

The Integration of the Outside and the Inside

17 August 2006

Lessons learned 2003-2005

After the 2005 conference I made a brief summary of some lessons that we learned together over three years of conferences. This is what I wrote:

1. Everyone is spiritual
2. People facing death have a greater interest in spiritual matters.
3. Although hospices arose in a Christian context, non-religious patients and patients of other religions all have the same needs for love, for meaning, for forgiveness and for transformation.
4. There is no agreed definition of spirituality, but we have some useful models (eg Michael Wright and Chantal Chou)
5. Spiritual healing is largely done by the patient. The carer provides a supportive environment
6. The carer experiences spiritual healing as he/she helps the patient towards spiritual healing.
7. Patients cannot be forced to explore their suffering and find meaning; they must be free to do so when they feel ready.
8. All staff can help with the patient's spiritual care
9. Spiritual care needs a lot of time

In 2006 I want to explore the concept of integration, or “becoming whole”. Harmony is an ancient Chinese concept. Ying and Yang and fengshui are ways of seeking wholeness, harmony or integration.

Integration could be studied from many aspects: integration between people of different cultures, integration between nations, integration between social classes, integration between people who follow different religions. This morning I want to concentrate on integration within the personality of each individual.

Before my first visit to Taiwan in 2003 I tried to prepare myself so that I could adjust to Taiwanese climate, lifestyle and culture. My wife gave me a copy of the “Lonely Planet Guide to Taiwan”

I was especially interested in the chapter titled “Society and Conduct”

This included advice such as

- How to give and receive gifts
- The importance of having name cards
- Giving money at funerals
- Removing shoes when entering a house
- Smiling in response to an embarrassing situation

Today I want to focus on three quotations:

Showing anger

“The Taiwanese are very successful at controlling their emotions in public. Even when greatly distressed, they try to look cheerful. Harmonious social relations are strongly emphasised in Taiwan. Even when people disagree with what you are saying, they often will pretend to agree or just smile rather than confront you.”

Speaking too frankly

“In Asia, people don’t always say what they mean. They often say what they think the other person wants to hear – this is necessary to preserve face.

The Taiwanese stress polite manners and smooth social relations, so you should avoid direct criticism of others. It is better to make up a story or avoid the topic rather than confront someone with unpleasant facts that will cause embarrassment.”

Face

“In Asia, having “big face” is synonymous with prestige, and prestige is important throughout the continent. All families, even poor ones, are expected to have big wedding parties and throw money around like water in order to gain face. The fact that this can cause bankruptcy for the young couple is considered far less serious a problem than losing face. Much of the Taiwanese obsession with materialism is really to do with gaining face, not material wealth.”

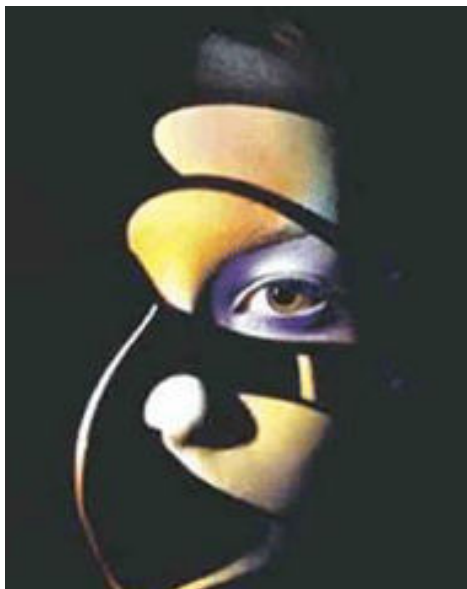
Here is a newspaper report about Mianzi from the China Daily paper in 2005

'Mianzi' of Chinese weighs a lot, comes at a price

By Echo Shan (chinadaily.com.cn)

Updated: 2005-08-08 13:09

Mianzi (literally "face value") has long been observed by most Chinese. As a famous saying goes, "Men live for face as trees grow for bark."



Most Chinese people value the face a lot as an old saying goes that people live for polished face while trees live for bark. [baidu]

In a recent survey conducted by China Youth Daily, over 93 percent of the 1,150 polled said they pay much attention to their mianzi, which concerns people's decency, personality, and dignity.

