and a working relationship with negative affects, insecure attachment patterns can be transmuted into capacity for secure attachment.

From these learnings, it is evident that foster mothers need to have a working relationship with negative affects. An experience of imaginal activities and meaning making provides foster mothers a working relationship with their maternal shadows, supporting them in dealing with foster children’s insecure attachment patterns.
CHAPTER 5

REFLECTIONS

This study explores the imaginal structures that support the experienced foster mother in promoting the healthy attachment process. Through the learnings, it was found that the foster mother’s imaginal structures related to attachment, when activated, provided a working relationship with negative affects and insecure attachment patterns that can help them to identify and integrate formerly disowned aspects of the self. Providing a pathway towards transmutation of these negative affects and insecure patterns into secure attachment patterns. This supports the hypothesis that increasing awareness of the shadow side of the Mother Archetype through storytelling, writing, and shared experience allows foster mothers to reclaim disowned aspects of their experiences as children, accept the shadow sides of their own mothers with increased compassion, and supports powerful expressions of fierce mothering. My understanding of the Research Problem has been revised through exploration of the data and learnings. The Research Problem explored the imaginal structures that support the experienced foster mother in promoting the healthy attachment process? In this final reflections chapter, the significance and implications of the learnings are discussed. The sections of the reflections are organized to include: Significance of the Learning, Mythic and Archetypal Reflections, Implications of the Study, and Recommendations for future Research.
Significance of the Learnings

To consider the significance of my research I will consider the learnings that followed expected outcomes as well as learnings that were new and unexpected. I will question how the learnings supported the research hypothesis. I will explore the ways the learnings my change the previous formation of the Research Problem. To fully consider these questions I will consider each learning separately before exploring the learnings in totality.

Five learnings were derived from the research data. Learning One found that foster mothers unable to confront and metabolize the negative affects of shame, distress, and fear that arise in response to an exploration of attachment failure, defend against these affects by internalizing responsibility for these failures and over–idealizing and/or caretaking neglectful or abusive parents. Through, the listening to music, writing and sharing of secure and insecure attachment experiences the foster mothers as expected activated their imaginal structures. It was unexpected when the data revealed the negative effects, especially shame and its relationship to the participant defending and over-idealizing the parent. As the participants and I listened to attachment stories and music the group process was deepened to an unexpected level.

Learning Two states that the narrative sharing of adult over-idealization of neglectful or abusive parents as well as challenging the cultural taboos against expressing grief and anger towards one’s mother, breaks down the dissociation from one’s affective experience allowing for the interpersonal resonance associated with secure attachment. It was unexpected that the data collected formed coherent narratives with a past present and future orientation. The interpersonal resonance between the speaker and listener was also
unexpected. The foster mothers created a highly complex form of nonverbal communication that was also unexpected.

Learning Three states that expression of affective experiences of negative mothering may inhibit unconscious enactment of those experiences by bringing them to consciousness and allowing their integration. The participants created negative aspects of the mother through art making. They were instructed to create art, given the theme of maternal images of a disrupted secure attachment process. This surfaced images of the negative and/or chthonic feminine that they dialogued with. It was through this dialogue that the foster mothers expressed polarities between the positive and negative maternal images. It was unexpected that the participants presented aspects of negative mothering intertwined with aspects of positive mothering. It was through their images and dialogue that the foster mothers demonstrated unexpected integration. It was expected that the foster mothers would hold negative images of the maternal attachment process. However, without prompting they linked this process to positive images of maternal attachment. One participant’s creation of the image of the trickster was also an unexpected result, which will be elaborated on in Learning Four.

Learning Four states that working with adolescents who have experienced attachment failures require an ability to embody the trickster archetype and transmute the negative affect of anger into appropriate fierceness. The participants were invited to share stories of negative and positive interactions while they were containing their foster teens negative affects. The results were unexpected, as I had thought the foster mothers would consider a negative interaction with their foster children as a failure and be reluctant to share these stories. The opposite was true, while sharing negative interactions with their
adolescent foster children the foster mothers were ebullient, excited and joyful. As they shared these stories they resonated a love for these children instead of dislike or rejection. I further reviewed the literature in order to account for the data I had collected. I was surprised to discover the role the trickster archetype played in the foster mothers interactions. The foster mothers’ acceptance of their fierceness and its role in the attachment process was also unexpected. Most of the experiences of the foster mothers related to adolescent foster children. I do not know if the findings of Learning Four relates to all ages of foster children or only adolescents.

Learning Five states that the creation and witnessing of an attachment story allows for the expression of unconscious internal representations of attachment patterns, putting one in relationship with aspects of the self that need nurturing, thus providing relief from unconscious defenses. The images presented in the participant stories were varied and vivid as they depicted attachment experiences. I had expected the stories would depict the attachment styles of the participants but it was unexpected that the participants would express such surprise and pride in their creations. The sharing of the stories provided a resonance in the group that was not anticipated.

The data collected of the participant’s experiences demonstrated support for the research hypothesis. The hypothesis states that imaginal structures related to attachment are activated among foster mother; through awareness, access, acceptance and working relationship to negative affects insecure attachment patterns can be transmuted into secure attachment. The foster mothers in the study discovered images related to their attachment processes through the use of music, story, art, dialogue, narratives, and creative writing. This process increased the awareness, access and acceptance of negative
affects of insecure attachment. The listening and sharing of attachment experiences provided a working relationship to negative affects that diminished the unconscious acting out of these affects thus promoting a secure attachment process. Learning Four is of interest in that the conscious acting out of negative emotions by the foster mother may also encourage secure attachment with the adolescent foster child. Although the research data supported the hypothesis there were expectations I had that were not revealed in the learnings. I had expected that the foster mothers would address and respond to issues in our society that degrade the role of mother and that of the foster mother. The cultural aspects of maternal attachment were not evident as all the foster mothers were Anglo as well as their foster children. The broad cultural themes of attachment in Western cultures did not arise unless it is the cultural support for dissociation from the archetypal mother in all her forms.

Also the research group experience provided a level of resonance between the foster mothers that suggests the shared exploration of imaginal structures may be useful in promoting the healthy attachment process. I might change the Research Problem to: How the exploration of imaginal structures might support the experienced foster mother in promoting the healthy attachment process with adolescent foster children?

**Mythical and Archetypal Reflections**

The Imaginal Inquiry research design reflects the research learnings against a mythic and archetypal journey. Myths contain the greater story and a mode of discovery. They have been called “the DNA of the human psyche.” The symbols of the unconscious form a mythology that resembles a myth. The myth is collective and
contains elements of the human psyche in general. Singer asserts that myth is a story that reveals the secrets of the psyche and has to do with the invisible world that is subjective. Therefore by using a specific myth a deeper insight is gained into the non-personal archetypal patterns presented by the participants.

The story of Demeter and Persephone provides an understanding of the mythical context of the participant’s experiences. Part of Demeter’s name in Greek, meter, means “mother.” However, Demeter and Persephone, mother and daughter extend the maternal consciousness both upwards and downwards. Jung asserts that mother and daughter are intertwined. Every mother contains her daughter and the daughter contains her mother, so every mother extends backwards into her mother and forwards into her daughter.

The story of Demeter and Persephone is told in the long Homeric “Hymn of Demeter.” In significant ways the experiences of the foster mothers reflect Persephone’s return to Demeter, which is a reminder that the two goddesses are one and together they represent the wholeness of the Great Mother.

The myth of the abduction starts with Persephone gathering flowers and as she reaches to pick the narcissus the earth opens before her. Hedes appears from the underworld in his gold chariot grabbing Persephone and dragging her into the underworld. Like Persephone the participants were suddenly and unbidden initiated into the dark realms of the psyche. As they shared their maternal negative attachment experiences the foster mothers were challenged to confront the loss of their idealized love object and descend into the underworld. The underworld in the terms of modern psychology represents the unconscious.
Demeter heard the cries of Persephone and ran to her rescue. For nine days Demeter searched for Persephone without eating, sleeping or bathing. She asked her father Zeus for help but Zeus would not help. While Demeter is searching for Persephone the God Poseidon rapes her. To be a mother is the primary guiding principle of Demeter’s story yet she is unsupported and even wounded by the Gods. Today the maternal is also unsupported and wounded in Western Culture. The foster mothers have chosen to mother as a vocation, working to rescue the lost children in society that does not support the maternal. The participants demonstrated the attitude of Demeter as they supported one another. The majority of the participants reported that one key moment of the workshop was the physical and psychological nourishment they received from other participants.

Demeter leaves the company of the Gods to become a nursemaid to a mortal child. Under Demeter’s care the child grew up like a God. To make the child immortal she fed him ambrosia and held him to the fire. In Learning Four the foster mothers reported that as well as nurturing their foster adolescents they also engaged the capacities of the trickster and employed fierceness in building a relationship with them. In my opinion to become immortal could be likened to a secure attachment promoted by foster mothers providing both nourishment and fierceness.

In her grief and rage Demeter withdrew and refused to function. Nothing could grow or be born and famine threatened to destroy all humans. The research participants depicted the destructive aspects of the mother in Learning Three. Demeter shares her identity with her under world daughter and is associated with the dark mother, the opposite and complementary sides of the nurturing mother. Archetypes of the Dark
Mothers symbolically “smite” their children by withholding love, attention, and communication. The participants as they encountered the dark mother became reunited with themselves at a deeper level as they came into contact with the darker elements of their souls.

Demeter’s acceptance of her unpleasant feelings brought her the power to influence Zeus to return her child. Zeus sent a message to Hades’s to return Persephone to her mother. When Persephone heard she was to leave the underworld she rejoiced eating the pomegranate seeds given to her by Hades’. Because Persephone ate the pomegranate seeds she could only spend two-thirds of the year with her mother and the rest of the year in the underworld. When Persephone returns to her mother she is a mature goddess. She joins with her mother representing the wholeness of the Great Mother. The participants were brought into contact with the primordial figure of the Great Mother, which contains within her opposites. They explored her good and evil, her warrior and nurturer, her giver of life and death and the archetypes of mother and the daughter. After mother and daughter are united, Demeter restores fertility to the earth.

When Persephone again returns to the underworld winter occurs. The cycles of life are celebrated the planting tending, nurturing, birth and death. Persephone becomes a guide for others who wish to visit the underworld due to her experience of growth in the underworld. Symbolically the underworld represents the unconscious and Persephone gains the ability to move between the conscious and unconscious worlds. The research group participants due to the processes of exploration of images, patterns, memories, instincts, and feelings also grew in their abilities to mediate between conscious and unconscious levels. The Myth of Demeter supports the cumulative Learning of: Bringing
negative affects related to attachment failures to consciousness through shared
meaning making and imaginal activities facilitates the integration of these affects,
expects one’s capacity to recognize one’s maternal shadow, and lessons the possibility of
unconscious enactment.

**Implications of the Study**

The learnings that emerged from this study are significant to myself as well as
others including: the participants, the profession of psychotherapy, the academic
discipline of psychology, and the orientation of Imaginal Psychology, specific social
institutions, and contemporary culture.

Prior to my graduate studies of Imaginal Psychology, I wanted to write a
dissertation on the theme of attachment. While attending classes I encountered the
archetype of the Dark Mother. I realized that my maternal experiences were enriched
when I accepted this dark archetype as part of my maternal experience. I became curious
about the imaginal structures of other professionals attempting to attach with troubled
children.

The process of writing this dissertation has been a long journey for me. During
the time I worked on the dissertation the physical attachments in my life changed
dramatically. My parents, aunts and uncles have died and my only child has moved far
away. On Memorial Day I put flowers on the twenty graves of my childhood attachment
figures. This ritual that my grandmother, my aunt and now my cousin and myself have
attended to provides for me a continuity, and the strength to create a future. It is firm
ground that I stand on; the remembered stories of my family members.
Personally, the research project has broadened my perspective on the nature of my attachment figures. My childhood attachments figures are experienced as segments of a larger story. The feelings of fear, rage, sorrow, and shame are not the dominant affects associated with my memories. These affects are present as part of my attachment stories but do not dominate the stage. When this is the case I am free to reveal more of myself when seeking secure attachments. I am reminded of Lilith’s image on amulets that acknowledge the power of the dark mother but she is not in charge and the children who wear them are safe from her in the night.

I have often projected the dark mother onto the dissertation committee and Meridian University. I have feared and hated the evil hold I felt from the dissertation process. It has been revealing for me to explore my reactions and projections on to the dissertation process and the school. As I have processed my work on the dissertation my projections on to the school has changed from that of a devouring mother to that of a secure attachment. It is interesting to me that I could only finish my dissertation when I achieved this position.

