

Transcript of the **Storytelling Therapy workshop** led by Dr. Eric Miller on Friday 18th Nov 2022 (2pm-5pm).

This Workshop was hosted by Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong, Meghalaya, and was an event in India's "Tribal Week" and MLCU's "Folklore Week", both 15th-18th Nov 2022.

Abstract: Characters in Khasi traditional stories could serve as metaphors for psychological tendencies -- just as Sigmund Freud and other founders of psycho-analysis have utilised characters in traditional stories from ancient Greece (and ancient Rome) in this way.

Contents:

- 1) Introduction**
(page 1).
 - 2) The eight steps of Storytelling Therapy, and key ideas**
(page 3).
 - 3) Activity: Write your Life Story**
(page 7).
 - 4) Activity: Write about four outstanding aspects of your Life Story**
(page 7).
 - 5) Metaphors, and Metaphor Therapy**
(page 8).
 - 6) Metaphors in nature-related proverbs of the Kani tribal people of south India**
(page 9)
 - 7) Looking at characters in ancient Greek (and ancient Roman) traditional stories as metaphors for psychological tendencies**
(page 10).
 - 8) Looking at characters in Khasi traditional stories as metaphors for psychological tendencies**
(page 16).
 - 9) Commentary by Dr. Auswyn Winter Japang**
(page 22).
 - 10) Activity: Active Imagination (involving imagining, visualising, and role-playing)**
(page 25).
 - 11) Activity: Question-based Story-making**
(page 27).
 - 12) Brief review of the Storytelling Therapy method.**
(page 28).
 - 13) Activity: Reflections on the Workshop**
(page 29).
 - 14) Vote of Thanks**
(page 31).
-

1) Introduction to Storytelling Therapy.

EM: I have lived in Chennai for approximately the past 20 years, but I was born and raised in New York City. New York City is considered to be one of the psycho-analysis capitals of the world, because the founders of psycho-analysis were mostly European people, especially from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and in the mid-1900s many of these people migrated to America, especially to New York City. And they brought psycho-analysis with them. Jacob Moreno is one such person. He is the founder of Psychodrama. New York City is also a theatre capital of the world, featuring the Broadway theatres and community, and when I was coming-of-age in the 1960s and 1970s there was also a tremendous Experimental Theatre scene, which included various forms of storytelling. So it is not surprising that a central part of my life's work has become helping to establish and develop the field of Storytelling Therapy.

Psycho-analysis is the practice of 1) looking at ways one's personality has been formed by experiences from one's past, especially from one's childhood; and 2) seeking to change any patterns of thought and behaviour within oneself that now seem to be counter-productive. It is said that the second experience of a situation can be a *liberation* from the first experience of the situation. Especially concerning difficult and painful experiences. When such experiences occurred, if one was young one may have had little control over the situation. But then in the process of therapy, one can go back and really look at what happened and understand it, and see who did what. And if one wants to express some thoughts and feelings about what occurred, one can do it because now one is more self-possessed, and also now one is accompanied by a guide and ally, one's therapist. One can experience and express one's feelings and then hopefully one can put down the baggage that one was carrying.

Here I am using the word, "baggage", as a metaphor for any pain, anger, and bitterness that one might have been carrying around. If we walk around in pain, bitterness, and anger, we are not going to have much fun, and the people around us are not going to have much fun -- plus we are not going to be in-the-present-moment very much. So the hope of therapy is to be able to work through what occurred, and to feel and express any pent-up feelings about it, and perhaps eventually even be able to forgive people for their less-than-perfect behaviour.

Therapy has a bad name with some people, because in some cases people get in touch with their anger over things that occurred years ago, and that's it. They remain in a state of anger and resentment. That's not the way therapy should be. Hopefully the therapist can help the client to work through the pain and anger, and achieve a kind of peacefulness. You see, the client gets to have her day in court, to use another metaphor, where she gets to say what happened from her point of view. If she feels she was injured, she gets to accuse the wrongdoer in her imagination, with a witness present (one's therapist). After this, hopefully one can move on with senses of release and relief.

Storytelling Therapy is one of the Arts Therapies. Please try to get accustomed to this term, Arts Therapies. Arts Therapies is a general term referring to the various Art Therapies, such as Music Therapy, Dance Therapy, Visual Art Therapy, Storytelling Therapy, Drama Therapy, Psychodrama, and so on.

Actually, Psychodrama is the original form of Drama Therapy. Psychodrama involves role-playing events from one's memory and imagination.

When we use a combination of the arts in a single session, that combination-method is called Expressive Arts Therapy. So Expressive Arts Therapy is also one of the Arts Therapies.

People sometimes say, Creative Arts Therapies, but the word "Creative" here is not necessary. It is understood that the arts involve creativity. However, the Arts Therapies are not about producing "beautiful", "polished", or "finished" objects or performances. A key aspect of the Arts Therapies is that the *process* is the important thing -- the process of playing, creating, and expressing, and then thinking and talking about it all, integrating into one's conscious self whatever has come up. Many times in this process, things come up from one's unconscious regarding which one had previously been unaware.

Story is used in many of the arts. For examples, one will see a dance performance and there'll be a story involved. One will see a painting, and many times there's a story involved. Likewise, story is used in many of the Arts Therapies. Storytelling Therapy can also be seen as one component in Expressive Arts Therapy.

2) The eight steps of Storytelling Therapy, and key ideas.

Now I will introduce to you the eight steps of the version of Storytelling Therapy that I and others are developing. By the way, there are different versions of Storytelling Therapy. All versions utilise "Narrative Psychology". (For more information about Narrative Psychology, please see its wiki page.)

One version of Storytelling Therapy is called Narrative Therapy, which has especially been developed in Australia. Narrative Therapy focuses on helping the client to reframe aspects of her Life Story, to help the client proceed more constructively and confidently. As I understand it, Narrative Therapy does not use traditional stories or fantasy very much, nor does it focus on the therapeutic value of the social, inter-personal *process* of storytelling.

Incidentally, one does not need to have earned a Master's degree in Psychology or Social Work to apply most aspects of Storytelling Therapy. Most aspects of this method can be used by Life Coaches, and by people who are facilitating Personality Development in themselves or others (in a non-therapeutic sense).

Anyway, here are the 8 steps of Storytelling Therapy. Please note the three references to the work of Dr. Carl Jung. Carl Jung laid the foundations for Storytelling Therapy. Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung are considered to be the co-founders of psycho-analysis. Carl Jung was especially interested in ways mythology could be used therapeutically. This is not about, "Is the myth really true?", or "Do you believe in God or not?" We are just looking at divine characters and other story characters as possible models of behaviour and thought.

The eight steps of Storytelling Therapy are:

- 1) Tell one's Life Story.
- 2) Listeners may share similar experiences.
- 3) Identify four themes (outstanding elements) in one's Life Story.
Carl Jung called this, Explication.
- 4) Discuss metaphors, and ways metaphors may relate to aspects of one's life.
- 5) Gather three "Associative stories" relating to each theme. The characters in these stories could be seen as metaphors for oneself.
Carl Jung called this, Amplification (as in, Amplifying one's experience).
- 6) Play with any of the above-mentioned stories. One could change endings, add episodes, or modify the stories in any other way.
- 7) Speak to and as characters in the above-mentioned stories (role-play).
Carl Jung called a version of this role-playing, Active Imagination.
- 8) Compose a metaphorical Healing and/or Growing-developing story for oneself.

