

Narrative Therapy Workshops with Anupa Mehta

I did my first workshop with Anupa end of April 2018. This was a day long workshop using Narrative practices. I came into the workshop unsure and unclear about myself and that is how I introduced myself at the beginning. During the course of the workshop, working with the timeline and other methods used, I was able to see how I was holding on to the problem story and not acknowledging the other sides of myself. Through the workshop by the end I was able to create a preferred narrative that was more whole and in the process have a larger, more complete picture of myself from a more confident and integrated space.

The second workshop I attended was a weekend workshop in Alibaug in March 2019 titled Alchemy. During this workshop we once again looked at our personal stories and went deeper into transforming them by using the Jungian concept of Symbols to excavate the trauma, discover the redeeming aspect and then move towards transcendence. This was a very powerful tool for further delving deeper into the self while looking at trauma and how that too brings its own redeeming qualities which we can discover and hold within ourselves. At the end of this process I felt more empowered to be able to hold the good and not-so-good aspects of myself in the light and as a result strengthen my own preferred narrative at a deeper level.

The third workshop was held in Goa in June 2019 and was about Reclaiming the Self using narrative practice along with the work of Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estes, a Jungian analyst and storyteller. This workshop moved me to another level of integration with the use of metaphors, memory box, and the stories from Dr. Estes book, Women who run with Wolves. I found this workshop extremely powerful and transformative, as it moved away from the specifics of personal stories and in the process took us deeper into an understanding of the self in a more universal context. The use of metaphors like the river of the self, helped create the necessary distance needed to go further into excavating the myths and tales we tell about ourselves and hold on to, and how these limiting ideas/beliefs can be loosened, furthered and transformed. Also the Jungian work enabled further claiming and reclaiming of the shadow self – the hurt, pain, anger etc that also are part of our lives. I learnt that I need not deny myself those emotions and experiences, but that by acknowledging, accepting and holding them they can be integrated and contained in my developing conception of self.

The workshops were well structured and clearly outlined and since we were given the format beforehand I was able to get a clear picture of what it was about and where it was headed. Because they were well organized on all fronts, I was able to gain a lot from the process and could look forward to an outcome or movement/shift of some sort, which did happen for me. All three workshops felt very comprehensive on their own and I think all the participants walked away having gained some insight into their own worlds.

Anupa's facilitation was very intuitive and also organic. While staying true to the outline and structure provided, I felt that Anupa was able to use the techniques to address each participant from where they were standing. There was a clarity about where we were going and also when faced with challenges, she was able to guide us gently but firmly towards the work we had come to do. Her presence was very comforting, even through the difficult bits,

and I was able to trust and open myself to the process because I felt safe and confident that she would hold space for it.

My experience of this therapeutic process has been very evocative. Through my work with Anupa I have been able to not only come to a better understanding of my self, but also been able to manifest that change in my day to day life. From being someone who was very unsure of herself and not confident about who she was and is in this world, working with Anupa has helped me crystalize a better understanding of who I am, to be able to own that person who is emerging, and to actually make shifts and changes where necessary in order to be a more whole, complete and functional person in my own world as well as in the outside world.

(Name withheld due to reasons of confidentiality; referrals available)