During the writing of the dissertation I have been active in the Big Brother and Big Sister program. I plan to continue to donate my time to this program. I currently work with adolescent children in the school system. The adolescents I work with are labeled severely emotionally disturbed. I will continue to work with these children using the knowledge I have gained from this study.

The participants acknowledged that the research weekend was a positive experience. They expressed surprise and a level of relief in the creation of images. Several foster mothers stated that they had regretted signing up for the weekend but had
found the experience rewarding. There has been a continued interest in the results of the research and many have contacted me as to their interest in the findings. They expressed appreciation when the findings were shared with them. When the imaginal structures related to attachment were activated among foster mothers and they established a working relationship to negative affects, their resonance with other foster mothers increased. Several foster mothers stated that they felt less alone due to their sharing and listening to other participants. Some stated that they thought an ongoing contact with the group working with images would be helpful to their emotional life and work.

The psychological community often deals with attachment issues of children and adults. Development of a working relationship to negative affects supports the work of clinicians, parents and foster parents. The community of psychology is in a unique position to benefit from the results of this study.

The orientation of imaginal psychology supports the use of imagery and myth to heal the soul. The human connection to the polarities of the archetypal mother enhances one’s experiences and cares for the soul. Care of the soul is of primary concern of imaginal psychologists. Another aspect of Imaginal Psychology deals with the nature of the soul and culture. Imaginal psychologists in their consideration of mainstream Western culture evaluate the nature of the human soul in relationship to society and find it needing care.

Contemporary institutions of education and child welfare would also benefit from the results of this study. Both educators and social workers function as material figures in a child’s life. The results of this study could be used to develop trainings that support a
working relationship to negative affects. Trainings using music, art and myth find support from this study.

Goldberg and others suggest that the dominant US culture’s development of the self as an autonomous unit maximizes chances for success in a mobile competitive society. However, other researchers have described, this excessive individuation, as narcissism, and spiritual emptiness. Also, individualism being a value of mainstream western society has often isolated families from the community and the extended family. Furthermore, individualism being a value of mainstream western society has often isolated families from the community and the extended family. As a result, there is little support for maternal care from the extended family, community or country in Western culture. Some authors have contended that modern Western culture is in peril, partly from the patriarchal development of the male intellectual consciousness, which is no longer balanced by matriarchal values. When I reflect on the attachment patterns of children in Western Culture I consider the increase of children with insecure attachment patterns. The excessive individualism of our culture leads to an unattached state of being. Omer states “Individualism is individuality without belonging.” Individualism thus is associated with materialism, hedonism and alienation from others in our community. Christopher Larch writes of individuation: “… the culture of competitive individualism, which in its decadence has carried the logic of individualism to the extreme of a war against all, the pursuit of happiness to the dead end of narcissistic preoccupation with the self.” One problem with the myopia of individualism is that it limits the ability to locate solutions for challenging social problems. When I consider the increase of insecurely attached children, I relate this to other social issues thus avoiding falling into
the trap of individualism. As Peter L. Callero writes: “When we are committed to the myth of individuation we fail to appreciate the fact personal troubles are usually tied to social issues.” I believe there are individual issues that concern insecure attachment patterns, but they are also social issues. These issues, in western culture, are the ways in which hate is dealt with; and the role of the father in the family and community,

There are extreme cases of children with insecure attachment patterns. These children hate and act out the darker side of the human spirit. A foster mother must be able to meet this hate in order to work with these youth. Omer states “hate is a compound of anger, shame and disgust.”

Rush W. Dozier defines hate has having four core elements: (1) obsessive, intense dislike; (2) binary stereotyping and generalization; (3) a lack of empathy for the object of hatred; (4) and basic sense of hostility that can trigger aggression-the fight response. Aristotle distinguished anger from hatred: “Whereas anger arises from offences against oneself, enmity, may arise even without that: we may hate people merely because of what we take to be their character…. Moreover, anger can be cured by time; but hatred cannot…and anger is accompanied by pain hatred is not.” Children who hate have disorganized attachment patterns. Disorganized attachment may occur when the child’s caretaker is a source of fear, rather than the neutering person they can turn to in time of stress. The child cannot find a solution to relieve anxiety. If this trauma continues the child is vulnerable to the effects of emotional deregulation in interpersonal interactions. This pattern continues into adulthood. The individual cannot regulate feelings of fear, anger, shame or disgust that make up their hateful state. Omer describes this situation of hate as “the soul’s reaction to unmet dependence.”
This disorganized attachment pattern developed in childhood shifts to controlling behaviors in the adolescent and adult. The internalized mental model of the self is that of an individual who is unlovable and unworthy of care. They fear of abandonment, rejection, and betrayal. Disorganized attachment is associated with a predisposition to relational violence and dissociative states related to children hating.

Ruah W. Dozier describes this dark side as follows:

The incredible plasticity of the young brain is that it can be warped by the wrong kinds of stress. If a vulnerable young person is repeatedly exposed to abuse, neglect, and terror, the result appears to be a reprogramming of the primitive neural system’s hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis— which regulates the fight-or-flight response—placing it on a hair trigger. The result can be out-bursts of aggression at the slightest cause. If the parental care is inadequate or unsupportive, the brain decides that the world stinks—and it is better to always defend one. This kind of impulsive anger can turn to hate.\(^5\)

Another way that children act out in long periods of stress is to emotionally shut down towards others they perceive as a threat. In this case the child’s relationship to others disappears and when he explodes it is with the cold deliberation of the adolescent who takes guns to school to kill.

Hatred like love requires an attachment object. The individual’s choice of the hate object, like love, can be rational or irrational, dictated by the unconscious needs and personal history of the hater. The child’s traumatic experience is encapsulated and becomes a non-reflective reality that cuts off authentic relatedness and relies on the attachment of hate that influences and distorts expectations of current events and relationships outside of conscious awareness, particularly in situations involving intense stress.
Alice Miller contends that when children are abused they grow up and bring hate into the community and culture. She theorized that much of the cruelty acted out in World War Two was the result of Germans, who had been abused as children. Within a culture abused individuals can act normally but under stress hate is projected on the other. An example would be when one considers the effects of war. In the United States the war in Afghanistan and Iraq brings out prejudice and hate against Arabs. This hate is often directed at Arabs who have noting to do with the war and support the side of the haters. Arabs have become the scapegoat toward whom hate can be directed toward with impunity.

It is therefore vital to our community and culture that we find ways for parents and foster parent to deal with children who hate. Caregivers' insightful understanding of children's experience, coupled with the provision of feedback to children concerning that experience, models for children how to pay attention to, and to understand what they are experiencing. This attachment ultimately culminates in children learning to reflect upon, and understand their own states of mind. Importantly, this progression from assisted to independent observation of self depends on a healthy and consistent emotional interaction between children and caregivers, which can only occur when secure attachment is present. The foster mother is dealing with children who do not understand what they are feeling and thus have no ability to regulate their emotions. To aid the child the foster mother must be able to contain and understand her own hate. She will need to “meet hate from the inside.” I often deal with hateful adolescents, when I am under attack I can feel my own rage come up to meet theirs. I can put their hate on like a coat and move deeply into their world to help them find meaning and understand their own emotional
state. I promote secure attachment through containing and reflecting their hate back to them. I find this work quite thrilling. Likewise a culture, “working with hate re-enlivens the center of the culture with living conscience.”

Debra Niehoff reports that experiments with animals indicate that when they are abused and neglected they also develop a damaged threat response pattern. These damaged patterns are much like humans in that these response patterns become over reactive or under reactive. She believes that this damaged response system is also particularly evident in human children with neglectful or absent fathers. She states:” The presence of a father seems to contribute to tuning a child’s nervous system in ways not fully understood.”

The Father Principle, which deals with the role fathers play in the family and community, can be found in myth, legend and dreams. Miles Manroe adds that the Father Principle is the “male energy in all individuals.” The archetype of the father is personified as the Elder, the King, or the father in Heaven. The father is the guardian of the status quo and guards against all enemies. Jung writes that, “In dreams it is always the father-figure from whom the decisive convictions, prohibitions, and wise counsels emanate…an authoritative voice which passes final judgment.”

Alexander Mitscherlich contends that the imago of the father is disappearing from Western Culture. Michael Lamb stated that children without fathers are more likely to be maladjusted having problems with social and school interactions. More than half of all children in America won't live with their biological father at some time in their youth.
Bly states that America has turned away from the inherited traditions of patriarchal culture — that we now live and learn within a non-hierarchical, “sibling” society. Bly contends that western society is a sibling society, or a horizontal society, or a flat society, or a fatherless society, or even a motherless society. More accurately, it's a society without elders. We're just in the process now of realizing just how much we have lost by killing the elders. We didn't kill them literally but the father society has collapsed. When you're looking at young gang members, you're looking at people with no elders. So we either develop elders, or the amount of hate and violence will increase year by year. We know that the (traditional) paternal society had an elaborate and internally consistent form with the authoritative father, arranged on hierarchical levels. Children need to be attached to elders and taught the adult ways of talking, writing, and thinking. The father in traditional society helped the child obtain independence and freedom from the clinging negative mother. Also in a society that has elders there are clear limits that enhance freedom. Margo Maine maintains that the emptiness experienced by girls with and absent or unavailable father has profound effects on her development.

This study deals with aspects of the archetypal Mother. Western culture can benefit from this studies revelation and focus on the archetypal mother. Also Western culture can benefit from the an understanding of how to support secure attachment patterns dealing with issues of individuation, hate and the Father Principle.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

As a result of the new knowledge gained by this study I would recommend the following research to continue exploration of the attachment process: (1) There is a
limited amount of research concerning foster mothers, but even less is known about the attachment experiences of foster fathers. It would be interesting to do a similar study with fathers to explore the activation of their imaginal structures concerning attachment;

(2) Some participants became animated as they described playing a trick on their adolescent foster child. It would be informative to do a study on the archetype of the trickster and its relationship to the attachment process with Adolescents; (3) As I found in learning one the affect of shame was particularly defended against by the participants and myself. I would like to see further research on what might be needed to aid those unable to face and metabolize the negative affects of shame, as it relates to the attachment processes. What might a healing experience involve? (4) While doing the literature review I was reminded of the nature of foster placements. These placements often start and end with little or no notice. The lives of the foster children and foster parents face revolving attachment challenges. This in my opinion is a shame of the system, with children and foster parents treated as objects. I would like to see further research on how integrating the use of ritual might support the attachment process and support the spiritual nature of the maternal archetype; (5) In Leaning Four I was surprised that the foster mothers were joyful as they expressed their fierceness towards their adolescent foster children. I would enjoy doing further research on the activation of the imaginal structures that supports this aspect of the attachment relationship; (6) This research design was for participants working with foster children who have a history of attachment failures. I wonder if a similar research design would be informative, if the participants were the natural parents of foster children attempting family reunification as their children leave the foster care system; (7) The participants expressed that their continued meeting and
working with images would be useful. A longitudinal study might enhance the capacity of foster mothers to transmute insecure attachment into secure attachment patterns; (8) In studying the myth of Demeter and Persephone I imagined them as both parts of the Great Mother. I became interested in the mother daughter connection. Several of the participants reported that the communications relating to their mothers was especially useful. I became fascinated as to how the research design might work if the participants were natural mothers and daughters. How might capacities develop if natural mothers and daughters shared the activation of their imaginal structures; (9) In learning three the images of the maternal aspects of good and evil were depicted by the foster mothers. As they dialogued with their negative maternal images and while sharing, some of the mothers questioned the cultural sterility, narcissism, and performance orientation of our culture. There are a limited amount of cross-cultural studies on the nature of attachment process between natural mothers and their children. Participants from another culture might provide alternative data that would expand the knowledge of the imaginal structures related to attachment activated among foster mothers. Many of the foster mothers mentioned insecure attachment experiences and I became curious about why they decided to mother insecurely attached children. How do negative or ambivalent attachment experiences and failures contribute to the decision to become a foster parent?

The research recommended and this study deals with bringing negative affects related to attachment failures to consciousness through shared meaning making and the use of imaginal activities to facilitate the integration of these affects, expanding one’s capacity to recognize one’s maternal shadow, thus lessening the possibility of unconscious enactment. In the larger picture, humans individually and culturally need to
support the maternal archetype in all her forms. In my opinion it is the human reconnection with the archetypal mother that will save our children and our planet.
APPENDIX 1

ETHICS APPLICATION

1) Subject Population: a) describe who the population was; b) how you obtained them; c) inclusion and exclusion criteria; d) total number of subjects studied:

A) The subjects were women who had been identified as experienced professional foster mothers. Experienced foster mothers have been fostering for ten or more years. The foster mothers were provided professional training and support. They received promotions and positive work evaluations from the agencies that employ them. These experienced foster mothers were identified by interviews with foster care and adoption agencies. They were chosen from different agencies, and or assigned to different counties and towns.