So **first**, the client tells her Life Story. The Story of her Life. I call one's Life Story, "the Mother of All Stories", because all that one perceives derives from one's experiences. Usually the client tells her Life Story in the first two sessions..

Secondly, a listener, even if just the individual therapist, may say about an episode in the Life Story, "Hmm, something like that happened to me too". This is called, "self-disclosure". Some therapists do this, some don't -- it is purely a matter of style and taste.

Number 3. Once the client has told her Life Story, she is invited to look at it and ask, "What are some (typically, four) outstanding themes in this story? What major decisions has one

made, and followed through on? What has happened again and again in one's life? What has happened throughout?" By themes, I mean: outstanding elements and issues. What has happened to one is an important part of one's Life Story -- as is, how one is dealing with the circumstances one has faced. So one's Life Story includes a combination of what has happened to one and how one is responding.

It is good to include social issues. For example, ways women have been kept down by the patriarchy, if that has been an important part of one's Life Story. Do you consider the terms, patriarchy and matriarchy, very much? Of course these terms mean, "rule by the father", and "rule by the mother". The Shillong area is famous for some forms of matriarchy. There are also these terms: matrilocality, which means that when a couple gets married, the boy comes to live with the girl's family; and matrilineality, in which ancestral descent is traced through maternal lines, the name of the mother may be part of the child's name, and property such as land may especially be passed by mothers to daughters. Anyway, we invite the client to identify at least four major elements that have been major factors in the client's life to date. This requires some real soul-searching.

Step 4 is that the concept of metaphors, and ways metaphors may relate to aspects of one's life, are discussed. A metaphor is a thing that stands for another thing. This is similar to a symbol, which is a thing that stands for an idea. Using metaphors for aspects of oneself can provide a little distance between oneself and the behaviours being discussed. Doing this can make an intensely personal issue more of a general issue. Moreover: metaphors are often vivid; they begin to tell a story; and they speak to one's unconscious, partly bypassing the rational brain. All of this can be helpful at times. "Metaphor Therapy" is a field, and is an essential element of the Arts Therapies. (For more information about Metaphor Therapy, please see its wiki page.)

The **5th step** is that we invite the client to gather what we call "Associative stories". These are stories that somehow relate to the four themes (outstanding elements) that the client has identified in her Life Story. I usually invite a client to gather three Associative stories for each of her four themes. For each Associative story, the client is invited to journal about how she is similar to and different from the main character in the Associative story.

Associative stories can come from anywhere. They can come from mythology and fairytales, and they can also come, for example, simply from something one read on the internet. Gathering Associative stories can help one to realise that one is not the only one who has certain experiences.

Characters in Associative stories can be seen as metaphors for oneself. In this workshop,

- 1) First we will look at metaphors in proverbs I have collected from the Kani tribal people of south India. In these proverbs, animals and vegetation serve as metaphors for human behaviour.
- 2) Then we will consider gods and goddesses, and other characters, of ancient Greece (and Rome) that have come to be used as metaphors for psychological tendencies, which can in some cases be called "conditions" or "complexes".
- 3) And finally we will look at Khasi stories with similar possible applications in mind.

Today's workshop is especially dedicated to Item 3 -- to looking at Khasi folktales, legends, and myths as Associative stories. (The Western definitions of these genres of traditional stories are: Folktales occur in non-specific time-periods, and in non-specific locations such as forests. Legends occur within history and feature the divine. Myths are about divine figures only.)

Regarding the themes one has identified in one's Life Story, I'll be asking, "Has anything like this occurred in a traditional Khasi story?" And as we review 20 traditional Khasi stories I'll be asking, "Does anything in these stories relate to any of the themes of your Life Story?"

I believe that our work today on beginning to look at local Khasi stories as metaphors representing psychological tendencies is an historic event. This is part of making counselling and psycho-analysis indigenous to a place. Why should people in cultures all around the world only use the metaphors of ancient Greek (and Roman) gods and goddesses, etc, to conceptualize themselves? Because we don't want local people to think that psycho-analysis and counselling is only from the West, that these processes are only Western inventions. In a sense they are, but in a sense they are not. You know, in extended families all over the world, forms of counselling have been occurring since the beginning of humanity. In an extended family, one can always find someone to talk to about personal issues. One difference might be that professional counselling involves assisting the client to make her own decisions, whereas family members might tend to seek to pressure a person to behave in a certain way.

Regarding psycho-analysis: Many traditional cultures acknowledge that the way one was raised affects one's behaviour. This is seen in many proverbs.

So today as we think about Associative stories, again: first we'll be looking at south Indian Kani proverbs, then at Ancient Greek traditional stories, and finally at Khasi traditional stories.

Step 6 involves encouraging the client to play with, to modify, any of the above-mentioned stories (both the Personal-experience stories and the Associative stories). For example, one could add an imaginary episode to a story, or one could change an ending of a story.

Step 7 involves role-playing with characters in the above-mentioned stories. It is through this role-playing process that emotions and new realisations often emerge. Here the client often learns more about how she understands and feels about the various characters in her mind.

Finally, **Step 8** is the culmination of the Storytelling Therapy process. Here the client creates a Healing, Transforming, and/or Inspiring metaphorical story for herself (with assistance from the Storytelling Therapist as needed). This story often has the feeling of fairytale, which is a kind of coming-of-age story. The story contains some of the client's challenges, and points towards ways of overcoming these challenges. The story is not about the client directly. Rather, it is about a family of rabbits, or people on a different planet, or a princess 500 years ago. Although, of course, at its core the story really is about the client's issues and hopes.

We'll do a little bit of this today, because the best way to learn about something is to do it, to apply it to oneself.

To mention a few key words, terms, and phrases in the Storytelling Therapy process:

This process can help one work towards **individuation**. That is a term Carl Jung used. He was writing in German. So this may not be a good translation. It doesn't mean becoming an individual. It means becoming an *integrated* individual. The different parts of oneself are integrated, and one is integrated with the universe. So this is about becoming aware of different aspects of oneself and increasing one's understanding of where one stands in relation to various ideologies, social movements, culture, and religion. This makes one an increasingly self-aware and mature individual.

As Professor Gideon said the other day in the Seminar at Nartiang (I paraphrase): "You have your story of yourself as a Khasi person, or as coming from some other group of people. You have the story of yourself as a woman, for example. You have the story of yourself as a college student. You have the story of yourself as an Indian. Now it's up to you

to organise all of these different stories -- and to leave some space for your unique self to bloom out of all these influences".

The right story will do its work on you. This is a key idea in Storytelling Therapy. In other words, if you hear or read a story, if it's the right story, it will engage with your unconscious, and it will help you to develop in the way you need to develop, whether for the sake of healing or just for the sake of growing. One needs to heal if one needs to recover from a trauma, an emotional injury. If one just needs to grow, a good metaphor for this is a seed. A seed does not need therapy. It just needs conditions that will facilitate its growth -- sunlight, but not too much sunlight; water, but not too much water; nutrition; and so on.

When you hear, **The right story will do its work on you**, you might ask yourself, "**What work needs to be done on me?**" And this is where the Storytelling Therapy process begins in earnest.