When asked what the most humiliating thing is, a heavy number accounting for 74.9 percent of the total chose public gaffes, with the failed fulfillment of one's promise coming in as second.

More than a half of the respondents feel ashamed of being shown as ignorant before others. A total 47.5 percent of the polled considered it a loss of face to have not enough money on them when treating friends out to a dinner.

What would enhance one's face value then? In a ranking on this question, the survey revealed that doing what others cannot do topped the list, taking up a high proportion of 83.7 percent. Following at the second, with 53.9 percent, was being praised in public.

Being outstandingly knowledgeable was third on the list for sharpening one's mianzi, accounting for 51.7 percent.

According to the survey, face value usually comes at a price. To pay or not to pay, it's a problem. Deeply obsessed with the face value concept, many "fight" each other for the chance to foot the bill despite an infertile pocket. Some 80.7 percent of those taking the poll thought it a tough life to always cling to the face value concept.

Surprisingly, only 8.7 percent of the polled insisted that it tarnishes a man's authority and face value in a family where the wife is the major breadwinner.

Clad even into teeth with the luxury name brand apparels, a limited 7.7 percent among all the respondents tend to resort to pricey clothes in a bid to gain more face value.

Taking the social status into consideration, 82.9 percent of the polled nod at the opinion that those holding a superior position care far more than the general public about face. In another comparison, the manual labors pay less attention to the face value than brainworkers. The survey also revealed that men focus more on face value than women and the senior more than the young.

While most people hold a neutral viewpoint about those who value mianzi a lot, nearly 80 percent of all the respondents were willing to make friends with them.

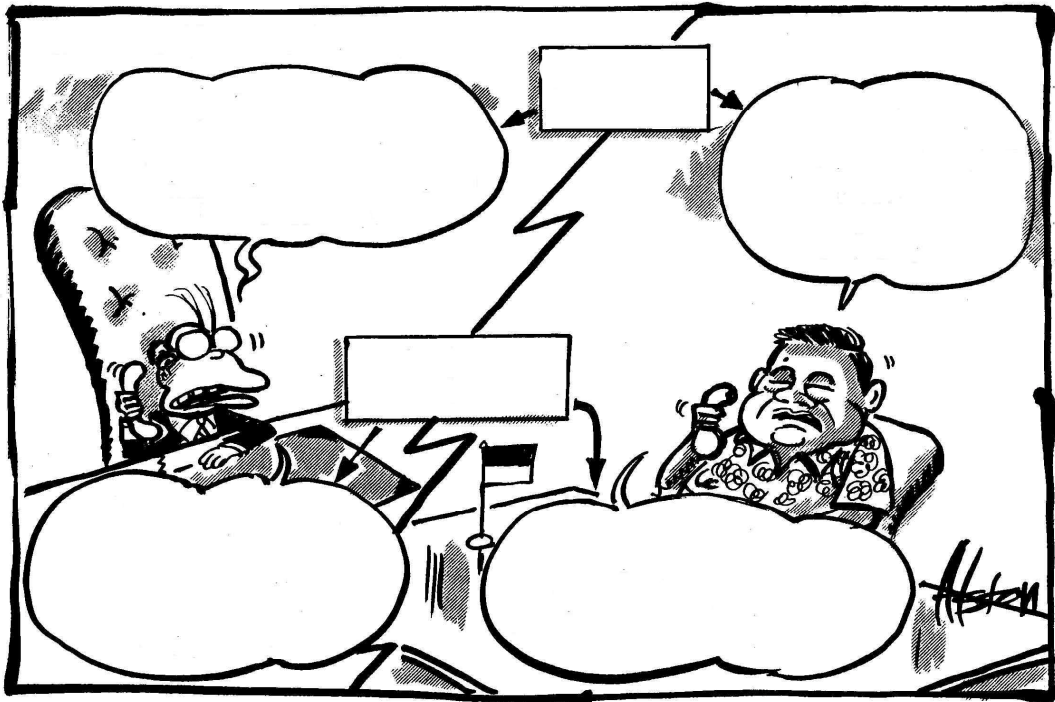
Although there is much benefit in social harmony and polite relationships, there is a cost to Mianzi. It can be a barrier to true integration and wholeness of the person.