B) Personal and professional contacts were used to solicit experienced foster mothers. I interviewed the unit supervisors from two professional foster home agencies in Butte County. I talked with social workers assigned to foster families in Butte County. I interviewed foster family social workers from California State Adoptions. Lastly, I interviewed counselors and social workers from The Butte County Youth Services Department. (See Appendix 6)

C) Professional foster mothers did not need to be currently caring for children. They needed only have a history of being a professional foster mother. It might have been difficult for current foster mothers to get away for a weekend and therefore the population was open to those currently not caring for children.

D) The group of professional foster mothers included at least seven participants. Seven were interviewed and scheduled.

2) Describe all procedures, which involved the research subjects. Include all aspects of how you asked for their involvement. Prior to the research weekend:

A) I introduced myself over the phone to potential participants that were referred to me and. I generally explained the topic of my research. I asked them if they were interested in being involved in a research weekend. I provided my telephone number in case they had any questions. If they needed more time, I gave them a week to think it over. This initial contact was brief, not exceeding one half hour. (Appendix 6)

B) I mailed interested foster mothers a letter outlining the schedule, requirements and benefits of the research. Foster mothers who decided to do the research weekend were scheduled for a meeting, no more than two weeks before the research weekend (Appendix 7).
C) I met with the foster mother individually no more than two weeks before the research weekend. I provided each participant with a consent form to sign. (Appendix 10). I went over the benefits and limitations of confidentiality. I asked the foster mother to tell me her favorite story about an interaction with a foster child.

D) I phoned each participant two days before the research weekend to ask if they had any last minute questions about the weekend.

3) Describe the consent process and documentation: The consent process is described above. The form is in Appendix 9.

4) Risks: Describe any potential risks or discomforts to your research subjects both during and/or after their participation in the study.

A) A potential risk or discomfort experienced by participants could include intense feelings: such as grief, shame, anger, sadness, and loss. Relationships with their mothers and foster children will be discussed. After the research weekend participants might experience vulnerability or embarrassment for sharing deeply with the group.

5) Safeguards: Discuss procedures for preventing or minimizing the study’s potential risks.

A) The participants were provided with an overview and schedule of the weekend and were prepared for the risks involved (Appendix 20). I followed this plan to provide structure and safety within the inquiry group.

B) I asked my co-researcher, Cheryl Scholar, to help hold the container in which the research weekend will occur. Cheryl conferred with me as to her observations and gave me feedback about my role as the group leader. As the group leader, I attempted to minimize discomfort by providing clear boundaries and individual support for the research participants. I intervened if a participant reached emotional overload or became disrespectful to other participants. My interventions included: prompting, redirection, and provision of time out and individual attention from researchers. I let members know that they can leave the research weekend if they choose to.

C) I instructed members that if they feel too uncomfortable they can take a break, talk with co-researcher or leave.

D) I discussed confidentiality with the participants. I let the participants know they should only disclose material that is comfortable for them to share. Participants were from different agencies, counties and cities.
E) I provided participants with a list of therapists in Butte County that deal with attachment issues (Appendix 22).

6) Benefits: Describe the potentially direct benefits to subjects, as well as possible general benefits and contributions this research made for participants:

A) Participants were provided experiences that deepened their awareness of their capacities and the capacities of other foster mothers.
B) Participants gained respect for the role of foster mothering and the importance of this role.
C) Participants shared with other foster mothers
D) Participants were provided access to the completed dissertation so that new knowledge can be structured into the foster care system from the ground level.

7) For the Institute of Imaginal Studies:

A) This research explored the role imaginal structures play in the maternal side of the attachment process.
B) The results of this research moved the teachings of Imaginal Psychology into the arena of direct services for children.
C) Research on attachment and imaginal structures brings into discussion the soul. This inquiry is consistent with the values of Imaginal Psychology.
D) The Institute of Imaginal Studies has concerned itself with community making. Children are at the core of future development of community.

8) For the psychological community:

A) Adds to the development of attachment theory. The literature review and research provides additional ways of looking at attachment by way of using Imaginal Inquiry to examine the images held that promote attachment.
B) Expands the knowledge of foster mothering. This is an area that has little current research.
C) Expands knowledge of mothering in Western culture, which can open questions that support future research.

9) After the study: Describe what and how you communicated to subjects after the study was completed.
A) After the last research group, I wrote each participant a summary letter (Appendix 17). In this letter I thanked the participants for their participation. I let them know that if they had questions they can call me. Also I suggested, if they have unfinished issues, they should refer to the therapy list or call me for a referral to a therapist.

B) Participants were provided with a copy of the dissertation or a copy of the results.

Supplemental Information:

Appendix 2- Conceptual Outline
Appendix 3- Chronological Outline
Appendix 4- Flyer
Appendix 5- List of Agencies Contacted
Appendix 6- Phone Script for Potential Participants
Appendix 7- Letter to Potential Participants
Appendix 8- Research Instruments
Appendix 9- Informed Consent Reviewed and Signed on First Meeting
Appendix 10- Foster Mother Participant’s Information Sheet
Appendix 11- Art Supplies
Appendix 12- Summary of Learnings
Appendix 13- Love You Forever
Appendix 14- Dialogue with Art Piece
Appendix 15- The Little Match-Seller
Appendix 16- Participant Stories
Appendix 17- Thank You Letter
Appendix 18- Summary Cover Letter
Appendix 19- Script of Research Weekend
Appendix 20- Short Schedule for Research Weekend
Appendix 21- Therapist Referral List
Appendix 22- Secure Attachment Maternal Behaviors
APPENDIX 2

CONCEPTUAL OUTLINE

Evoking Experience

Individual meeting with participants
- Share story of interaction with foster child

Group meeting with participants
- Light candle and say names of foster children they have worked with.
- Play song “This is to Mother You” from Gospel Oak by Sinead O’Conner.
- Listen and share story about a positive attachment experience with a foster child.
- Play music “Children’s Lullabies.”
- Participants review the names of mother goddesses
- Play the song “Sweet Side” from the tape World Without Tears by Lucinda Williams.
- Participants will share and listen to a memory about how an attachment experience with a foster child did not go well.
- Play song “My Darling Child” from Universal mother by Sinead O’Conner.
- Participants will listen and share a memory of their own attachment experience with their mother.
- Participants will create and share an art piece that reflects their image or images of the maternal side of the attachment process.
- Participants will read and listen to myths and stories about the mother/child attachment process.
- Participants will write a story or myth about the mother/child attachment process.
- Participants will listen and share their original stories about the mother/child attachment process.

Expressing Experience

- Participants will fill out the Foster Mother Participation Information form.
- Participants will share a memory of interaction with foster child. (Taped)
- Participants will share a memory of an attachment experience that was positive. (Taped)
- Participants will journal to capture impressions of what evolves from their experiences.
- Participants will share their experiences of creating their art piece in their journal and verbally. (Taped)
- Participants will write a fairytale or myth about a mother/child attachment process.
- Participants will do reflective journaling about experience of writing and listening to the fairytale or myths. Participants will identify key happenings of the research experience in journal.
Interpreting Experience

- Participants identify key happenings in their research experience.
- Researcher and co-researcher respond to key happenings, written and taped data.
- Co-researcher share responses to researcher’s initial interpretations.
- Differences and parallels between researcher and co-researchers interpretations will be explored.
- Researcher will interpret data collected using theoretical and mythic information.
- Information on ethnic/cultural background. (Appendix 9)

Integrating Experience

- A written Summary of Learnings will be provided to the participants (Appendix 12).
- The use of ritual to support integration of weekend experiences, providing participants with transitional objects.
APPENDIX 3

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE
MASTER SCHEDULE USED FOR THE RESEARCH STUDY WEEKEND

Saturday

8:30a- I will meet with the co-researcher Cheryl Scholar to review the schedule and arrange materials.

9:00-9:10a- Participants will arrive and settle in. Participants will tour parts of the house to point out the bathroom, where to put coats and purses, first aid, drinks, snacks, and art areas to work in. This is to help participants find what they need during the day on Saturday and Sunday. Participants will go home at 5:00p and return Sunday at 9:30a. The house belongs to the researcher.

9:10-9:40a- The schedule will be reviewed for the research weekend informing participants about breaks, lunch (bag lunch), beginning and ending times. Expectations will be gone over in regard to confidentiality and respect for diversity. Mention that art pieces will be photographed and the creator will remain anonymous. Art pieces can be taken home Sunday, after the research weekend. Signed informed consent will be gathered. Participants will get a copy at the end of the day. The foster mother participation sheet will be filled out and gathered. A simple definition of attachment will be provided. Chime In.

9:40-10:00a- Each participant will light a candle to recognize the foster children they have worked with. They will say the names of foster children as they light the candle. The researcher will go first.

10:00-10:05a- Play “This is to Mother You” from Gospel Oak by Sinead O’Conner.

10:05-10:45a- Have a brief meditation for foster mothers to recall and coalesce in their minds their own childhood vulnerabilities in regard to attachment. Participants will introduce themselves and tell about herself as a child, especially at a time when she did not feel safe and nurtured.

10:45-11:00a- Participants will be asked to write in their journal in order to capture how they are affected by recalling and sharing their experience and by hearing the experiences of others. How were they affected by the stories that have been told including their own? The researcher and co-researcher will also journal.

11:00-11:15a-Break, drinks and snacks provided. (Silent)) Play song “Sweet Side” from the tape World Without Tears by Lucenda Williams.

11:15-12:00p- Participants will be asked to share a story about their attachment process with their own caregiver. They have been asked to bring in a picture of their primary caregiver and show it while they are telling their story. Taped They will be asked to write in their journal a letter to their primary caregiver, stating how
her trust or lack of trust in the caregiver’s protection, has affected her relationships. Also she will be asked to write what she would like to tell her caregiver that might improve her trust in the relationship?

12:00-12:30p- Participants will have lunch. A simple bag lunch will be provided. During lunch participants will be asked to share their letter to their caregiver. Sharing these letters will continue to deepen their experience of the child’s extreme need to have the protection of a caregiver. This will also promote the foster mother’s awareness of her own needs. Sharing with the group is a direct attachment experience in that she is sharing her current relationship with her childhood caregiver.

12:30-1:15p- Researcher will read to the participants the book *Love You Forever*. Participant will have her own copy of the book and will look at pictures as the story progresses. This story has pictures that depict the process of the stronger person looking over the weaker person as if to protect them, which is the basic foundation of attachment according to attachment theory. Participants will be asked to share a memory of her having a positive interaction with a foster child. That is a time when she felt like protecting and caring for the child in her care.

1:15-2:15p- Participants will journal. They will be asked to write about an attachment experience with a foster child that did not go well. That is she was not feeling like protecting or caring for this foster child and may even have had thoughts of harming the child. Brief meditation. There will be sharing and discussion of these journal writings. While the discussion takes place the researcher will ask how foster mothers are affected be recalling, sharing and hearing the experiences of others.

2:15-2:20p- Break, drinks and snacks will be provided.

2:20-3:20p- Participants will be asked to create an art piece that reflects the participant’s image or images of what interferes with the maternal attachment process. That is from the experience they have just written about in their journal, shared and heard about What images come up for them. What is the image or images that interferes with wanting to care for or protect the child?

3:20-3:40p- Participants will be asked to journal to the image they have created and tell it what it might need to know in order to want to protect and care for the foster child. Does the image listen? How old is it? What does it want? Where did it come from?

3:40-4:00p- Participants will share their art pieces with the group and state what relationship they want to have with this image. Participants will receive a copy of the consent form. Artwork will be left and photographed in the evening. Art will be taken home on Sunday. It will stay in the environment all day Sunday. Taped

4:00-4:15p- Participants will put out a candle and state the name of a foster child they have worked with. Chime out. They will be reminded to get their belongings before going home. Time of Sunday meeting.
Sunday

9:00a-9:30a - Researcher meets with co-researcher, Cheryl Scholar to share impressions and review the schedule.

9:30a-9:45a Participants settle in and light a candle in recognition of the foster children they have worked with. They will say the names of foster children they have worked with as they light candle. The researcher will go first. Chime in. Drinks and snacks will be provided.

9:45-10:00a - The co-researcher will read a story or myth about the mother child attachment process. One story depicts a child that is in various states of being cared for. The child’s image of the caretaker. *The Little Match Seller* by Hans Christian Anderson.

10:00-11:00a Participants will write a story or myth about attachment between mother and child or children.

11:00-12:00p Participants will share their stories and discuss their reactions. Participants will be asked to do reflective journaling and identify five key moments of the research weekend. Researcher and co-researcher will journal as well.