One might ask a new client, "**What is going well in your life? And what changes are you looking forward to?**"

This whole process, to use a metaphor, is about **taking stock** of oneself. You know, if you have a shop or a business of any sort, once in a while you take **inventory** to see what you have, what you don't have, and what you need to get. The Storytelling Therapy process is all about that.

To use another metaphor, this process involves one **checking the engine** of oneself. If one is depressed a lot, if one is anxious a lot, or if one procrastinates a great deal, one's engine is not running smoothly. There's some blockage, or some part of the engine is not working at its optimum level, so one has to check it out. You know, when you check out a system, you troubleshoot, you look at components of the whole, until you find where the problem is. An engine is powered by petrol, or diesel, which we buy at a shop. But as a human being, your life energy is coming from within. One's life energy, one's vitality, can be symbolized as a fountain. Often water is a symbol of the inner life force. If that life-giving liquid is not coming up and giving you energy, you have to find out why. What's the problem? What's the hold up? And, you know, psycho-analysis asks, "Is it because you are angry, bitter, or hurt because of something that happened? Is it because a part of you has not yet developed as it naturally should?"

I already mentioned this sentence: **The second experience of a situation can be a liberation from the first experience of the situation.**

Working with traditional stories can help one to recognize the power of archetypal elements. **Archetype** is a term that was especially used by Carl Jung. Type means "typical". And arch means "very", as in "my arch enemy". So archetype means "very typical". This refers to the idea that there are certain ideas, imaginings, stories, and characters that people all over the world experience. One archetype is a teacher, a mentor, a guide. Such figures appear in every culture, in every society. This character is important in real life, and also in the imagination, and can be thought of as an archetypal character.

"Working with folktales, epics, and other traditional stories could help one to recognise the power of archetypal elements outside and inside oneself, and then put one's personal experiences into a larger perspective. Understanding the functioning of archetypal characters and situations within oneself is a way of synchronising the beating of one's own heart with the rhythm of the cosmos". (June Singer, *Boundaries of the Soul: The Practice of Jung's Psychology*, p. 127.)

This is poetry! It's from an academic book, but it's poetry -- "Synchronizing the beating of your heart with the rhythm of the cosmos". It is a part of wellness, you know, to feel connected with nature, with one's conception of "the big picture", whatever one's conception

of it is, and that you're synchronized, you're in rhythm, you're in connection with the rhythm of the cosmos.

And I like this quote: People who know a lot of stories -- both from one's own culture and from other cultures -- have "**a richly-furnished chamber of the psyche**" (Stephen Larson, *The Mythic Imagination*, p. xxvii). Such a person's psyche is furnished with all these different metaphors by which one can think about one's own situation. One can get new perspectives about what one is going through by comparing one's own experience with what these other characters went through.

So these are the steps, and some of the ideas, of Storytelling Therapy.

3) Activity: Write your *Life Story*.

I think at this point we should take the first step in the Storytelling Therapy process. I kid you not, I'm inviting you to write a 10-minute version of the Story of Your Life, your Life Story.

Please begin with, "I was born in Shillong in 1999" or wherever and whenever it was. And the ending would be something like, "And here I am today." You might include mention of some joys and frustrations. This is only for you. No one else is going to read this. So, you know, make it as "personal" as you like. You can bring in relationships with other people if you want. But especially include some big decisions which have been turning points in your life. And activities you love to do -- you know, your unique interests, talents, and skills. And when you discovered that you loved to do these things. And as I have said, please mention social issues that have affected your life.

If you're in college, choosing a college and choosing a career path is a major, major step in life, right? And some of you, maybe you had some discussions with your parents about your college plans, because many parents will say, "We would like you to be a doctor, or a lawyer, or an engineer. Or perhaps an IAS officer". And you might have said, "Well, no, I'm going to be a psychological counsellor". "What?!", your parents might have replied. Or you might have said, "I have decided I'm going to be a tourism facilitator". "What?!" You might want to include such discussions in your Life Story.

Please go ahead. Please take 10 minutes. Fill one page if you can. Write the Story of Your Life. Of course you can write a longer version on your own later in a journal. This is just an introductory experience.

10 minutes go by.

4) Activity: Write about four outstanding aspects of your *Life Story*.

Now. Please read over what you have written, and underline or highlight the words and sentences that seem most interesting to you -- that "jump out at you" (to use a metaphor).

And based on that highlighted material -- after your Life Story -- please write a list (with commentary) of the four most outstanding aspects of your Life Story.

5 minutes go by.

5) Metaphors, and Metaphor Therapy.

As mentioned, a metaphor is a thing that stands for some other thing. We use a lot of metaphors in our everyday language, whatever language it is. Often without even being aware that we are using a metaphor. Metaphors transport us into our imagination. If it is a traditional or conventional metaphor, using it could help one to feel related to and supported by one's culture and society. If a metaphor involves nature, using it could help one to feel related to a universal process of nature. A metaphor can take an experience that is intensely personal and relate it to the outside world.

One very popular group of metaphors is animal metaphors. Different cultures have varying ideas and stereotypes about some animals -- but in some cases all cultures have the same stereotypes.

The fox is considered clever in all cultures, as far as I know.

A flying bird often represents freedom, and actually, one's soul.

In the USA, people say, "Stop horsing around!". That means, "Stop fooling around, stop being disruptive -- you are making a mess, and what's more, what you are doing could be dangerous".

"He is crabby". That refers to the way a crab pinches with its claws, and means he's complaining.

"I will not be cowed" -- this is such an interesting one. It is built-in to the English language that the female, a cow, is going to "cower", which means, to shrink away from something that is menacing. And that the male, a bull, is going to be a bully and is going to be bull-headed. This view of female and male is built into the language -- and not just regarding cattle, but regarding humans also. We men may not be bullies, but the English language says we are. What we can do about this! We have to change the language. But how? Is there some authority, perhaps in England, we could talk to about this? I don't know.

"He's chicken". In the USA, this means a person is a coward. Does it mean that here also? And you know, a chicken, when it is butchered, if its head is cut off, for a few minutes the body is still moving around. So if somebody is very disorganized we'll say he's going around "like a chicken without a head".

Another very popular form of metaphor in everyday language is colour metaphor. If we say somebody is blue, that means they're sad, right? I think that might be a global stereotype. But blue is also considered to be a very peaceful colour. In European Christian paintings, Mary the mother of Jesus is always wearing a light blue cape. Light blue is her colour. And it's not because she's depressed, it's because she is heavenly and is at peace.

There are so many metaphors in everyday language! In counselling, people may say, "I'm stuck. I'm trapped. I feel like a bird in a cage" -- all metaphors. "I'm in the woods. I'm at sea. I'm in the dark." It's using a visual word and a kind of a story element to describe a feeling, and it makes the feeling much more vivid.

Now, let us look at metaphors in some proverbs I collected among Kani tribal people in the mountains of southwestern Tamil Nadu in the course of my year of doctoral Folklore fieldwork there. These proverbs involve metaphors of animals and plants for humans. Then we'll look at ancient Greek and Roman metaphors, and finally Khasi metaphors.

6) Metaphors in nature-related proverbs of the Kani tribal people of south India.