In 2003 I used an illustration of the “black box”. I suggested that we all hide our painful experiences – sometimes they are deeply buried in our unconscious minds. ‘

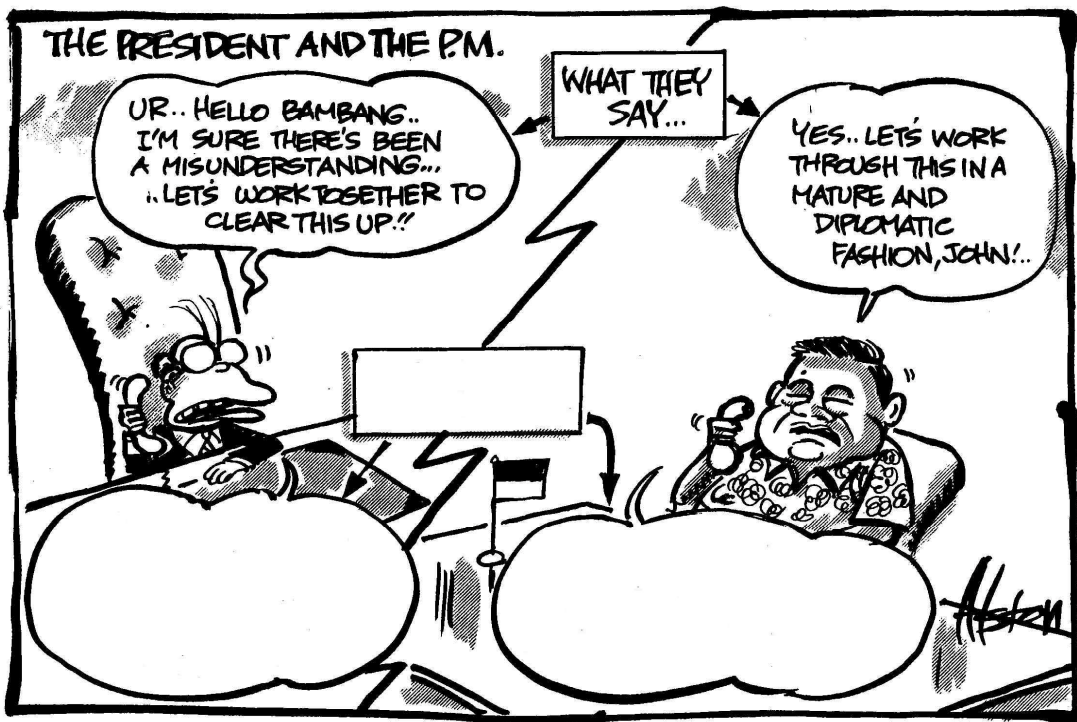
Last year we discussed the concept that we all live inside a protective shell, like a tortoise. As we try to meet the spiritual needs of our patients, one thing we may need to do is to take off our own shells. This is scary, frightening, because we become vulnerable: we could be embarrassed and “lose face”