12:00-12:30- Ritualized Closure. A silver acorn for each participant will be in a basket that will be passed around the group. As each participant takes an acorn from the basket they will share a meaningful memory they are taking from the weekend. The acorn represents the seed that can grow into a great tree if provided a nurturing environment. It is also a transition object. This will be taped. Chime out.

12:30-1:00- The stories will be collected with the journal and returned by mail to participants after the researcher makes a copy. The researcher will provide counselor referral sheets as needed. Researcher will hand out her card with numbers she can be reached at during the day. Reminders of follow up contacts will be given at this time. Participants will take their artwork home with them.
APPENDIX 4

FLYER

_Foster Mothers and Group Home Staff_  
_A Day of Exploration_

An Invitation to Participate in a Weekend Research Study on the Experiences of Being a Caretaker for Foster Children  
To Take Place on the Weekend of April 29th & 30th, 2006 in Chico CA

In a Group, Participants will Explore their Experiences as Caregivers for Children through Writing Journals, Making Art, and Creating Stories.

Foster Mothers and Female Group Home Staff please contact Lois Davis at (530) 343-3665 for more Information.
## APPENDIX 5

### LIST OF AGENCIES CONTACTED TO POST FLYERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Northern California Youth and Family Programs, Chico, CA...........</td>
<td>(530) 893-1614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Youth for Change, Paradise, CA ....................................</td>
<td>(530) 877-6764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• California Department of Social Services-Adoption Branch serving all of Northern California ..................................</td>
<td>(530) 895-6143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Butte Co. Behavioral Health Dept. Youth Services Division Oroville, CA ..........</td>
<td>(530) 891-2915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 6

PHONE SCRIPT FOR POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

Hello,

Thank you for your interest. I am conducting a study on attachment for my dissertation from Meridian University. Have you been a foster mother for ten years or more? I am especially interested in gathering information about foster mothers who have worked in the field for over ten years and have received recognition by promotions and positive evaluations. I have 30 years experience working with the foster care system and intend to gather data that is not currently available for the selection and training of foster mothers.

My research interest emerges out of training in Imaginal Psychology. Imaginal Psychology emphasizes the care of the soul, which expresses itself in images. A deeper exploration of imaginal structures involves examination of culture, myths, art, music, ritual and fairytales. The intent of my study is to examine the images of experienced foster mothers hold.

Participation in this study will require:

- Participation in a two-day group with other foster mothers. (No more than 10).
- Creating an art piece.
- Creating a story or writing down a fairytale or myth you are drawn to.
- Using a ritual process during the group weekend to help facilitate a holding container for the group sharing.
- Discussing and journaling about your experience and the meanings that emerges for you privately or with the group.
-Sharing your attachment experiences verbally both and with a group of other foster mothers.

Participation in this inquiry is on a voluntary basis and confidentiality guidelines will be adhered to. Participants will be informed about the boundaries of confidentiality before the group meets. The researcher’s written dissertation and personal dialogues will keep the identities of the participants confidential. If you choose to participate you will be asked to sign an informed consent form. If you would like extra time to make your decision I will call you back, when would you like me to call? (Within limit of one week) If you are committed to participate I will send you a letter with the date, time and other information. Thank you for your interest and the work you have done with children.
APPENDIX 7

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Dear ___________________

I am writing to follow up on our phone conversation of ___________.

This is a written schedule of the research weekend. Please consider the information. The date for our group meeting is ___________. The meeting place is 2627 Pillsbury Rd. Chico, California. My research topic deals with the maternal side of the attachment process. This research project uses a participatory research design, which promotes the sharing as well as development of knowledge. You will be asked to:

1) Read stories, do journal writing, tell stories, make art and share your attachment experiences with a group of 8-10 foster mothers.

2) Attend a two-day research weekend.

The potential risks of this research inquiry could be the experiencing of deep feelings related to attachment. These feelings specifically could include feelings of grief, shame, anger, fear, sadness and loss. You could experience feelings of vulnerability or embarrassment after sharing with the inquiry group. Benefits to the inquiry group include a deepened awareness of the capacities of foster mothers.

Direct any questions to:
Lois Davis (xxx) xxx-xxxx

__________________

Lois Davis, MFT
APPENDIX 8

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The research instruments to be used in my dissertation study are as follows:

Mother Myths and Fairytales

Story: *Love You Forever*

Music: “Sweet Side” from *World Without Tears* by Lucinda Williams; “This is to Mother You” from *Gospel Oak* by Sinead O’Conner; “My Darling Child” from *Universal Mother* by Sinead O’Conner.

Reflective journal writing

Imaginal Dialogue/Collaborative Discussion

Art making and sharing

Audio recording of dialogical participation

Use of candles and ritualized openings

Chimes to start and end group

Information Sheet (Appendix 9)
APPENDIX 9

INFORMED CONSENT

You are invited to participate in a study of the experiences of foster and group home mothers. The study's purpose is to better understand the experiences of foster mothers in the care of foster children.

Participation will involve small group discussion with 7-10 other participants, journaling, art making, sharing memories, stories and use of ritual. The meeting will last seven and one half hours on Saturday and four hours on Sunday and will be audiotaped and professionally transcribed. Meeting dates will be __________.

For the protection of your privacy, all tapes and transcripts will be confidential and your identity will be protected. Information will be kept in a locked file at my home. In the reporting of information in published material, any information that might identify you will be altered to ensure your anonymity. The photographs of the artwork may be reproduced in the dissertation but the creator of the artwork will remain anonymous. Your artwork will be returned to you at the end of the second day of the research weekend.

This study is of a research nature and may offer no direct benefit to you. In addition to myself and one co-researcher, a professional transcriber may have access to the tapes. The published findings, however, may be useful to foster mothers and may benefit to you. This study is designed to minimize potential risks to you. However, some of the procedures such as sharing experiences in a group may touch sensitive areas for some people. A potential discomfort could include intense feelings, such as grief, shame, anger, sadness and loss. Participants may experience vulnerability or embarrassment for sharing deeply with a group. If at any time you develop any concerns or questions, I will make every effort to discuss these with you. I, the researcher, cannot provide psychotherapy, but at your request or using my personal judgment will facilitate referrals to an appropriate mental health professional, if such a need should arise.

If you decide to participate in this research, you may withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time and for any reason. Please note as well that I, the researcher, may need to terminate your participation from the study at any point and for any reason.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may call me at xxx-xxx-xxxx any day of the week from 6:00pm to 9:00pm or you may contact the Dissertation Direct at the Institute of Imaginal Studies, 47 Sixth Street, Petaluma, CA, 94952, telephone (707) 765-1836. The Institute of Imaginal Studies assumes no responsibility for any psychological or physical injury resulting from this research.

I _____________________, consent to participate in the study of foster mothers. I have had this study explained to me by Lois Davis, MFT. Any questions of mine about this research have been answered, and I have received a copy of this consent form. My participation in this study is entirely voluntary.

Participant's Signature

Date
APPENDIX 10

FOSTER MOTHER PARTICIPANT’S INFORMATION SHEET

Name: ____________________________ Fictitious name?: ____________________________
Address: __________________________ Phone: ___________ E-mail: ___________
Age: _______ Years you have worked with foster or group home children: __________

Occupation:

Please describe as fully as you are comfortable with. This information will be used as part of the research data, but will remain confidential, using your fictitious name only.

Attachment is a relationship of a weaker, less skilled person to a more powerful person for protection. The mother is generally considered to be the protector. The mother or caretaker experiences the maternal side of the attachment process.

What is your ethnic background/history?

How might your ethnic background influence your work with foster or group home children?

What are family stories you have heard about parenting that may reflect your ethnic background?

Please describe your history of attachment to foster or group home children.

Briefly describe your attachment history. Please describe your history of attachment with your own mother.

What is the most striking example of a positive interaction with a foster or group home child?

What is the most striking example of a negative interaction with a foster or group home child?
APPENDIX 11

ART MATERIALS

The art materials that will be provided to create the image of mother include:

1. colored pencils
2. pastels
3. charcoal
4. collage materials
5. fabric scraps
6. colored paper
7. colored ink
8. heavy paper
9. sketch paper
10. glue
11. scissors
12. newsprint
13. magazine pictures
APPENDIX 12

SUMMARY OF LEARNINGS

The cumulative learning states that bringing negative affects related to attachment failures to consciousness through shared meaning-making and imaginal activities facilitates the integration of these affects, expands one’s capacity to recognize one’s own maternal shadow, and lessons the possibility of unconscious enactment.

Five Learning’s were derived from the research data. Learning One states that those unable to confront and metabolize the negative affects of shame, distress, and fear that arise in response to an exploration of attachment failure defend against these affects by internalizing responsibility for these failures and over-idealizing and/or caretaking neglectful or abusive parents. The second Learning states: The narrative sharing of adult over-idealization of neglectful or abusive parents, as well as challenging the cultural taboos against expressing anger towards one’s mother, breaks down the dissociation from one’s affective experience allowing for an interpersonal resonance associated with secure attachment. The third Learning states that expression of affective experiences of negative mothering may inhibit unconscious enactment of those experiences by bringing them to consciousness and allowing integration. Learning Four states that working with adolescents whom have experienced significant attachment failures require the ability to embody the trickster archetype and transmute the negative affect of anger into appropriate fierceness. The last Learning states: The creation and witnessing of an attachment story allows for the expression of unconscious internal representations of
attachment patterns, putting one in relationship with aspects of the self that need nurturing, thus providing relief from unconscious defenses.

Please call or e-mail if you have questions: XXX-XXX-XXXX.

(E-MAIL ADDRESS)

Thank You,

Lois Davis
APPENDIX 13

LOVE YOU FOREVER

Love You Forever is reprinted with permission of the author, Bob Munsch.
A mother held her new baby and
very slowly rocked him back and forth,
back and forth, back and forth.
And while she held him, she sang:
I'll love you forever,
I'll like you for always,
As long as I'm living
my baby you'll be.
The baby grew. He grew and he grew and he grew. He grew until he was two years old, and he ran all around the house. He pulled all the books off the shelves. He pulled all the food out of the refrigerator and he took his mother's watch and flushed it down the toilet. Sometimes his mother would say, "This kid is driving me CRAZY!"

But at night time, when that two-year-old was quiet, she opened the door to his room, cradled across the floor, looked up over the side of his bed; and if he was really asleep she picked him up and rocked him back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.
While she rocked him she sang:
I'll love you forever,
I'll love you for always,
As long as I'm living
My baby you'll be.

The little boy grew. He grew and he grew and he grew. He grew until he was nine years old. And he never wanted to come in for dinner, he never wanted to take a bath, and when grandma visited he always said bad words. Sometimes his mother wanted to sell him to the zoo.
But at night time, when he was asleep, the mother quietly opened the door to his room, crawled across the floor and looked up over the side of the bed. If he was really asleep, she picked up that nine-year-old boy and rocked him back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

And while she rocked him she sang:

I'll love you forever,
I'll like you for always,
As long as I'm living
my baby you'll be.

The boy grew. He grew and he grew. He grew until he was a teenager. He had strange friends and he wore strange clothes and he listened to strange music. Sometimes the mother felt like she was in a zoo!

But at night time, when that teenager was asleep, the mother opened the door to his room, crawled across the floor and looked up over the side of the bed. If he was really asleep she picked up that great big boy and rocked him back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

While she rocked him she sang:

I'll love you forever,
I'll like you for always,
As long as I'm living
my baby you'll be.
That teenager grew. He grew and he grew and he grew. He grew until he was a grown-up man. He left home and got a house across town.

But sometimes on dark nights the mother got into her car and drove across town.

If all the lights in her son’s house were out, she opened his bedroom window, crawled across the floor, and looked up over the side of his bed. If that great big man was really asleep she picked him up and rocked him back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

And while she rocked him she sang:

I’ll love you forever,
I’ll like you for always,
As long as I’m living
my baby you’ll be.
Well, that mother, she got older.
She got older and older and older.
One day she called up her son and said,
"You'd better come see me because
I'm very old and sick."
So her son came to see her.
When he came in the door she tried
to sing the song. She sang:
I'll love you forever,
I'll like you for always...
But she couldn't finish because she
was too old and sick.

The son went to his mother.
He picked her up and rocked her
back and forth, back and forth,
back and forth.
And he sang this song:
I'll love you forever,
I'll like you for always,
As long as I'm living
my Mommy you'll be.

When the son came home
that night, he stood for a long time
at the top of the stairs.
Then he went into the room where his very new baby daughter was sleeping. He picked her up in his arms and very slowly rocked her back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

And while he rocked her he sang:

I'll love you forever,
I'll like you for always,
As long as I'm living
my baby you'll be.