14 of these proverbs are:

- 1) "Even the mighty elephant may sometimes slip and fall".
(Great people may also make mistakes.)
- 2) "You are playing like a fish!"
(First you are going one way, then another way.)
- 3) "Don't fly like a bird!"
(Do not try to avoid what you need to face.)
- 4) "Don't look around like an owl!"
(Owls are often looking around for mice and other small animals to catch and eat).
- 5) "Don't sleep like a pig!"
(Don't sleep anywhere, anytime. Don't snore loudly.)
- 6) "Mother pig breaks the fence; her child likewise breaks the fence".
(Examples set by parents are often followed by their children.)
- 7) "Behave properly, or the tiger will catch you!"
(Behave properly, or you will be punished.)
- 8) "If one puts a thorny plant in a fence, one's own leg might be injured by those thorns.
(One's actions meant for others may eventually affect oneself.)
- 9) "A tree with thorns is not useful as a pillar".
(One cannot depend on unfriendly people.)
- 10) "The palmyra tree is growing and becoming rough".
(And so is a certain person.)
- 11) "Is it enough to grow like a banana leaf?"
(A certain person is growing quickly but not strongly.)
- 12) "Know the tree, before planting the vine".
(One should know a person's character before becoming close to that person.)
- 13) "The areca nut one carried on one's hip has now become a tree".
(One can't take care of one's children once they are grown.)
- 14) "When an old leaf falls, a young leaf might laugh -- but one day the young leaf will also fall".
(Young people should treat old people with compassion and respect.)

These proverbs were collected -- recorded, transcribed, and translated -- by myself and my Research Partner in the Kani community, Velmurugan. We are co-authors of the article in which these proverbs appear. The article is at www.storytellingandvideoconferencing.com/22.pdf

7) Looking at characters in ancient Greek (and ancient Roman) traditional stories as metaphors for psychological tendencies.

Now we will look at characters from traditional stories of ancient Greece (and to a lesser degree, of ancient Rome).

Ancient Greece flourished especially between 3,000 and 2,000 years ago. Ancient Rome flourished especially between 2,500 and 1,500 years ago. (Ancient Roman culture was largely derived from ancient Greek culture.) These were two of the founding cultures of Western Civilization.

Psycho-analysis came into existence approximately 150 years ago, starting with Sigmund Freud and other Europeans in Europe. When Freud recognised a psychological condition (sometimes called a "complex") in a person, he often said (to paraphrase), "This is just like a certain character from a traditional ancient Greek (or Roman) story". And he named the condition after the character.

Thus, many of these characters have come to serve as metaphors for psychological tendencies. In many cases words derived from these names have become words in the German language (in which Freud wrote), and eventually in the English language also.

In the following annotated list of 41 examples -- just for general interest I have also included the names of some ancient Greek and Roman characters, and the resulting English words, even if the word does not relate directly to psychology.

The most famous example is the **Oedipus complex**, named after a prince (later, a king) in ancient Greece who killed his father and married his mother -- without being aware of what he was doing. Freud believed that especially at a certain stage of development, a boy wants to replace his father. It is possible that this psychological condition was especially prevalent in the culture in which Freud lived.

Matching this is the **Elektra complex**, which represents the way (it was believed) that especially at a certain stage of development, a girl wants to replace her mother. Elektra was a young woman in ancient Greece who conspired to kill her mother (who had killed her husband, Elektra's father).

Other famous examples are the half-god, half-human Narcissus, who represents self-absorption (**narcissism**); and Psyche, the goddess of the soul, whose name in English, **psyche**, has come 1) to mean the soul/mind, and 2) to provide the root-word for the word, **psychology**, the study of the soul/mind.

The examples given above are also mentioned in this list:

1

Achilles.

Achilles was a human. His only vulnerable point was the heel of his left foot, because when his mother Thetis dipped him in the river Styx as an infant, she held him by that heel.

Achilles was indeed killed through his left heel.

Hence, the English term, **Achilles heel**. ("He has a weak point, an Achilles heel".)

2

Atlas.

Atlas was a titan (a pre-Olympian god). For supporting an army that had opposed Zeus, Atlas was condemned by Zeus to carry the heavens upon his shoulders.

Hence the English word, **atlas**. (An atlas is a book of maps.)

3

Ceres.

Ceres was a goddess of Agriculture, especially grains.

Hence the English word, **cereal**.

4

Chaos.

Chaos is the mythological void-state preceding the creation of the universe in Greek creation myths.

Hence, the English word, **chaos**.

5

Chronos.

Chronos was the god of Time.

Hence the English words, **chronology** (a list of items in order of their occurrence), and**chronic** (a condition that persists for a person's lifespan).

6

Dionysius (known in Roman culture as, Bacchus).

Dionysius was a god of Wine, Drunkenness, Wild Vegetation, Parties, Festivals, Madness, and Ecstasy. He was the son of the god Zeus and the goddess Semele. Dionysius is called "twice-born" because Zeus snatched him from his mother's womb and stitched Dionysius into his own thigh and carried him until Dionysius was ready to be born. In art Dionysius was depicted as having long hair and a beard -- sometimes as a youth, and sometimes as a senior. His attributes included a drinking cup, the grape vine, and a crown of ivy. He was often in the company of male and female forest spirits. Dionysius' sacred animals included snakes, tigers, and donkeys.

Hence the English terms, **Dionysian**, and **Bacchic frenzy**.

7

Echo.

Echo was a female forest spirit.

This is the story of how Echo lost the ability to speak --

Zeus, the king of the gods, lived on Mount Olympus with his wife, the goddess Hera. Zeus enjoyed consorting with female forest spirits on Earth. Eventually, Hera became suspicious, and came down from Mount Olympus in an attempt to catch Zeus with the female forest spirits. Echo had a lovely voice and liked to tell long stories. Echo would try to distract Hera by telling her stories -- as Zeus had ordered her to do! In anger, Hera made Echo only able to mechanically-repeat the last words spoken to her.

Hence the English word, **echo**. (An echo is a sound that comes back to one because it reverberates off a surface.)

8

Elektra.

Elektra was a young woman who conspired to kill her mother (who had killed her husband, Elektra's father). Some European founders of the field of psychology believed that at a certain stage of development, a girl wants to replace her mother, and they named this tendency after Elektra.

Hence the English term, **Electra complex**.

Note:

Some of these same psychologists believed that at a certain stage of development, a boy wants to replace his father, and they named this tendency after king **Oedipus**.Hence the English term, **Oedipus complex**.

9

Eros (known as Cupid in Roman culture).

Eros was the god of Love and Reproduction.

Hence the English word, **erotic**.

Note:

Freud believed there are opposing instincts in people: one for Life (represented by the god Eros); and one for Death (represented by the god Thanatos). (Please see Thanatos in this list.)

10

Fortuna.

Fortuna was the goddess of Luck.

Hence the English words, **fortune**, and **fortunate**.

11

The Furies.

The Furies were female goddesses of Vengeance.

Hence the English words, **fury** and **furious** (meaning strong or even uncontrollable anger).

12

Gigantes (also known as Giants).

The Gigantes were pre-Olympian gods. One version of their story is that they were the offspring of Gaia (the goddess of the Earth) and the blood that fell when Uranus (the god of the Sky) was castrated by his Titan son Cronus.

Hence the English words, **gigantic** and **giant**.

13

Harmonia.

Harmonia was the goddess of Concord and Cooperation.

Hence the English word, **harmony**.

14

The Harpies.

Harpies were cruel winged-spirits -- they had the bodies and wings of birds, and the heads of women.

