

# *Dialogical Self Approach*

## Composition work

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# *Landscape of the mind*



**Dialogical Self:** *landscape* of the mind,  
(Hermans, 2001, Hermans, Kempen, & Van Loon,  
1992)

- Multiplicity of I positions
- Space

# *Dialogical Self Theory: Positioning and Counter-Positioning in a Globalizing Society,* by prof. **Hubert Hermans** and dr. **Agnieszka Hermans-Konopka,**

published by **Cambridge University Press**, 2010,

shows the state of the theory and it's applications.

## **Reviews**

'The 'dialogical self' is among the most important and original new theories in the social sciences in the past 20 years...The book should be welcome in all those fields as a major contribution to the understanding of globalization.' *Jeffrey Arnett, Clark University*

'By far the most accessible and comprehensive statement to date on the Dialogical Self, this volume ranges across a set of problems that bring together the practical and theoretical, the local and global, positioning theory and emotion research, in a timely and important theoretical elaboration. The scope and promise of the authors' work ensures that it will serve as a crucial reference for research and conceptual scholarship on the emerging conceptualization of the Dialogical Self.' *Henderikus J.*

*Stam, Editor, Theory and Psychology*



# *Traditions of mindscapes*

## **In religious traditions**

- Japanese gardens
- Mandalas

## **In philosophy**

- Samuel Guttenplan

## **Dialogical Self**

**Theory** (Hermans,  
Hermans- Konopka, 2010)

- Self as a landscape of mind



# Japanese gardens as mindscape





- Ryoanji garden: representation of a road to the real self (Abe, 1997)
- Stones composition: expresion of a refined spirituality (Jaffe 1964)
- Hoover(1977): Japanese gardens as abstract expressionism

# *Composition work*

- Based on the **Dialogical Self Theory**
- Inspired by **art** and **religious traditions**



# Landscape of the self in composition work

- **Positions represented by stones, or other forms :**  
texture, colors, size, position  
in the space

- **Space in between – „ma”**  
Relations between, space,  
distance.

*“we use ma for a space between  
a thing and another thing, and  
also between one moment  
and another moment”*



*(Morioka,2009, p.105)*

# *Abstract + realism*

according to Jaffe (1964)

- Symbolic expression of the world **behind** the **consciousness**. Modern abstract art allows to speak unconscious
- **Stones**: universal **symbols** (Jaffe, 1964)
- Jung: organic images in the **depth of psyche**

**Great abstraction** and **great realism** when come together speak to the deepest levels of psyche to the chthonic spirit to the primal ground of nature (Jung)

*Abstract form as an expression of an inner meaning (Kandinsky, 1914)*



# *Exercise Making a composition of your self*

- Which positions and emotions are important in your life? Chose 10 from the list and write each of them down on a small paper.

# Artistic view on the Dialogical Self and Emotions applied in composition work (Hermans, Hermans-Konopka, 2010)

1. **Multiplicity** of emotions and positions seen as a **pattern**
2. **Organization** of the self viewed from **artistic perspective**
3. Self as a composition is extended **beyond boundaries**: internal-external
4. **Transcending dualism**: positive-negative, pleasant-unpleasant
5. Inviting **receptivity**
6. **Space**: working with the space between (as described by Morioka, 2010)
7. Composition brings together I-positions, and emotions in an act of juxtaposition: **new bridges of meaning** can emerge