Robert Munsch

is the internationally known author of more than twenty books, including The Bear in Big Pocket. In 1993 he won the

"Vide债务 Award for Children Literature" presented by the Canadian Authors Association. He is also the recipient of the Canadian Booksellers Association


Sheila McGown

has worked as an illustrator and writer for 27 years. In that time she has contributed paintings and drawings to magazines, newspapers and advertising. Her book Paper Mache for Kids was a Bank Street Faculty Award.

Both Robert Munsch and Sheila McGown have children of their own.

Books by Sheila McGown

That's My Name House • Paper Mache Tales

Paper Mache for Kids • Soft Tote Bag • Doll Kit Can Make

1 Harry I'll Feel Fine (Biography) • Dolly Kit Can Make

Books by Robert Munsch

Something Good • Upstairs, Downstairs • The Two Percent Rain • A Theme of a Theme • Meet My Brother

I Have a Cat • 52 Yellow Zips • The Boy in the Orange Hat

MSandman Manual • Bad Paddle • The Paper Bag Princess

Mountains • Thomas Brownstone • Charlie's Father • Somebody Chained By Milburn and the Wind • The Dark and Whiter in Which Story

Water and Sun • People, Trees, the Sky, the Moon, and Tidal

(all published by Random House)

LOVE YOU FOREVER

A young woman holds her newborn son and looks at him lovingly. Softly she sings to him:

I'll love you forever,
I'll like you for always,
As long as I'm living
my baby you'll be.

This is the story of how that little boy grows through the stages of childhood and becomes a man.

It is also about the enduring nature of parents' love and how it passes generations.

Love You Forever is a book that both children and adults will enjoy — over and over again.

A Firefly Book
APPENDIX 14

DIALOGUE WITH ART PIECE

(1) When did you come into being?

(2) How did you come into being?

(3) What message might you have for me?

(4) What might you want?

(5) What stories do you know that remind you of me?
APPENDIX 15

THE LITTLE MATCH-SELLER

By
Han Christian Andersen
(1846)

It was terrible cold and nearly dark on the last evening of the old year, and the snow was failing fast. In the cold and the darkness, a poor little girl, with bare head and naked feet, roamed through the streets. It is true she had on a pair of slippers when she left home, but they were not of much use. They were very large, so large; indeed, that they had belonged to her mother, and the poor little creature had lost them in running across the street to avoid two carriages that were rolling along at a terrible rate. One of the slippers she could not find, and a boy seized upon the other and ran away with it, saying that he could use it as a cradle, when he had children of his own. So the little girl went on with her little naked feet, which were quite red and blue with the cold. In an old apron she carried a number of matches, and had a bundle of them in her hands. No one had bought anything of her the whole day, nor had anyone given her even a penny. Shivering with cold and hunger, she crept along; poor little child, she looked the picture of misery. The snowflakes fell on her long, fair hair, which hung in curls on her shoulders, but she regarded them not.

Lights were shining from every window, and there was a savory smell of roast goose, for it was New-year’s eve—yes, she remembered that. In a corner, between two houses, one of which projected beyond the other, she sank down and huddled herself together. She had drawn her little feet under her, but she could not keep off the cold; and she dared not go home, for she had sold no matches, and could not take home even a penny of money. Her father would certainly beat her; besides, it was almost as cold at home as here, for they had only the roof to cover them, through which the wind howled, although the largest holes had been stopped up with straw and rags. Her little hands were almost frozen with the cold. Ah! Perhaps a burning match might be some good, if she could draw it from the bundle and strike it against the wall, just to warm her fingers. She drew one out—“scratch!” how it sputtered as it burnt! It gave a warm, bright light, like a little candle, as she held her hand over it. It was really a wonderful light. It seemed to he little girl that she was sitting by a large iron stove, with polished brass feet and a brass ornament. How the fire burned! And seemed so beautifully warm that the child stretched out her feet as if to warm them, when, lo! The flame of the match went out, the stove vanished, and she had only the remains of the half-burnt match in her hand.

She rubbed another match on the wall. It burst into a flame, and where it light fell upon the wall it became as transparent as a veil, and she could see into the room. The table was covered with a snowy white table-cloth, on which stood a splendid dinner service, and a
steaming roast goose, stuffed with apples and dried plums. And what was still more
wonderful, the goose jumped down from the dish and waddled across the floor, with a
knife and fork in its breast, to the little girl. The match went out and there remained
nothing but the thick, damp, cold wall before her.

She lighted another match, and then she found herself sitting under a beautiful Christmas-
tree. It was larger and more beautifully decorated than the one which she had seen
through the glass door at the rich merchant’s. Thousands of tapers were burning upon the
green branches, and colored pictures, like those she had seen in the show-windows, looked
down upon it all. The little one stretched out her hand towards them, and the match went
out.

The Christmas lights rose higher and higher, till they looked to her like the stars in the
sky. Then she saw a star fall, leaving behind it a bright streak of fire. “Someone is
dying,” thought the little girl, for her old grandmother, the only one who had ever loved
her, and who was now dead, had told her that when a star falls, a soul was going up to
God.

She again rubbed a match on the wall, and the light shone round her; in the brightness
stood her old grandmother, clear and shining, yet mild and loving in her appearance.
“Grandmother,” cried the little one, “O take me with you; I know you will go away when
the match burns out; you will vanish like the warm stove, the roast goose, and the large,
glorious Christmas-tree.” And she made haste to light the whole bundle of matches, for
she wished to keep her grandmother there. And the matches glowed with a light that was
brighter than the noon-day, and her grandmother had never appeared so large or so
beautiful. She took the little girl in her arms, and they both flew upwards in brightness
and joy far above the earth, where there was neither cold nor hunger nor pain, for they
were with God.

In the dawn of morning there lay the poor little one, with pale cheeks and smiling mouth,
leaning against the wall; she had been frozen to death on the last evening of the year; and
the New-year’s sun rose and shone upon a little corpse! The child still sat, in the stiffness
of death, holding the matches in her hand, on bundle of which was burnt. “She tried to
warm herself,” said some. No one imagined what beautiful things she had seen, nor into
what glory she entered with her grandmother, on New-year’s day.
APPENDIX 16

SUMMARY OF DATA

Participant Stories

Story of Child/Caregivers Interaction: Cher

Lilly was her name, she was the envy of all the other mermaids and ocean creatures. Lilly had it all or so it seemed to the average on looker. Lilly was the most beautiful mermaid with her long flowing hair that seemed to almost change colors as the sunlight’s brightness changed throughout the day. Lilly was the fastest swimmer and highest jumped, everyone had the deepest respect for her.

It was almost a given that all the ocean’s creatures either knew Lilly or had heard of her accomplishments, because besides the beauty and intelligence Lilly had the grandest sense of adventure and she was always on the go, always looking towards the next journey.

Well one day as Mack the very large, very old. Very slow sea turtle was talking to his little friend Stone the other, whom himself was very handsome and intelligent, no to mention playful; Stone had some questions for Mack about Lilly.

Looking towards the next sojourn. Lilly was without question the most respected of all ocean creatures.

Mark was a very large, very slow and very wise old sea turtle. Mack loved telling stories and spending time with some of the younger creations in his neighborhood.
Many of the families living near Mack would sort of adopt him as a family uncle or grandpa because he was so loveable and wise. One of Mack’s favorite stories to tell was Lilly’s favorite stories to tell was Lilly’s story.

Well Stone was the neighborhood goof ball; he had way too much energy and all he ever wanted to do was play, and while most of the other otters liked to play also, none had energy like Stone. Stone’s playfulness was contagious as was his kindness. Stone lived in Mack’s neighborhood so one day when Stone was to drive his parents right up the ocean floor and into a sand bar, they sent him to visit Mack and take him some cookies.

So Stone went to see Mack and in a way only Mack seemed to be able to do, he got Stone to sit and listen to a story about Lilly. Stone interrupted Mack and told him, “yeah, yeah, yeah, she’s the greatest, I know, I know.”

While his tone was sarcastic and impatient, Stone, like everyone else in the ocean, had heard Lilly’s story. Mack looked at Stone and then asked him “oh, so you know why Lilly goes on these odysseys time after time?

Well now there was a simple question no one had ever asked, certainly not Stone. “Well no I have no idea why she takes off like she does,” said Stone. “So maybe there is more to Lilly’s story than you have heard,” Mack stated in his wise deep voice.

Well this of course caught Stone’s attention and he wanted to hear more so he asked Mack to tell him what he knew.

Well what Mack knew wasn’t necessarily the happy part of the story, which is why most people probably chose to forget it when thinking of Lilly. Mack went on to tell Stone “the rest of the story…”You see Stone even though Lilly had all the beauty and
intelligence any mermaid would want, what she didn’t have was even bigger. Lilly went on all these adventures not for fun, or education-Lilly was searching.”

“Searching? What for?” asked Stone.” “Lilly was searching for what most of us take for granted…..Love, acceptance and belonging,” Mack continued.

“YOU see Stone, Lilly never had Parents, siblings or any family or friends who love Lilly for Lilly. Yes it is true many admired her beauty and talents but no one saw her. No one saw Lilly—all of her, the good the bad and the ugly.”

“The ugly,” said Stone. “Yes we all have a little ugly in us, even Lilly, but we can talk more about that tomorrow.”

**Story of Child/Caregiver Interaction: Dolly**

All that was left of Rosie’s Dad was an old rusty bicycle. In fact, it was so rusty, you could barely tell what color it had been. Blue, maybe or silver, was Rosie’s best guess. When he had left that time for good, he had put everything he could in his huge pick-up truck- Mom said it was going to be reposed-that’s what started the fight- and drove away.

The rest of everything Mom had taken to the Salvation Army, or thrown away. Once, when her Aunt Lulu came over, they drank a bunch of wine, and then tore through the house pulling down pictures finding anything that could make them even think of Dad.

Rose stayed in her room and turning up the TV really loud, but she could still hear them use words like “FUCKING BASTARD and COCK-SUCKING PIG.” They went out
Side and made a big fire in the back yard and burned everything they could. It as like they had forgotten that Rosie ever existed. But the next morning when Mom finally woke up, she sat in the big chair in the living room and held Rosie on her lap, without saying anything and let Rosie cry till she ran out of tears.

For some reason, Mom didn’t get rid of the bike, though. Rosie had their own, till she forgot to lock it when she rode to China’s Market and it got stolen. Mom scolded her and told her it would be a long time until they could afford a new one-like right now they could barely afford to pay the cable bill.

Her Dad’s bike was too big for her anyway and both tires were flat. But, every once in a while she’d try to climb on it. She was growing like a weed-that’s what her Mom said as she realized that she could fit on that bike just fine Mr. Roth lived next store. He was the type of neighbor that loved kids-but not too much- Mom had checked him out on “Megan’s Law.” He’d let her come over and pick his blackberries and tomatoes and Rosie knew he could help her with the bike. Because he had about fifty of them in his yard.

It took a couple of Saturdays, but Mr. Roth did help get that bike running. He showed her how to patch the tubes and grease the chain and to lower the seat so it fit her just right, In return she pulled all the Velcro weeds out of his vegetable garden, even though it made her arms itchy.

Mom was going to school to be a CAN and working in the old folks home and it seemed like she was never around or if she was she had to rush off somewhere. Rosie mostly felt like she hardly knew she was there.
Rosie knew that Dad was somewhere, missing her terribly. Aunt Lulu said he was in Paradise living with some slut. Rosie had asked her teacher what a slut was, but when she saw the look on her face, she changed the subject.

Rosie didn’t know anyone who lived in Paradise, but she knew it was a long way from Chapman town, so she asked Mr. Roth and he told her about the skyway. ‘Could you ride your bike there’, asked Rosie. ‘I used to back in the day, but I sure wouldn’t now’, he said. To many crazy drivers in their SUVS.

But Rosie knew she had to find her Dad and she wasn’t scared of any old SUVS. One day when her Mom had to leave early for work, she went over to Mr. Roth’s and borrowed his pump. Where are you going today? ‘Twentieth Street Park,’ she said, averting her eyes.

Nobody told her how steep the skyway was or how hot it would be in the sun. She rode then walked, then rode, then walked. Someone stopped asked her if she wanted a ride, but she knew about stranger danger. She said, ‘No.’ She did take the bottle of water they offered.

Finally she was so tired she sat down and cried. She covered her eyes and balled so loud. She didn’t hear the car pull-up next to her, till she felt her Mom grab her and hold her. ‘How did you know where to find me?’ she said, and then she couldn’t talk. Mr. Roth thought you might be headed this way. Rosie knew Mom was mad and she was.
The Warrior Bear Hunter

Once upon a time, in 1865, there was a strong, beautiful woman named Belle. She was not beautiful in physical appearance, but in her fortitude, generosity, and strength of character.