Hence the English word, **to harp** (to harshly and constantly complain).

15

Hercules.

Hercules was a son of the god Zeus and the mortal woman Alcmena. Hercules had to complete 12 very strenuous tasks,

Hence the English word, **Herculean**, as in **Herculean strength**, and **Herculean tasks**.

16

Hermaphroditus.

Hermaphroditus was the son of Hermes, the Herald (the Messenger) of the gods, and Aphrodite, the goddess of Beauty. They named their son with a combination of their names: Herm-aphroditus. A female spirit fell in love with Hermaphroditus, and prayed to become one with him. A god decided to answer her prayer, and this god merged the body of the female spirit with the body of Hermaphroditus.

Hence the English word, **hermaphrodite** (meaning a person who has both male and female organs).

17

Hypnos.

Hypnos was the god of Sleep.

Hence the English word, **hypnosis** (a sleep-like state of consciousness).

18

Jove (also known in Roman culture as Jupiter; and in Greek culture as Zeus). Jove was the Roman god of the Sky and Thunder, and was king of the gods. It was believed that people born under the influence of the planet Jupiter had cheerful and joyful dispositions.

Hence the English word, **jovial** .

19

Lethe.

Lethe was the god of Forgetfulness.

Hence the English word, **lethargy** .

20

Mania.

Mania was the goddess of Insanity.

Hence the English words, **mania** , **manic** , and **maniac** .

21

Mars.

Mars was the god of War.

Hence the English terms, **martial** , and **martial arts** .

22

Mentor.

Mentor was an employee of Odysseus. Odysseus entrusted his son's education to Mentor while Odysseus was away at the Trojan war.

Hence the English word, **mentor** (an inspiring leader or teacher who passes on his or her skills to others).

23

Midas.

Midas was a king of Phrygia (an area in modern-day Turkey). King Midas was granted the boon that everything he touched would turn to gold.

Hence the English term, **The Midas touch** .

24

Mnemosyne (pronounced, "nem - mos - syn - ni", rhyming with tree).

Mnemosyne was the goddess of Memory. She was the mother of the Muses (please see below).

Hence the English word, **mnemonic device** (a learning technique that helps one remember something).

26

Moros.

Moros was the god of Doom. He could enable people to see that they were about to pass away.

Hence the English word, **morose** (meaning gloomy, sad).

27

Muses.

The Muses were nine goddesses of the Arts.

Hence the English words, **music** , **amusing** , **amusements** , and **museum** .

28

Narcissus.

Narcissus was a very handsome young man. A female forest spirit loved him, but he ignored her. A goddess punished Narcissus by causing him to be fascinated -- to the point of paralysis -- when he saw his own reflection in a river. Not able to move, Narcissus eventually died there on the river bank. Out of his body grew a yellow flower which was named after him (and is also called, a daffodil).

Hence the English words, **a narcissus flower**, **narcissism**, **narcissist**, **narcissistic**.

29

Nemesis.

Nemesis was the goddess of Revenge.

Hence the English word, **nemesis**. ("He is my nemesis").

30

Oedipus.

Oedipus was a prince (and later, a king) who killed his father and married his mother -- without being aware of what he was doing. Sigmund Freud believed that especially at a certain stage of development, a boy wants to replace his father. He named this inclination after Oedipus.

Hence the English term, **Oedipus complex**.

Note:

Some early psychologists believed that at a certain stage of development, a girl wants to replace her mother; and they named this inclination after Elektra (please see above).

Hence the English term, **Electra complex**.

31

Pan.

Pan was a god of Forests. Worship of Pan was often very boisterous, with much music and dance.

Hence the English word, **panic**.

32

Panacea.

Panacea was the goddess of Healing.

Hence the English word, **panacea**. ("This medicine is a panacea. It will cure anything.")

33

Pandora.

Pandora was a woman whose curiosity led her to open a container that her husband had instructed her to keep closed. In this way, she released physical and emotional curses upon humanity. She closed the box just in time to keep "hope".

Hence the English term, **Pandora's box**.

34

Phobos.

Phobos was the god of Fear.

Hence the English word, **phobia**. ("I have a phobia of snakes".)

35

Proteus.

Proteus was a god of the Sea. He could change form at will.

Hence the English word, **protean**. ("A protean being can take any shape".)

36

Psyche.

Psyche was born as a human woman, and came to be the goddess of the soul.

Hence the English words, **psyche** (the mind, or soul) and **psychology** (the study of the mind).

Note 1:

In Roman culture (in Latin language) Psyche's name was Anima. Carl Jung used this word to refer to the female aspect of a male's personality.

Hence the English words, **animated** (meaning, full of life), and **animation** (meaning, movement).

Note 2:

This is the Story of Psyche and Eros (and how Psyche became a goddess):

Psyche was so beautiful that Aphrodite, the goddess of Beauty (known in Roman culture as Venus), became jealous, and commanded her son Eros, the god of Love (Cupid, in Roman culture) to make Psyche fall in love with the first person she would see. However, when Eros was preparing to shoot a love-potion-tipped arrow at Psyche, his arrow accidentally cut him, and he fell in love with Psyche.

Concerned about Psyche's future, Psyche's parents consulted the oracle of Apollo. They were told that Psyche's suitor was a monster and that Psyche should be abandoned on top of a mountain. The west wind, Zephyrus, saved Psyche and carried her to Eros' palace.

Eros visited Psyche only at night and forbade her to make any attempt to see him. Psyche was curious about Eros' appearance. She was fearful after her two jealous sisters convinced her that Eros was a serpentine monster.

Urged on by her wicked sisters, Psyche concealed an oil lamp in her bedchamber. When Eros was asleep, Psyche illuminated his handsome figure with the lamp. However, she accidentally let a drop of hot oil from the lamp land on him, thus waking him. Eros woke suddenly, scolded Psyche, and walked out of the palace. Psyche tried to cling to his leg, but was not able to do so. Eros flew off angrily.

Psyche tried to drown herself but Pan, the god of the Forest, told her she could win back Eros' love. Aphrodite set Psyche a series of increasingly difficult tasks. Although Psyche failed the final task, the gods made her immortal and she was joyfully reunited with Eros -- and they remain joyfully united to this day!

37

Pyrrhus.

Pyrrhus was a king of Epirus (in ancient Greece). Pyrrhus first invaded Italy in 280 BC. His military victories against the Romans took devastating tolls on his own forces.

Hence the English term, a **Pyrrhic victory**.

38

Sisyphus.

Sisyphus was a king of Ephyra (now known as Corinth), Italy. Sisyphus escaped death twice, through trickery. Hades punished Sisyphus for this by forcing him to roll an immense boulder up a hill, only for it to roll down every time it neared the top. Sisyphus was cursed to repeat this action for eternity.

Hence the English term, a **Sisyphean task**. ("A sisyphean task is laborious and is impossible to complete".)

39

Thanatos.

Thanatos was a god of Death. Freud believed that humans have twin urges (or instincts): an urge for life (which Freud represented by Eros, the god of Love and Reproduction); and an urge for death (which Freud represented by Thanatos). Freud believed that the death drive is in-part about wanting to stop being a living individual, which inevitably involves some alienation and isolation. This death drive may manifest as self-harm or suicide. People sometimes channel this death drive outward, in which case it may manifest as destructive aggression toward others.