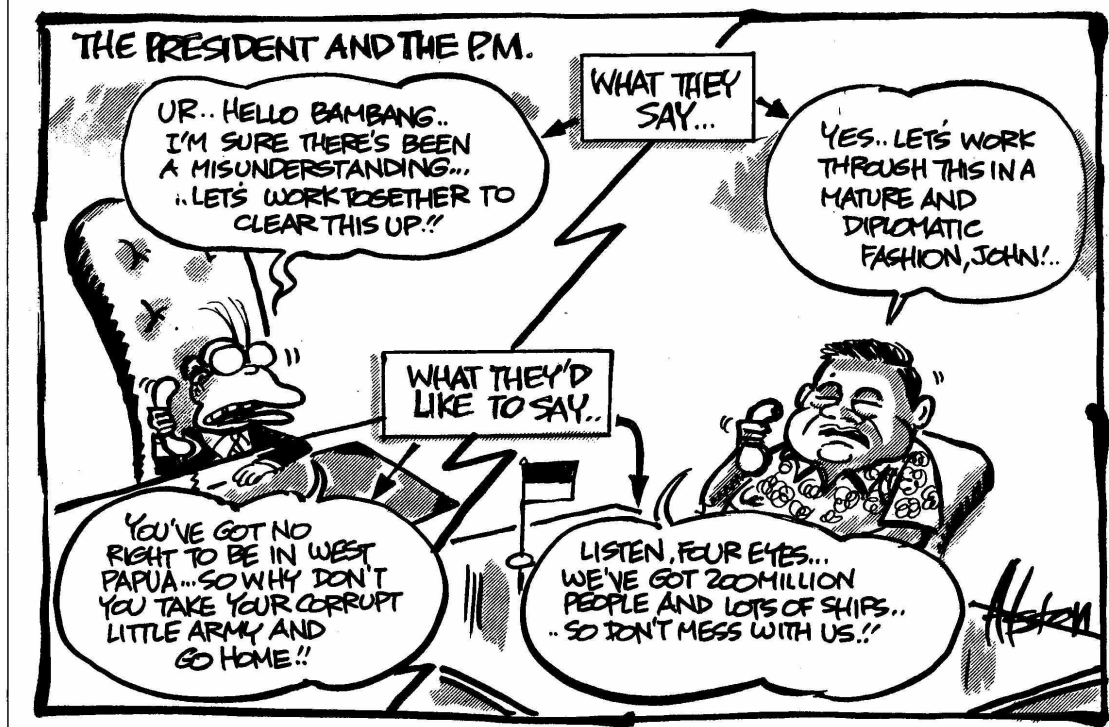
Keeping a good appearance may smooth social relationships, but it can also complicate and confuse. This year Australia accepted 42 refugees from West Papua, which is a part of Indonesia. This caused a big diplomatic conflict between Australia and Indonesia. Politicians are especially skilled at saying one thing but meaning another. In this case the leaders of Australia and Indonesia made public announcements that did not always express their true feelings. A newspaper cartoonist expressed the situation like this”