She lived in the country in a dry prairie land close to a never and not a far distance from the mountains. Her family helped the wealthy white family, the ranch owners; tend to the cattle, the fields, and the house.

Belle was Native American, French and English. She had olive skin but crystal blue eyes like a clear summer day. She loved the outdoors-the adventure, freedom, beauty and aliveness of nature.

Belle knew how to survive in the wild west of California. She could plow; tend livestock, fish and even hunt. Hunting was not her favorite task, as she hated to be the cause of the death of an animal, be it rabbit, squirrel, deer, or birds. However, she understood the necessity of survival, of the life struggles of every living thing. Each animal was honored for its sacrifice to her life and her family’s continued existence.

Belle loved her family. They had not deserted her, as had her handsome, carefree husband. He had left her with their young daughter, Rena, with out any means of support.

She felt lucky to have the closeness of her family and tribe, the Minomucca, to draw strength from. Although, her family worked for the Platina family, there was a distance and separation due to culture, language, prejudice and discrimination. Living away from town, Belle did not often experience the disdain and disrespect that was spoken of at tribal councils and gatherings.
Belle taught Rena about the beauty and wonder of nature—it’s unpredictability, it’s wildness, it’s rules, and it’s crucial and independent part of each person’s life. Rea in turn, grew up to be kind, compassionate, patient and proud of her mother and ancestors.

Rena honored nature in her own life, although now she lived in town. She had five children of her own and a hard working husband, Lonzo. Rena had a garden, fruit trees, chickens, and rabbits and worked their small plot of land the best of their ability. She realized her contribution to her children and husband was to use the land in a respectful way to help meet their needs.

Rena had never learned to drive. Her world now consisted of her children, relatives, home, and the quite neighborhood where she lived. Rena was glad that she could walk a short distance from her house and find unchanged land with Manzanita, black bush, rosebud, and many of the trees and plants that she remembered from childhood.

Rena had joined a Baptist Church when her children were young. She still participated in the occasional tribal gathering, yet felt that the kids needed other teachings as well. They now lived in the white world of streets, lights, schools, and government with its laws. The rules of her Mininucca tribe seemed inadequate to provide guidance and direction to her five children. Spirituality was at the core of Rena’s existence, as was love of nature.

In the years that passed, Rena had a satisfying and happy marriage to Lonzo. She didn’t like it that he smoked cigars and at the end of each workweek, drank whisky with the other men in his work crew. Lonzo refused to go to church with her. He was part Cherokee and felt that the Anglo religion was not his. It did not fit his beliefs.
Yet, in spite of those differences, they loved each other. At night when she took her waist long hair out of it’s bun, Lonzo would brush her hair. It was a loving, tender time at the end of each day.

Belle, now almost 90, lived with them. One of Rena’s and Lonzo’s sons had died in a work accident.

He was working for the Northern Pacific railroad, constructing train trestles. He had fallen to his death only a short ways from town. He was only 22.

Rena loved having Belle with them. Belle was now blind, but could manage to wander through the house and the yard immediately around the house without help. Rena felt Belle’s blindness was a gift. It allowed her mother to remember the country, the old days, stories from Rene’s childhood.

Each day, after Rene’s household chores were done, she and her Mom would sit on the front porch in the shade. With their glasses of iced tea, their casual conversation, and Rena’s view of the hills, they enjoyed each others company.

Belle would recall events from the past. Rena loved the story about the day her Mom shot a black bear. Rena was young at the time, maybe five to six years old. Her grandfather, several of the ranch hands, and Belle had headed out on horseback to deer hunt.

It was fall, early October. The grasses were dry. It was dusty and the land was parched from no rain all summer. Belle felt privileged to be included in this hunting expedition. Traditionally, only the “warriors” hunted. But she had grown up with these men. Because of her father, Belle, learned to do men’s work” and because of the men’s respect for her father (as a fair foreman and respectful boss), she was allowed to join
them. Belle had been hunting many times, yet she was unprepared when she looked up from the stream where she was watering her horse to see a bear crossing, coming straight towards her.

Belle stood and moved toward her horse to retrieve her rifle. She did this slowly and calmly. Belle assumed the bear would see she was not a source of food and with curiosity, head down stream. The bear continued to limber straight towards Belle was not diverted and preceded in the direction of Belle. She hesitated but raised the rifle and lined up the site at the bear’s chest. The bear was too close now and not acting typical. It’s actions spurred Belle to respond, she took aim and shot, The bear continued to look at her, as it’s large body fell partly into the stream, with it’s front paws on the bank.

**Story of Child/Caregiver Interactions: Frieda**

Once upon a time a baby fox was born in the wild, magical forest. The Mother and Father fox were happy, but also disappointed because she was the third of the girls and they were hoping for a boy.

For a while Frieda the fox was happy because she her mother’s favorite. But then she learned to talk and to assert herself. And even though her mother, Natzia didn’t want to hear her thoughts and feelings she couldn’t seem to stop expressing them. But this was not Frieda’s biggest problem. Frieda didn’t think her foxhole was a very fun place to be. Her older sisters, Shit and Twit, usually ignored her, beat her up or tried to extort her cricket juice money for school.

Unfortunately, Natzia was always afraid something bad would happen if Frieda went anywhere. Frieda knew that there were so many adventures to be had and other animals to hunt if she could just get out into the great, big fabulous world. Finally, Frieda
met a friend at school. Her mother would let her go to her new friend Sammy’s foxhole. They had freedom and adventure and Sammy’s foxhole was a fun place to be.

When Frieda got older, Natzia continued to be overly controlling, violent and highly critical. Frieda’s Dad left and so did her sisters. One thing Frieda had going for her was the fact that Natzia would take foxy downers and drink half a jug of Tyvolia at night. This made it impossible for Natzia to hear Frieda leave the fox hole and drive away in fox mobile.

There was nothing that could stop Frieda from venturing into the enchanted forest because it was what she tried for. All the animals she meets and the fun she had sustained her. Soon Frieda went to work after school at a dinner house that served rat filets and deep fried grasshoppers. Even though most foxes stayed with their parents until they were done with school, Frieda was different. One day while Natzia was not home Frieda gathered her few possessions and moved to a new foxhole where she could breath a sigh of relief for the first time ever. She was out in the beautiful, magical forest and she was happy.

**Story of Child/Caregiver Interactions: Mary**

**The Beautiful Girl**

Go Go! Swim faster, faster you your almost there yells Megan’s Mom from the side, like at the pool. Megan continues to swim to the end at the pool was finishes the race.

Her mother is waiting with the towel when she gets out of the water. Dripping wet and exhausted Megan walks over to her mother- She smiles at her and her mother wraps
her in a towel and tells her “great job.” You will do better next time. Megan, feeling disappointed, walks away to get the rest of the things from the pool area.

Her mother standing in the distance with all of her gold jewelry reflecting in the sun yells, “Hurry up, your sister’s race is about to start and she is going to win so we need to be there. Megan continues walking and her feeling of disappointment of getting second place has now turned into anger and frustration, not wanting to watch her sister. Megan decides to stay in the pool area with another member on her team were she is receiving congratulations for her great race,” Megan.

The fighting between Megan and her mother becomes so intense and frequent that the police have been called. Megan being old enough to protect her self now she fights back when her mother slaps her. The hostility between the two becomes unbearable and Megan’s mother sends her away to live with her father. Megan has no real memory of her father Megan has no real memory of her father except those of ice cream sandwich on a summer day. Megan is very scared and sad to move to with her father and his new family. The town is very different than were she came from. Hispanic a member of a gang, her stepmother does not like her because Megan is very young and beautiful, that her husband and his friend now pay attention to Megan. Megan is always the center of attention and her father is so proud to have such a beautiful daughter; his friends pay him handsomely to have sex with her. Megan feels so loved by her father. During the time at her fathers, Megan is in a drive by shooting. During the investigation Megan’s Mom becomes
Aware of what has been going on while she has been living with her father. Ashamed and disgusted with herself for sending Megan away but felt so relived to be without her.

She insisted that Megan return home, not her home but a foster home near by where they could work on their anger, Megan agrees and they start over again, weekend visits, parties, Mom always talking about how great it will be when Megan is well enough to come home. Megan continues to feel beaten up by her mother, not physically but emotionally, beaten.

Megan never stays anywhere long, she is constantly moving from foster home to foster home…

**Story of Child/Caregiver Interactions: Jessie**

In a mountain, far away from here and today, there sits a cave waiting for another story to emerge. Some life, some greenery. It holds a memory long past, one it cherishes above all others. It is this story that whispers around it.

It is a fine spring day, and I am the one hiking these hills, burning some calories and thinking of lists-when I happen upon this cave. It calls me to come sit and rest for a while, so it can guide me with a story. I peek my head in and look in and check for bear. Hmmmm, spiders maybe but no bear today. I think I set on the opening and just listen awhile.

The wind picks up, the grasses rustle a bit and start to tell of the green witch on the hill. The one that was banished there long ago, a crone.

It was a fine spring morning, her old bones stiffened a bit. She hears a sound above the wind and the leaves, a higher note unfamiliar yet recognizable. She pauses at
the entrance and sniffs out the day-something different, definitely. Oh! under the oak, not far removed, she spots a bundle, noisy and insistent. She totters over and sees the infant, round mouth, big eyes. She knows that look, that terror, without thinking she picks that baby up, never mind the smell or the shit. She picks that baby up and feels the fine skin, peachy soft but cold. She raps her long wool cape around the tiny thing, and a tear from her eye land upon his cheek.

That tear startled him; he stops his crying and investigates her face. He touches her and rests his fingers in her mouth, on her teeth—once so sharp and threatening, now a children’s plaything.

The old woman cackles and coos. Her steps are lighter now and she glides back with caution and care. She finds a right sized stick and rubs the bark off it with her free hand. She uses her toe to slide off the lid to the large honey pot on the floor and dips the tip of the stick in the pot first and then into the baby’s mouth.

He grabs it firmly, greedily at first, so she lets him hold it. That baby boy licks every drip without a breath between and shoves the stick back in her face. She feels uncertain about things, and rests her ear upon his belly; she presses it firmly with the finger of her free hand and decides another will be OK. This time he squeals with delight, and even tries to share a little with her. She laughs and sticks her tongue on the tip, but baby grabs it away. Not Yet!

She looks around now thinking fast what to do, what to do…. She finds some moss and crumbles it together. She soaks it into the milk bucket and puts it to his lips. He looks at her in a long way, opens his mouth and suckles the milk. Soon his eyelids grow heavy, he feels warm and soft in her arms. But also, he is getting heavy. Moss she thinks,
and soft leaves for a bed. Where to put it? Oh, right next to mine, she thinks. She sets him down to gather more moss. I will need to gather much, she thinks—surely the gods will provide…. she wonders-half prayer and half beg. She sets forth a place for the child in a cave, where just the right warm and just the right cold is provided by the solid structure of massive rock. Thank You cave she thinks and as she thinks this kindly thought, the ancient cave drops a tear. It lands upon her cheek.

And I will provide you with pure water, it says in cave talk, which is much more silent than people talk, and much more silent than baby talk. “We can do this, we can raise up this baby to be a fine man and he will do right and what more can we ask for? Just then Sun broke through a clearing and smiled on the new family. Blue birds took refuge in the baby’s tree and provided a lullaby. The old witch sighed a deep sigh, she knew she would never out grow her green skin, large nose and crazy ways, but she could let the sun, the birds and the land do their magic and he would be alright.

That was years ago the cave said. The boy grew strong as the witch grew old and perished. The boy had had a by and came to visit from time to time, but eventually the visits ended and the cave was left with memories.

“Thank You for sharing that story, I feel glowy inside”, said I, but cave interrupted to say, “It is not over.” The visits have ended eons ago, but the connections remain. The thread of me calls the thread of him and all his progeny thru time. We are still connected, no doubt about it, I am sad you humans have not figured that out.

The cave abruptly turned silent. “Cave” I whispered and then louder, “Cave.” But no answer. I was left with the wind, the trees, a new memory and me. And I wondered, was I called by the thin threaded connection? Was cave grandfather to me? I will never
know that, but I do know that cave and I each hold a beautiful new memory. I am changed. I hope cave is changed too.

**Story of Child/Caregiver Interactions: Linda**

Once up on a time there was a beautiful tabby cat names Lucy, who loved her life with the Jones family. She lived in a small apartment with Mr. and Mrs. Jones and their two small children. Lucy loved her life of leisure. She slept, ate and played outside, all she wanted. She was very loved by her family.