Hence the English word, **thanatotic**. ("He was obsessed with death -- he was very thanatotic".)

40

Titans.

Titans were pre-Olympian gods. The Titans were very large. They were the twelve children -- six male, and six female -- of Uranus (the god of the Sky) and Gaia (the goddess of the Earth).

Hence the English words, **titan**, **titanic**.

41

Typhon.

Typhon was the god of Storms.

Hence the English word, **typhoon** (a huge tropical storm).

8) Looking at characters in Khasi traditional stories as metaphors for psychological tendencies.

Now we will look at 20 Khasi stories. These stories are in the book, *Around the Hearth: Khasi Legends*, by Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih.

We will seek to begin to find "psychological tendencies" in these stories -- so that the traditional characters in the stories could serve as metaphors for human thoughts and behaviours relating to these tendencies.

The idea to do this arose in my mind at the seminar this past Tuesday at Nartiang, when Professor Desmond was talking about psycho-analysis and folktales. He mentioned that Freud had used folklore from ancient Greece to label certain psychological tendencies. So that's what got this thought process going in my mind.

So today's session is dedicated especially to searching in Khasi stories for metaphors for tendencies in modern-day people. Those of you who are from different parts of the northeast, please bear with us. You know, we can do this with every community. We should do it with every community. But today we're doing it with the Khasi community.

My general reaction to the whole, the complete set of 20 stories, is that I see a world-view that is being presented. The world-view I see in these stories is:

Existence is in a perpetual state of becoming. Every day, all day -- many humans (and personified animals and other elements of nature) are striving to maintain, confirm, protect, support, celebrate, and/or improve their situations. This may involve seeking to resist bad actors and actions. It may also involve seeking to get revenge and being greedy. Each individual is embedded in a web of hopes and fears -- having motivations and doing actions. These drives by so many beings are what is making the world go around.

Each one needs to do each one's part, or disaster might come for all members of one's community. To have a "pure heart" is to seek to help to put things in balance and in order -- or to keep things this way. An implication is: "You are needed. Find your self and voice, and your unique talents, skills, and abilities -- and please use these things to contribute to the common good. You are a needed part of a big system. Your presence can do a lot of good in the world, can help others, can help the community." A lot depends on each individual. Thus, a message I hear is, "Don't give up, and don't let up. If you would not be present, your absence (or your 'absence of mind') might weaken the side of the good, and as a result much suffering could occur among the community of the good".

I see a positive example of this in Story number 8) "Ka Nam and the Tiger" (and the Toad), in which every member of the community is needed make a sufficient volume of sound.

I see a negative example of this in Story number 11) "The Human-eating Serpent, U Thlen", in which one community member does not cooperate, leading to suffering for all.

So now I'm going to summarise these 20 stories. You know, I'm an outsider and I'm not a specialist. I don't have really deep knowledge about these stories. Many of you have much deeper knowledge than I have about these stories. So please correct me if I've totally missed the point about a story, which I'm sure is very possible. Dr. Auswyn Winter Japang, as I'm talking, please just add any thoughts.

1) "Seven Clans".

The first story is about how people used to live in heaven. There was a ladder down to earth. And some people came down, and some of those people behaved in some kind of bad way, they were arrogant in some way. So God was so angry that he removed the ladder. So those people who had come down could not come up again. Do I have that right? So far so good. Okay. So the issue of humility as a good behaviour and arrogance as a bad behaviour is here from the start.

2) "Purple Crest".

In the this story, the Sun and the Moon were insulted. There was a big dance ceremony, and Sun and Moon came late, so they were the only ones dancing, and somebody said some insulting things, something inappropriate. You know, Sun and Moon were brother and sister, and somebody said something like, "Hey Moon, looks like you got a very cute dance partner!"

And Sun was offended. So Sun said, "Bye! No more sun. No more sun for you people. I'm going back to my palace with my brother, and that's it."

This was a big problem for the people. There was no sun. Everything was in the darkness. Nothing would grow. So the people sent the hornbill bird to apologize, but the hornbill bird was arrogant. He also said something inappropriate to Sun.

Finally Rooster volunteered to visit Sun. And Rooster handled it well. Rooster said to Sun, "I will sing every morning before you appear in the sky. And I and the other roosters, we will be honoured if we are included in the sacrifices, in the ceremonies. We want to be part of the rituals by which you and the people unite." So Sun finally to come back into the sky and helped the people. And that is why the sun is in the sky every day. Do you want to add anything or correct me?

Dr. Auswyn Winter Japang: No, that's just fine. But there's another version as well. As you have said, Sun and Moon are siblings. In another folktale, it was said that Moon actually fell in love with Sun. So he proposed an incestuous relationship, which is very taboo. Sun was so angry at her brother, Moon, that she cursed him to forever remain at a distance from her. That's why when the moon is in the sky, there's no sun there. And when the sun is in the sky, usually there's no moon there.

EM: And she also threw ashes on him?

AWJ: Yes. That is why the moon has lighter and darker areas.

EM: It may be built-in to traditional cultures that in some cases with these kinds of stories, the stories are understood to, on one level, be allegorical, symbolic, and metaphorical. It is understood that the sun both **is** and **is not** a female living being; that the moon both **is** and **is not** a male living being; and that they both **are** and **are not** dealing with family relationships.

Anyway Rooster apologized properly to Sun on behalf of the humans, and so Sun came back in the sky. So things were thrown off-balance by rude behaviour by a human, but then the humans sent a representative who was able to apologise properly and patch things up.

3) "Lost Manuscript".

Now the legend of the lost manuscript. There's a story that God called two men to a mountain where he gave them instructions regarding how people should live. In Judaism, you know, it's the Ten Commandments -- and fortunately, those Ten Commandments were carved in stone. But in this case, the instructions were written on some reeds -- a much softer material.

There was one man from the plains, and one Khasi man from the forest. When they had to cross a river, the man from the plains tied the rolled-up reeds in a tuft of the hair on his head. So when he swam, the rolled-up reeds didn't get wet. But the Khasi man didn't have hair like that, and he just put the rolled-up reeds into his mouth -- and here the rolled-up reeds got soaking wet and were lost.

When the Khasi man got back to his village, the people asked him, "Where are God's instructions?" The man replied, "I lost them. They're in the river. But don't worry. I remember everything."

So then he reconstructed it all from memory and he spoke it. This shows that Khasi culture was an oral-centric culture. I mean, there was writing, but it didn't function well. What really worked was the spoken word.

4) "Animal Dance Festival" (Lynx).

There was an animal dance festival. Lynx (which is a type of big cat) came with a special sword, a large silver sword. Thunder wanted that sword, and took it. Lynx was very unhappy about this. Do I have that right, or is there anything else?

AWJ: Yes, the narrative is absolutely correct. Lynx, who we call Kui in Khasi language, is known to try to always excrete in the same place. According to folklore, Kui is trying to use his excretion to build a tower to reach the sky, to take its sword back from Thunder.

5) "Luri Lura, the Animal Fair" (Dog).

EM: The animal fair. This is a very popular story. I've heard this from a number of people. Dog liked a certain fermented chutney. This chutney had a very strong smell. And it seems the other animals said, "It smells like poop". So the other animals got angry when Dog brought a big portion of this fermented chutney to the animal market. All the other animals said, "You're stinking up the place! Get out of here!"