Tuesday April 4 2006



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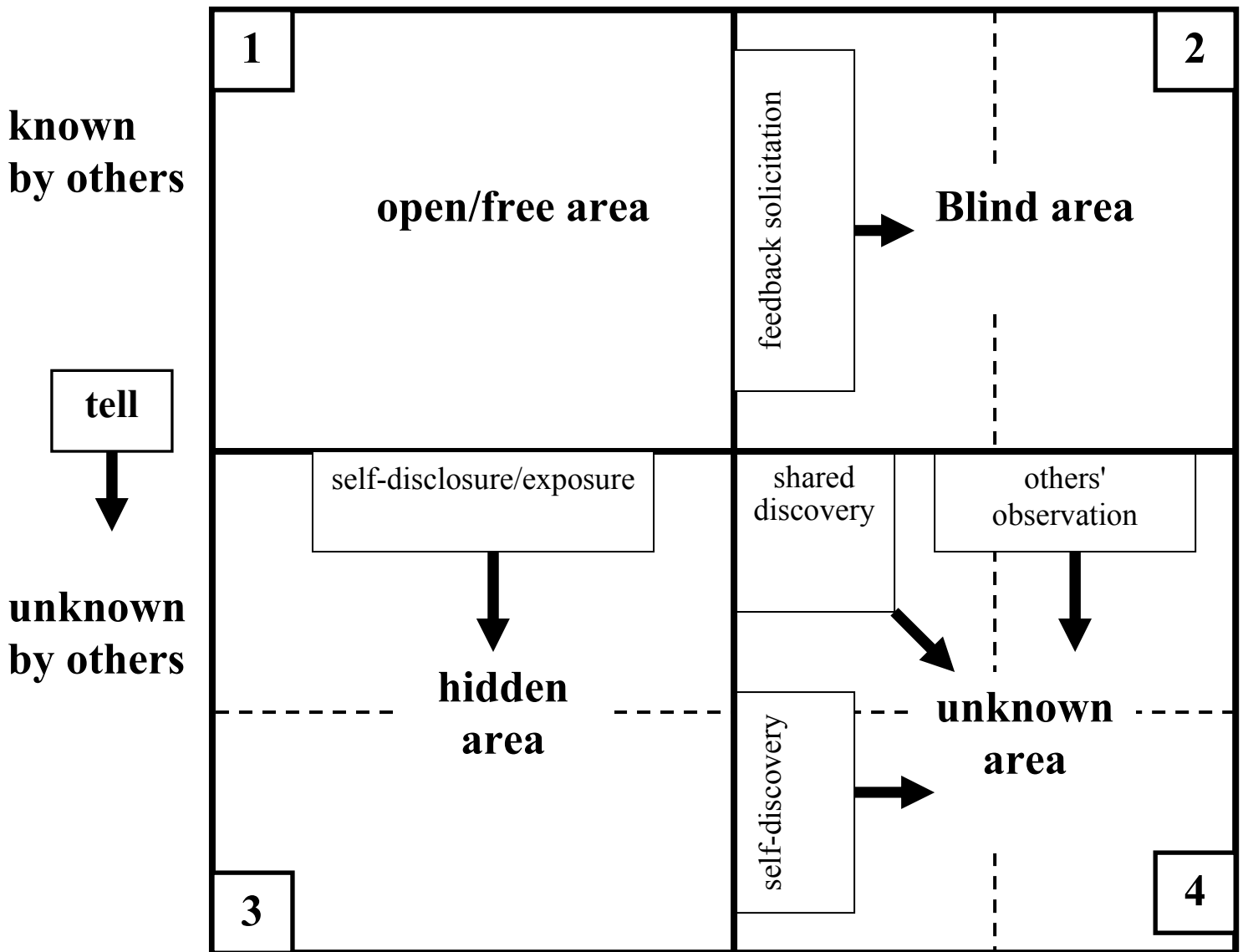
None of us is completely honest and open. Even if we want to be totally transparent, there is a deeper problem: there are parts of our personality that we do not even understand ourselves.

Two American researchers developed a diagram to explain this. They suggested that every person has four compartments in their personality:

- ♦ The open part is known to us and also seen by others.
- ♦ The hidden part is what we know about ourselves, but hide from others.
- ♦ The blind part is what others can see in us, but we cannot see in ourselves.
- ♦ The unknown area is that part of us that not perceived by us or anyone else.

Johari Window model

known by self ask → Unknown by self



© design alan chapman 2001-4 based on [Ingham and Luft's Johari Window concept](#)

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The process of personal maturation and healing, or “integration” involves exploring and accepting our blind and unknown areas. And gaining courage to allow others to look into our hidden parts.

The concept of Mianzi emphasises the importance of the surface or exterior. In contrast, true spiritual growth emphasises the importance of what is inside

Three Biblical quotations

1 Samuel 16: 1-12

^{1SA 16:1} The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king."

^{1SA 16:2} But Samuel said, "How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me." The LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'

^{1SA 16:3} Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate."

^{1SA 16:4} Samuel did what the LORD said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?"

^{1SA 16:5} Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

^{1SA 16:6} When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD."

^{1SA 16:7} But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

^{1SA 16:8} Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The LORD has not chosen this one either."

^{1SA 16:9} Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the LORD chosen this one."

^{1SA 16:10} Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The LORD has not chosen these."

^{1SA 16:11} So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?"
"There is still the youngest," Jesse answered, "but he is tending the sheep."

Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

^{1SA 16:12} So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one."

Mark 7: 14-23

^{MK 7:14} Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand this.

^{MK 7:15} Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.' "

^{MK 7:17} After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable.

^{MK 7:18} "Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'?"

^{MK 7:19} For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.")

^{MK 7:20} He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.'

^{MK 7:21} For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,

MK 7:22 greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly.

MK 7:23 All these evils come from inside and make a man `unclean.' "

Matthew 18: 1-4

MT 18:1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

MT 18:2 He called a little child and had him stand among them.

MT 18:3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

MT 18:4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

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