Every once in awhile her family would let her stay out all night. She loved the neighborhood she lived in and she had lots of cat friends that she enjoyed spending time with. About two weeks after a night out on the town she started to feel some changes happening in her body that she didn’t understand.

Her family also noticed that she was changing and they figured out that she was going to have kittens soon. They started pampering her even more than usual and she got to sleep on the bed, which was never allowed before. Lucy didn’t understand what was going on but she loved all the attention.

Soon it was time for Lucy to give birth to her kittens. The whole family gathered around for the big occasion. Before long Lucy gave birth to a beautiful little girl. The family waited for more kittens but only one came. Lucy was so over joyed with her new role as mother. Because there was just one kitten she was able to focus all her attention on her sweet new baby.

Lucy continued to enjoy her new baby. Not knowing that he Jones family were not allowed to have more than one cat at their apartment. The children in the home grew very attached to the new arrival and decided to name her Dandy Lyon. Their parents
reminded them that when the kitten is old enough they would be finding her a new home, so don’t get too attached.

Lucy and Dandy Lyon were oblivious to the plan, and Lucy carried on being the great mother that she is. She would be there for Dandy Lyon to protect her, clean her and they would always snuggle up together when it was naptime. (With cats that means they were snuggling about 20 hours a day). Lucy would never let Dandy Lyon out of her sight.

The time came when the Jones felt that Dandy Lyon was old enough to go to her new family who ever they may be. The Jones were having a hard time finding the right family for Dandy, and the Jones children were becoming more and more attached to the kitten. This made the parents look harder for a home. They didn’t want to deal with the heart break of their children if they kept her much longer it would be much harder to let her go.

It took 6 months to find a home for Dandy. By this time she was half grown. One sunny Saturday afternoon the Smith family came to get Dandy. Lucy and Dandy were asleep on the bed with sun beating on them through the window as they did every afternoon. Mrs. Jones came in the room and picked up Dandy. Lucy barely noticed. Now that Dandy was older she often spent time away from her.

When Lucy woke from her nap she went looking for Dandy and couldn’t find her. She searched the apartment and meowed as she did this. Her family tried to console her but they could see the unrest in her eyes.
APPENDIX 17

THANK YOU LETTER

Date
Name
Address
Dear ________________.

Thank you for your participation in my research project. The knowledge gained from your participation will provide useful information in the selection and training of foster mothers. I will provide you with a copy of the results when it is written up. I am grateful for the experience of working with women who have given so much to children. You may have also gained from participation in the research project. As you integrate your experience please call me if you have any question, observations or concerns.

Best Wishes,

____________________________
Lois Davis, MFT
XXX-XXX-XXXX
Dear ________________________,

I again thank you for your participation in the research weekend that allowed me to collect the data for my dissertation. I am including a summary of the information I gained from the research weekend. The information is arranged into five learnings. If you want to read the entire dissertation please let me know and I will make arrangements for you to receive total text.

Thank You,

Lois Davis

xxx-xxx-xxxx
APPENDIX 19

SCRIPT FOR RESEARCH WEEKEND

Inquiry Group Purpose and Expectations, Saturday

Welcome to my home, I am looking forward to spending time with you this weekend. I appreciate that you have given up your weekend to participate in this research study of the experiences of foster mothers. As you know my name is Lois and this is my co-researcher, Cheryl. I will show you where to put your belongings, where the bathroom, first aid, drinks and snacks are. (Look around house) Please find a chair, pillow or back jack to provide comfort for you during the weekend. The weekend will follow this schedule: Saturday break at 11:00a, lunch at 12:00, a bag lunch will be provided, break at 2:15p, end at 4:00p, Sunday start at 9:30a, break 10:00a and ending at 1:00p. At this time I would like to review the research format and instructions for the discussions this weekend. This is a qualitative research study, which is participatory in nature. You are all from diverse backgrounds with individual thoughts and experiences. Diversity is encouraged and each individual is invited to share your unique experiences and thoughts.

Sharing your honest experiences and thoughts are welcome here, as it will contribute to the depth and validity of the research. For this reason confidentiality is important. I imagine that everyone will feel more comfortable sharing knowing that their
experiences and thoughts remain confidential. When talking about the youth you have worked with it is important to not use last names. Similar to a therapy group, it is important to respect the boundaries of other participants by not sharing their names as a participant in this research weekend. Your art projects will be photographed and the pictures may appear anonymously in the dissertation. Does anyone have any questions or requests in regard to confidentiality? Collect forms. I will provide copies at the end of the day.

The research group will provide time for conversations between participants. It is important to give others the time to share their thoughts and experiences. If questions come up for you, feel free to ask questions. You might have an emotional response in relationship to your own sharing or with or the sharing of others, as each participant will be encouraged to share freely. If you’re emotional response is extreme talk with the co-researcher or researcher or journal as you are encouraged to take care of yourself. Also I want to gather some basic information about you. To help me do this I am handing out a foster mother participation sheet. When you are finished filling the participation sheet please hand them to Cheryl. Cheryl is also handing out journals for you to use during the research weekend. Please write the name you have chosen to use as stated on the participation sheet.

We are now ready to start the research weekend. I am going to chime in to begin the research weekend. As we listen to the sound, you may wish to close your eyes taking a moment to make the transition to the experiences of the research weekend.

Opening Ritual and Participant Introduction
To honor the children you have cared for I would like each of you to light a candle, saying the first names you recall of the children you have worked with. (I will start by speaking the names of some of the children I have worked with as I light the first candle, when candles are lit) I am going to play a song that is about mothering. (this song as it was used at school brought up feelings of longing for the mother for some of us)

Please introduce yourself. Also I would like to get to know you as a child. Tell the group a story about yourself as a child, especially about a time you did not feel safe or cared for.

We will take a brief time so that you can recall your childhood experiences. (Brief Meditation) I will start by telling about an experience from my childhood. (Story) Who would like to go next? (As stories are told I will attend to the person talking by looking at them, making mirroring sounds and statements, when the stories are finished) As I have listened to your stories I have been affected by them, much has been brought up for me. I would like to take this time for each of us to journal about how you have been affected by the telling and listening to these childhood stories. (Break)

**Relationships With Caregivers, Positive and Negative**

Please take a few minutes and think of a story to share about your relationship with your primary caregiver also have their pictures on hand to share with the group. As you share I would like you to show the group a picture of your caregiver. (Attend to speakers) Thank you for letting the group hear about your relationship to your caretaker. I am going to play a song that is about mothering, please listen. (The song is about how a child with poor behaviors is cared for due to the caretaker seeing the sweet side, the maternal side of the attachment process has been upheld) I would like you to write a
letter to your caretaker in your journal stating how this primary relationship has helped you develop or not develop trust in the caretaker’s protection. How has this relationship affected subsequent relationships? What could you tell your primary caretaker that might help improve trust in the relationship either past or present? (Time to write) The co-researcher will hand out bag lunches and drinks. As you eat your lunch I would like you to share your letters with the group. (Attend to speakers) Thank you for sharing your letters as I have listened to the letters I have been affected. Let us all take time to write in your journal about how writing and hearing these letters have affected you. The co-researcher is handing out a children’s book called *Love You Forever*, some of you may be familiar with this book. You are each getting your own copy, as I want you to focus on the pictures as I read the story. Please do not read along with me simply look at the pictures. Please share how the story and the pictures affected you. What story comes up for you about a positive interaction with a foster child? Especially a time when you were drawn to protect the child in you care. Tape. Thank you for sharing.

Having shared a positive experience of wanting to protect and care for a foster child as depicted in the story and your stories, as we all know there is another side of relating to foster children. Please think of an opposite experience, those moments of not wanting to care and protect the child. Moments where you may have wanted to damage a child.

Take a moment of brief meditation to recall and coalesce in your mind this experience. Please write in your journal an experience that did not go well with a foster child. As you write this experience please focus on how you are affected in the moment as you write about this negative experience. (journal time) Please share with the group
the negative experience with a foster child. How does it affect you to write about it and how you are affected by talking about it? I will share my experience first. (story) Who would like to go next? (stories) Thank you so much for sharing stories about the negative side of foster parenting, as well as how you are affected by sharing it. Cheryl has put food and snacks out which you may help your self to, after silent snack. Without talking with other group members, I want you to create a work of art. There are enough art stations set up around the house and in the garage for you to have the privacy and space to work in. Art materials are set up on the patio and you can select any materials that are comfortable for you. However, if you choose to use clay, please work on the patio. I want the artwork to reflect an image or images of what interferes with you wanting to care for and protect the foster child you have written about. This is an image that is the opposite of the images presented in the book *Love You Forever*. Although the image or images that come up for you may not take the form of pictures. What is the image of the negative mother? That is a mother that does not protect and care for her child and may indeed damage the child. (When artwork is done it will be left at the work site, participants will return to the living room and will collect their journal and be given the following instructions) I want you to look at your image and journal as if you are talking to it, ask this image what it would like to tell you? How old is it? What does it want? Where did it come from? Does it like talking to you? When you are finished please come back into the living room and bring your artwork. Please introduce your artwork to the group telling us what it might want us to know. What is your relationship to this image? Taped Thank you for sharing your artwork, I would like to keep them here until the end of the day tomorrow.
You have finished your first day of the research weekend and tomorrow will be a short day from 9:30a to 1:00p. While at home and at night continue to keep the research weekend in mind but do not talk about it to friends or relatives until we are finished on Sunday. I will photograph you art work this evening and you can take them home tomorrow. Are there any questions you have for Cheryl or myself before you leave? Hand out copies of consent forms. Good-by, see you tomorrow.

**Myth and Fairytales, Sunday**

Hello. This is the last day of the research project. I want to thank everyone for their continued participation. We will open today as we did yesterday by each of us lighting a candle and naming foster children we have worked with. Chime in. Before we start the morning are there any questions or concerns about the day. Cheryl is going to read you a story about the care and safety provided for a child. Cheryl will read you *The Little Match-Seller* by Hans Christian Anderson.

(Attached) I want you to continue to stay with this story and not talk to other participants. This story is about several aspects depicting the care and safety of a child. I have provided areas write in that are quite and comfortable. I would like you to take your journal to an area and write in it a story or myth that is about an interaction between a child and a caregiver. There are many aspects of this relationship so feel free to be creative in following whatever story comes up for you. The story need not be long and do not be concerned about the mechanics of writing. It only needs to be readable. (One hour of writing with break time included, drinks and snacks provided)
I thank you for creating this story. I am excited to hear them. I want to go around the group and have each participant share her story. I will allow time for other participants to share how the story affected them. (Taped)

In our last journal writings I would like you to identify five key moments of the research weekend. Your participation in this study may provide useful information for other foster mothers. I appreciate your commitment to this profession. To close please form a circle I will pass a basket around. As each participant takes an acorn from the basket share one meaningful memory you are taking from the weekend. (Taped) The acorn represents our foster children who can grow as a great Oak if given a nurturing environment. I have provided counselor referral sheet and my card at the door if you want to get one before you leave. Good-By

And Thanks Again.
APPENDIX 20

SHORT SCHEDULE FOR RESEARCH WEEKEND

Saturday

9:00a -10:30 Share a memory of foster child

10:30a-10:40 Silent Break

10:40a-12:00 Journal, Discussion, Share memory of foster child

12:00p-12:30 Silent Lunch

12:30p-1:30 Share memory of attachment experience

1:30p-1:40 Silent Break

1:40p-3:30 Create Art, Discussion, Journal

3:30p-4:30 Read myths and fairytales about maternal attachment

4:30p-5:00 Ending ritual

Sunday

9:30a-10:45 Opening ritual, Write myth or fairytale about maternal attachment

10:45a-12:00 Read myths and fairytales

12:00p-12:30 Closing ritual
APPENDIX 21

THERAPIST REFERRAL LIST

It is important for each foster mother participant to know that safety precautions are available. I do not foresee the necessity but the following list of Chico Therapists have been trained in attachment issues. If you choose to seek therapy and do not connect with anyone on the list please contact Lois Davis MFT at (XXX) XXX-XXXX for further referral information.