So there was a big hullabaloo. And finally Dog was driven out. And Dog said, "I'm going to get revenge". So Dog went and applied for a post to be the watchman for some humans. And he said to the humans, "I will be your watchman. I will keep all those other bad animals away from you. I will warn you when those bad animals are coming". So that's how Dog got his job as human's best friend, and watchdog.

What is a theme here? Sometimes society does not go harmoniously. Sometimes there are misunderstandings, sometimes people's feelings get hurt, and sometimes people seek revenge.

6) "Peacock and Sun".

Mr. Peacock was married to Mrs. Sun. One day Peacock said to Sun, "I want to go and spend some time with some other females." Sun replied, "Get out and stay out!" Peacock went, and after some time he wanted to come home to his wife. But the door was locked.

7) "Death in a Hut".

This is such a terribly tragic story. There was a poor man and a wealthy man. They were friends. The poor man would often visit the wealthy man, and he would be invited to eat there.

So the poor man said to himself, "I have to invite my friend to my house". So he invited the wealthy man, and the wealthy man came. But the poor man and his wife discovered -- somehow they did not realize it in advance -- they had no food to offer the wealthy man, nothing.

So the poor man, you know what he did? He killed himself, stabbed himself. And the wealthy man, when he saw that his friend had killed himself for this reason, you know what the wealthy man did? He killed himself too. And their wives killed themselves also.

So then God commanded that at the very least, people should be able to give each other beetle nut and leaf when they visit each other. So that was the beginning of the custom of sharing beetle nut and leaf. I guess an idea here is that even if you can't afford food, at least you can afford beetle leaf, or you can pick it or find it and in this way avoid multiple suicides.

The sense of social obligation that would even drive people to kill themselves out of shame, that's a very strong thing in this story.

8) "Ka Nam and Tiger" (and Toad).

Early in the story of humanity, a great tree was growing and it was blocking all the sunlight. So the people tried to cut it down. But every night, Tiger came and licked where they were cutting the tree, and this helped the tree to recover.

So the people put some knives where the tree had been cut, because they were trying to stop Tiger from coming and licking it. Tiger came and licked the tree, and he cut his tongue and ran away. He was furious. So he wanted to get revenge and for some reason, he wanted to get the revenge against a particular young lady. So that young lady was in trouble. She decided that the only way she could escape from Tiger would be to disguise herself as a toad. She got her toad skin and put the toad skin over her. And that managed to help her escape from Tiger.

But the Toad goddess was not happy. Toad goddess wanted to destroy all humanity, and she decided to do this by devouring Sun, to stop Sun from going through the sky. The humans in a village saw what was about to happen, and they made a lot of sound banging pots together, and that allowed Sun to escape. Did I get it right?

AWJ: Yes. Well, there are three more aspects to this.

Firstly, the young woman, Ka Nam, was supposed to be an offering to Tiger. But because the moon gave shelter to Ka Nam, she eventually also became the target of both Tiger and Toad.

Secondly, the Toad is known as Anura, which means the equivalent of an eclipse. So what happened was that, firstly, when we speak of the tiger narrative in the Khasi context, the tiger narrative is very much relatable to what exists in Ri Bhoi of the people who are able to transform into tigers, or to spirit-walk as tigers. The Toad involves a different kind of phenomenon. Whenever there's a solar eclipse, the people would use sounds, the banging of pots or any other loud sound, to create a ruckus to ensure that the sun escapes the grasp of the eclipse.

And thirdly, the first three people who landed on the moon were Neil Armstrong, Edwin Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins. The story of Ka Nam is considered to be a Khasi prophesy of this first moon-landing by humans.

EM: Everyone in the community had to bang these pots in order to make noise to cause a distraction to help Sun escape. So the take-away I get from this story is that everyone is important. Everyone should contribute, otherwise, the whole community might be destroyed.

9) "Sun and Moon".

We have already discussed this one. This is the story of how and why Sun no longer wanted to live with her brother, Moon.

10) "Ren and the River Nymph".

A River goddess fell in love with a man named Ren. She agreed to marry Ren and live with him. But she told him, "I'll live in your humble hut with you and your mother, but I don't want to see the broom, because brooms are dirty." By mistake, however, Ren's mother left the broom out and the River goddess had to leave immediately. Ren went to live with the River goddess in the river.

11) "The Human-eating Serpent, U Thlen".

And now, the terrible U Thlen. It seems a leading nightmare monster in the culture is a giant snake who eats people. Somebody is able to chop up the snake, and then calls upon all members of the community to eat every bit of this snake. The snake's flesh has to be digested. That is the only way we can destroy this monster serpent snake forever.

So everyone comes out and I guess they cook it, and everyone eats a piece except for one person who says to herself, "I'm going to take some back to the village to give to my son". It just took one person who did not cooperate, who did not go along with the program. So she took that little piece of snake, she put in a box, but she forgot to give it to her son. Perhaps the snake had the power to make her forget to do so.

And the little piece of meat reconstructed and became the big snake. And suddenly said, "Lady, you have to feed me the bodies of a certain number of people every day, or I'll eat you and your family." That's blackmail, right? "You have to give me human flesh, or I'm eating your family's human flesh." And this led to the development of a group of men who, it is said, this lady would pay to kill people and bring their bodies to the snake. And it is said that those men are still in the mountains today.

So there was just one person who didn't do what should have been done -- and look at the horrors this led to!

12) "The Legend of Ka Pahsyntiew".

In this story, a god places one of his daughters in a cave near a human village because he wants to start a half-divine clan among local humans who will be the leaders of that culture. So his daughter marries a local man, and they have children. But after some time she has to go back to the realm of the divine.

13) "The Fight Between Kyllang and Symper".

Then there's a fight between two brothers. Each brother was a hill. One brother ripped off a lot of the earth and vegetation on himself, and threw it at the other. And the other one said, "Great! I'm keeping all your earth and vegetation." So the brother who threw everything, he ended up as just a rocky crag. Whereas the other brother has a beautiful ecosystem with lots of trees and animals and everything. So a take-away might be, "Don't throw away valuable aspects of yourself."

14) "The Death of Lapalang, the Stag".

A mother and son were a kind of big deer. The son wanted to travel and see different lands and explore the upper mountains. Mother said, "No. They'll kill you. The people there have bows and arrows." But the son said, "I'm invincible!"

He went, and indeed he was killed by those people. His mother came, and she wept in such a way that she is known among those people as the one who taught them how to mourn.

You know, there are traditional practices of mourning, of lamenting, when someone has passed away. In Tamil Nadu, it's called Oppari. Women especially do it. It's pure expression of grief. But it is also formulaic in that there are certain words, melodies, and physical actions that are done. For example, the lamenters might rip their own clothing.

In some cultures, there are some women who do the lamenting professionally. They come and they lead the weeping, the grieving. Sometimes their own husbands have passed away. So they are mourning their husbands. And they are also freed of family responsibility, so they can travel and work.

So that mother deer is known as the one who taught the people in the mountain community how to really mourn because they witnessed her mourning for her son.

15) "The Child-devouring Stone".

This story involves a lady who was doing some agricultural work. She had two young children. One day she said to her children, "You stay here on this big boulder." She told the older one to take care of the younger one. She went off to work.

The younger child started sinking into the stone. The older one tried to hold him out, and the older one called, "Mother! Mother! Help!"

The mother heard this, and said to herself, "I'll come later."