**The list of internal I positions (Hermans, 2003) (with emotions included by Hermans-Konopka, 2010)**

- |                         |                           |                            |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. I as a man           | 37. I as professional     | 68. I as vulnerable        |
| 2. I as a woman         | 38. I as member of a      | 69. I as disillusioned     |
| 3. I as happy           | cultural community        | 70. My conscience          |
| 4. I as sad             | 39. I as freedom seeker   | 71. I as a enjoyer of life |
| 5. I as enthusiastic    | 40. I as victim           | 72. I as dreamer           |
| 6. I as inferior        | 41. I as coach            | 73. My masculine side      |
| 7. I as anxious         | 42. I as a leader         | 74. My feminine side       |
| 8. I as angry           | 43. I as manager          | 75. The child in myself    |
| 9. I as proud           | 44. I as entrepreneur     | 76. I as pessimist         |
| 10. I as powerful       | 45. I as idealist         | 77. I as materialist       |
| 11. I as weak           | 46. I as independent      | 78. I as fearful           |
| 12. My pain             | 47. I as clown            | 79. I as stable            |
| 13. I as calm           | 48. I as mystic/spiritual | 80. I as deep down         |
| 14. My energy           | 49. I as warm seeker      | inside                     |
| 15. I as powerless      | 50. I as sacrificing      | 81. I as presenting        |
| 16. I as depressive     | 51. I as dependent        | myself to the              |
| 17. I as strong         | 52. I as doer             | outside                    |
| 18. I as ashamed        | 53. I as sexual           | 82. ....                   |
| 19. I as caring         | 54. I as doubter          | 83. ....                   |
| 20. I as loving         | 55. I as fighter          |                            |
| 21. I as tender         | 56. I as understanding    |                            |
| 22. I as self-confident | 57. I as adventurer       |                            |
| 23. I as lonely         | 58. I as dominating       |                            |
| 24. I as trusting       | 59. I as restless seeker  |                            |
| 25. I as intimate       | 60. I as betrayer         |                            |
| 26. I as safe           | 61. I as recognition      |                            |
| 27. I as free           | seeker                    |                            |
| 32. I as a father       | 62. I as demanding        |                            |
| 33. I as a mother       | 63. I as jealous          |                            |
| 34. I as husband        | 64. I as perfectionist    |                            |
| 35. I as wife           | 65. I as understanding    |                            |
| 36. I as colleague      | 66. I as guilty           |                            |
|                         | 67. I as optimist         |                            |


# Instruction part 2

- Choose stones which can represent these positions/emotions
- While taking a stone try to connect in your body with an emotional quality of this position
- Make a composition of stones which represents how they are related in your life. Do not think to much, let it rather make itself. It needs to fit to your feeling.
- You can draw lines between positions, add some symbols, shapes, words, just make a composition of your own emotional positions.

# *Share with another person*

- Do you see any important pattern in your self-space?
- Which positions are in a conflict?
- Which positions dominate in your self?
- Which positions would you particularly like to develop in your life? How would you like to do it?
- Which positions give deeper meaning to your life and work? How much space do you give them in your life?



A close-up photograph of layered, cracked wood or bark. The top layer is dark grey and heavily cracked. Below it, there are layers of reddish-brown wood, some of which are also cracked. The bottom layer is dark brown and appears charred or burnt. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid in the center of the image, containing two lines of black text.

What can I learn from my  
composition?  
What will I do with it?

- Do you like to learn more about dialogical self approach developments?
- Contact us for a “learning experience-session” or “learning trajectories”
- Look at our website for new events

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# Dialogical Practice Network

- **Global network** of practitioners, scientists-practitioners, managers and artists involved in the application of methods based on Dialogical Self Theory. An initiative of the [International Institute for the Dialogical Self](#) (IIDS)
- Space for **professional development, inspiration and cooperation.**
- Countries: **The Netherlands, Portugal, Arab Emirates, Japan, Mexico, Belgium, Australia, USA, UK, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Israel, Canada, Norway, South Africa, Russia, Latvia, Estonia, Egypt, India, Germany, Colombia, Spain, India, Greece, Denmark**
- **Mission: global exchange of professional experiences and methods based on the dialogical self** in cooperation between the members of the Network mutually and between the members and the [IIDS](#). It aims to be a **space for the cooperation** between practitioners, scientist-practitioners, managers, and artists across countries and cultures.

If you would like to become a member, please contact us on

[www.dialogicalpractice.com](http://www.dialogicalpractice.com)

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