Chris Perske MFT
319 Orient Ave
Chico, CA 95927
(530) 894-7209

Ann Giel MFT
341 Broadway
Chico, CA 95927
(530) 893-1795

Dean Mott MFT
1430 Esplanade Ave
Chico, CA 95927
(530) 342-9326

Grace Lucido MFT
341 Broadway
Chico, CA 95927
(530) 343-0626

Michael W. Clark Phd.
4 Williamsburg Ln
Chico, CA 95928
(530) 345-3952
1. **Collaboration.** Secure relationships are based on collaborative, contingent communication. The signals sent by each member of an attuned dyad (a pair of individuals) are directly responsive in quality and timing with each other. These attuned communications often have their foundation in the nonverbal signals that are shared between two individuals. Eye contact, facial expression, tone of voice, bodily gestures and timing and intensity of response are all fundamental aspects of nonverbal signals. The sharing of nonverbal signals creates a joining of two minds at a basic level of “primary” emotions. As discussed later in this article, these primary emotions can be seen as the “music of the mind.” and thus the sharing of these nonverbal signals, the sharing of the primary states of mind of each person, creates a resonant connection that often may have a sense of emerging vitality. Each person may come to “feel felt” by the other. Some adults may find such joining experiences exhilarating and easy to create; others may find them uncomfortable or unfamiliar, and be unable to participate in such an intimate “connecting” experience. Children need such joining experiences because they provide the emotional nourishment that developing minds require. Relationships that are “connecting” and allow for collaboration appear to offer children a wealth of interpersonal closeness that supports the development of many domains, including social, emotional, and cognitive functioning. Such collaboration may be essential in the creation of a coherent core and autobiographical sense of self.
2. Reflective Dialogue. Secure attachment relationships may involve the verbal sharing of a focus on the internal experience of each member of the dyad. Attachment figures recognize the signals sent by the child, attempt to make sense of them in their own minds, and then communicate to the child in such a manner that creates “meaning” for the child in the shared dialogue about the mental states of the child and of the caregiver. Internal experience, or “states of mind,” can involve emotions, perceptions, thoughts, intentions, memories, ideas, beliefs, and attitudes. By directly focusing on these aspects of mental life, the adult can create a sense that subjective experience is both important and can be communicated and shared. In this manner, the “mind” itself becomes a central focus of sharing in the discussions between two minds. Such a meaning-making process coupled with collaborative, reciprocal communication allows the child to develop “mindsight” the capacity of the mind to create the representation of the mind of others, and of the self (Siegel, 1999).

3. Repair. When attuned communication is disrupted, as it inevitably will be, repair of the rupture is an important part of reestablishing the connection within the dyad. Repair is healing. Repair is also important in helping to teach the child that life is filled with inevitable moments of misunderstandings and missed connections that can be identified and connection created again. Such interactive repair allows the child to make sense of periods of painful disconnection and create a sense of meaning out of the understanding of one’s own and another’s mind. An adult’s pride may at times inhibit repair and leave the child isolated in what may be a shameful state of disconnection, especially if combined with hostility and humiliation, can have significant negative effects on a child’s developing senses of self. Providing repair of
the inevitable disconnections of attuned communication can occur naturally in a setting where parents and other attachment figures generally provide consistent, predictable, reflective, intentional, and mindful caregiving.

4. **Coherent Narratives.** The connection of the past, present, and future is one of the central processes of the mind in the creation of autobiographical form of self-awareness. An adult without a coherent autonoetic process may be at risk of providing interactive experiences for a child that produces various forms of insecure attachment. In essence, adults with a flexible capacity to integrate their experiences across time appear to also be able to provide integrating interpersonal communication with their children. In addition, adults can teach children about the world of the self and of others by joining with them in the co construction of stories about life events. These stories focus on activities as well as the mental life of the characters. In so doing, the adult is both collaborating in the construction of reality for the child, as well as giving her the very tools she needs to make sense of the internal and eternal worlds in which we all live.

5. **Emotional Communication.** Attachment figures can amplify and share in the positive, joyful experience of living. These heightened moments of sharing a sense of vitality are important in creating the foundation for a positive attitude toward the self and others. Equally important is the attachment figure’s ability to remain connected to the child during moments of uncomfortable emotion. Thus, negative emotional states can be shared as the adult then helps the child reduce these states and soothe his distress. Helping a child learn that he will not be emotionally abandoned during these moments and that he can learn to understand and soothe his painful emotional state is an
important role for the attachment figure to play. Adults also need to be sensitive to a child’s cycling needs for direct connection and for solitude. Awareness and respect for these changing needs for connection are a part of emotionally attuned communication. These interactive forms of emotional communication may be at the core of how interpersonal relationships help to shape the ongoing emotional and social development of the child’s growing mind.
NOTES

Chapter 1


5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Aftab Omer, “Imaginal Process” (class lecture, Imaginal Process, Meridian University, Petaluma, CA, February 8, 2002).


9. Ibid.


11. Ibid.

12. Ibid

13. Ibid.


18. Ibid.


20. Ibid., 38-43.


22. Omer, “Imaginal Process” (February 8, 2002).

23. Aftab Omer, (comments to author, dissertation defense, Meridian University, Petaluma, CA. December 17, 2010).

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.


28. Ibid., 128.


36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

39. Ibid
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Omer, “Imaginal Process” (February 8, 2002).
Sardello writes, “We experience a sense of soul when we feel the sense of those deeper patterns working through our sensing, thinking, feeling, and acting.”
50. The United States General Accounting Office (USGAO, July 1993), reports the significant increase of children in residential care in the United States and the increase is projected to continue.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
57. Aftab Omer, conversation with author, Meridian University, Petaluma, CA, February 6, 1998.

**Chapter 2**

2. Ibid.


6. Ibid.


8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.


15. Ibid.

16. Klaus, Kennell and Klaus, *Bonding*, pxvii. They state that the term bonding refers to the tie from parent to infant, whereas the word attachment refers to the tie from infant to parent. The word attachment refers to the feelings that bind a person of less power to one of more power. Goldberg, *Attachment and Development*, 8. Also discussed the term bonding compared to attachment. An article that studies the bonding process is Dorothy W. Smith and Laurie N. Sherwen, “The Bonding Process of Mothers and Adopted Children,” *Topics in Clinical Nursing* (October 6, 1984): 38-48. William H. Berman and Michael B Sperling, “The Structure and Foundation of Adult Attachment,” *Adult Attachment: Theory, Clinical and Developmental*, ed. Michael Sperling and William H. Berman (New York: Guildford Press, 1994), 8. Sperling and Berman define attachment as “a stable tendency of an individual to make substantial efforts to seek and maintain proximity to and contact with one or a few specific individuals who provide the subjective potential for physical and/or psychological safety and security.”

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.


28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.


34. Ibid.


38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.


41. Ibid.


43. Ibid.


45. Ibid.

46. Ibid


48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.


53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Bowlby, *A Secure Base*, 12. Bowlby believes that no parent provides a secure base for the child unless they have an understanding of the child’s attachment behaviors and accepts this as part of human behavior.


59. Bowlby, *Attachment*, 80-5. Bowlby uses the term “Working Model” in his early writings. In later writings he used the term “Internal Working Model.” Bowlby describes these models as necessary parts of a biological control system that are similar to the traditional psychological theory of internal worlds.

60. Ibid.


64. Ibid.


69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.


73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.

75. Feeney and Noller, Adult Attachment, 37.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid.

83. Karen, Becoming Attached, 143-62. Reactive Attachment Disorder, which was first published in the DSM III in 1980. The DSM IV refocused the criteria on descriptions of two deviant patterns of social relatedness. In the first, the child exhibits ambivalent patterns of social responses. In the second, the child demonstrates no interest in attachment. These children are relatively “nonattached.” The current criteria for RAD requires that the unattached social behavior is limited to one or the other subtype and are evident across social situations, negating the possibility of relationship specificity.


85. Ibid.

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.


90. Ibid.

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid.

93. Ibid.

94. Ibid.


96. Ibid.

Sceery, “Attachment in Late Adolescence: Working Models,” 135-46. Feeney and Nobler, *Adult Attachment*, 36-40. Securely attached adults experience less fear of death. They have more positive emotions than the other attachment patterns.


100. Ibid.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid.


105. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid.


114. Ibid.

115. Ibid., 223.

116. Ibid., 31-5.

117. Ibid.

118. Ibid.
119. Ibid.

120. Ibid.

121. Ibid.

122. Ibid.


125. Ibid.

126. Ibid.

127. Ibid.

128. Ibid.

129. Ibid.


131. Ibid.


133. Ibid.


136. Ibid.

137. Bowlby, *Attachment*, 80-5. Bowlby uses the term “Working Model” in his early writings. In later writings he used the term “Internal Working Model.” Bowlby describes these models as necessary parts of a biological control system that are similar to the traditional psychological theory of internal worlds.

138. Ibid.

140. Ibid.

141. Ibid.


143. Ibid.

144. Ibid.

145. Ibid.

146. Ibid.

147. Ibid.


150. Ibid.

151. Ibid.

152. Ibid.

153. Ibid.


158. Ibid., 312.

159. Ibid.

160. Ibid.

161. Ibid., 394.

162. Ibid.
163. Ibid.
164. Ibid.
165. Ibid.
166. Ibid.


168. Ibid.


175. Ibid.

176. Ibid.


180. Ibid.

181. Ibid.

182. Ibid.
183. Solomon, George and DeJong, “Children Classified as Controlling at Age Six: Evidence of Disorganized Representational Strategies and Aggression at Home and School.”


185. Ibid.

186. Ibid.

187. Ibid.


191. Ibid.


193. Ibid.

194. E. Hesse, “Discourse, Memory and the Adult Attachment Interview: A note with emphasis on the emerging cannot classify category.”

195. Ibid.

196. Ibid., 81.


198. Ibid.

199. Ibid.

200. Ibid.

201. Ibid.


203. Ibid., 105.

204. Ibid.

205. Ibid.

206. Ibid.
207. Ibid.
208. Ibid., 127.
209. Ibid., 107.
210. Ibid.
211. Ibid., 106.
212. Kalsched, *The Inner World of Trauma*.
214. Ibid.
217. Ibid.
218. Ibid.
219. Ibid
220. Ibid.

222. Ibid.
223. Ibid.

225. Ibid.
227. Ibid.
228. Ibid.
229. Ibid.
230. Ibid.
231. Ibid.
232. Ibid.


234. Ibid.

235. Ibid.

236. Solomon and George, Attachment Disorganization, 3-33.

237. Ibid.

238. Ibid.

239. Ibid.

240. Siegel, The Developing Mind, 1.

241. Ibid.


244. Goldberg, Attachment and Development, 8-10. Attachment literature describes securely attached persons as dealing with distress by acknowledging it and seeking support. These persons are more tolerant of stressful events; they can contain unpleasant emotions without being overwhelmed. They use problem focused and support seeking strategies. Further discussion of secure based attachment in Judith A. Feeney, Patricia Woller and Mary Hanrahan, “Assessing Adult Attachment,” Attachment in Adults: Clinical and Developmental Perspectives, 145-7.


247. Ibid.


250. Ibid.
251. Ibid.
252. Ibid.
253. Ibid.
256. Ibid.
257. Ibid.
258. Ibid.
260. Ibid.
263. Ibid.
264. Ibid.
265. Ibid.
266. Ibid.
267. Ibid.
268. Ibid.
269. Ibid.
270. Ibid.
271. Allen N. Schore, “Children in Trauma: Frontiers of Trauma Treatment,” (Fifth Annual Conference of Children in Trauma, California State University, Chico, CA, June 5, 2009).
272. Ibid.
274. Schore, “Children in Trauma: Foundations of Trauma Treatment.”
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278. Ibid.


281. Ibid., 31.

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287. Ibid., Schore, “Children in Trauma: Frontiers of Trauma Treatment.”


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307. Ibid.


309. Ibid.

310. Ibid.

311. Ibid.

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314. Schore, “Children in Trauma: Frontiers of Trauma Treatment.”

315. Ibid.

316. Ibid.

317. Ibid.

318. Ibid.


320. Ibid.

321. Ibid.

322. Ibid., 81.

323. Ibid., 334-5.

324. Ibid.

325. Ibid.

326. Ibid.

327. Ibid., 333.

328. Ibid.

330. Ibid.

331. Ibid.


333. Ibid.

334. Ibid.

335. Ibid.

336. Ibid.

337. Ibid.

338. Ibid.

339. Ibid.


341. Ibid.


343. Ibid.


345. Ibid.


347. Ibid.


350. Ibid.

351. Ibid.


353. Ibid.
354. Ibid.


358. Ibid.
359. Ibid., 28.
360. Ibid., 29.


363. Ibid.


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370. Ibid.


373. Ibid.
374. Le Vine, and Miller, “Commentary.”
375. Ibid.


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384. Ibid., 145-6.


386. Ibid.


388. Ibid.

389. Hillman, Myths of the Family; audiocassette, 4 tapes.

390. Neuman, The Great Mother; xii.


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395. Harwood, et al., Culture and Attachment, 27.

396. Ibid.

397. Ibid., 29.

398. Ibid., 145-6.

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473. Meadowcroft and Thomlison, “Treatment Foster Care Services: A Research Agenda for Child Welfare”.


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