Before long, the younger one had been swallowed by the stone, and the older one was also swallowed by the stone.

So what I got out of this story is: when a child emphatically asks for help, one should seek to help the child immediately. Unless it's like "the boy who cried wolf," who was faking it. But in this case, the danger and the fear was not being faked.

But I was confused by this story because I thought, "Why did this terrible tragedy happen?" The mother loved her children, she just decided to wait a bit and do her work before going to the children. It is very likely that she could not have saved either one of them anyway. You know, usually in a story, you want wicked people to suffer. You don't want innocent people to suffer.

16) "The Race between Ka ĩew and Ka Ngot".

Two sisters became rivers. Together, side by side, they came down from the mountains.

17) "U Suid Tynjang".

A giant demon in the forest wanted to be scratched. It seems that this demon could only be satisfied if a young woman would scratch him. So the demon would grab young women who were walking alone in the forest. If the young woman was lucky, the demon would fall asleep after being scratched for some time. But if he did not fall asleep, he would devour the young woman.

It seems that a story like this functions to communicate the message to young women: "Stay home and do what your parents tell you to do."

This may be similar to the story about the young deer who wanted to explore new places. One lesson from that story could be, "Don't travel, don't explore, don't be curious because you might be destroyed."

18) "The Legend of Ka Lidakha".

In this story a River goddess is in the form of a fish. She takes human form and marries a man. She lives on land with him for some years, and they have children. But at some point she says, "I have to go back to the river", and she does so, and regains her form as a fish.

A plot element in stories number 10, 12, and 18 is that a quasi-divine female can be married to a human man and can live in a human family and community for some time, but then she has to go back to a divine realm, a realm of nature.

19) "Ka Likai".

For me this was the most painful story.

A woman was happily married. They had a daughter. The husband passed away. There was another man who wanted to marry the widow. He had wanted to marry her in the first place, but she had rejected him -- and for good reason. But now, her friends all said to her, "You need a man. And here's this fellow who is willing to step in. Take him into your life."

The widow resisted. But she had to go to work every day, and it was difficult to care for her young daughter. So finally, she let this man move in with her.

It turned out that this man was an alcoholic, and that he was violent. He did not have a job.

At some point he was irritated by the woman's daughter. So one day when the woman came home, there was a big pot of cooked meat on the table. He had killed the daughter, chopped her up, and made a stew out of her. The mother didn't know that it was her daughter that she was eating. She thought the stew tasted good.

But then when she found out, she killed herself. And the village was abandoned, because the village leaders said, "This is so bad, we recommend that everybody leave this place. The karmic stain -- the emotional and psychological stain -- on this place and community is just too much. There's nothing to do but leave."

I found this story so disturbing because that poor woman and her poor daughter had not done anything wrong. They did not deserve their fates. The mother just made a mistake in judgment, to allow that man into her life.

20) "U Manik Raitong".

This last story is one of the most complex ones.

There was a man named Raitong. His family had some money, he had some property, but all of his family members had died. He liked a certain young lady, Ka Lieng Makaw, in the village. She was the daughter of a local political leader. And he happened to meet her near the river one day, and he told her that he liked her. And she said, "Come to my house, meet my parents".

So this is what Raitong did. But Ka Lieng Makaw's parents, especially her mother, were against the marriage. Her mother said to Raitong, "You are from a family in which all of the people have passed away. You're not an auspicious match for our daughter, even though you have some money and property." So he was sent away.

Raitong lived in the forest and on the family property. He had a strange habit. He played music at night, while he was dressed up very handsomely in beautiful clothes. He played very beautiful music at night. But during the day, he went around looking like a beggar.

The years passed. Ka Lieng Makaw was married to a man in a political family. She didn't have much of a relationship with her husband. Her husband went off for three years on a business trip.

Ka Lieng Makaw would hear the music coming from the forest at night. And once she went and she found that the music was being played by Raitong, the man who had professed love for her. Raitong asked Ka Lieng Makaw, "Why didn't you speak on my behalf when I came to your house? Why didn't you tell your parents that you loved me?" Ka Lieng Makaw said that she just didn't feel capable of doing so at the time.

Eventually Ka Lieng Makaw became pregnant. And her husband had been away for three years. So you see something doesn't match there. So when the husband finally came back, his mother said, "I've got bad news. Your wife is pregnant." It was discovered that the man in the forest, Raitong, was responsible. And of course, he had to be put to death. Raitong asked to be given his choice of method of being killed. And he requested, and they granted, that he would die by fire.

So Raitong built a great beautiful pier out of wood and different things. And he came to it dressed beautifully, playing beautiful music. The music was so beautiful, everyone was crying. Many people said, "Let him go, let him go!" But the husband's ego was injured -- he felt insulted that his wife was pregnant by another man. So Raitong played his beautiful music and walked into the fire. And Ka Lieng Makaw walked into the fire also.

Does anything in any of these stories remind you of anything in your life? That is the question of the day.

By the way: As I have been talking with people this week, one issue that has come up is, "What is the relationship of these Khasi stories to Christianity?" As you know -- those of you who are both Christian and Khasi or a member of some other tribal people in the northeast -- there's not necessarily a conflict between Christianity and the local culture. I guess if you take all the stories literally -- that this historically happened, and that these particular divine figures actually exist -- maybe then there would be conflicts. But, as has been mentioned, one can appreciate a culture on allegorical, symbolic, and poetic levels, and on the level of the examples of behaviour that the stories present. And those examples of behaviour are not necessarily in conflict with Christianity. In fact, the man in the last story, the musician who walks into the fire, that's kind of Christ-like behaviour, to my understanding.

9) Commentary by Dr Auswyn Winter Japang.

Now, Professor, please say something about what these stories might mean to people, and ways the stories might relate to people's lives.

AWJ: Yes. Hello, good afternoon! Some of you might know me because I've been your teacher for a semester or so. For those of you who do not know me, I am a folklorist. For the

past few years I've been collecting stories. And these stories are very important, irrespective of whether you're Khasi or non-Khasi or you belong to any other community.

Point number one is that I was born in a Christian family. But these stories have always had an impact on my life. From the day I was born, I was given a cultural name, or at least a cultural surname, which is linked to my clan, Japang. The flower that was given to Ka Pahsyntiew (the ancestral mother of the chiefs of Shillong – now split into the chiefdom of Myllem and Nongkrem).

Number two: Because I come from the context of a Khasi from the War area (south), we practice what is narrated in the story of Ren and the River Nymph – the hiding of the broom. When you enter many Khasi households, you will never find a broom in the front of the house. In fact, my mother will scold me if I have left the broom in a person's view after I've completed my dusting of the room or the house. We always hide the broom, right? Whether you're Christian or non-Christian, you hide the broom. It has been part of our cultural set-up. (The broom is a symbol of filth, and display of it in a household is unwelcome in War-Khasi and extensively in the entire Khasi society.)

Number three: Some of these stories continue to shape the way we think. Let's take for example, the story of Ka Lieng Makaw and Manik Raitong. Manik Raitong was a very rich man, and who wouldn't want to marry someone who could provide a bit of stability? But in their story, Ka Lieng Makaw could not marry Manik Raitong. She was asked to not engage in a relationship with him because he, according to the cultural beliefs of the Khasi, came from what we call 'Ka lap Jait' (a dying clan), a clan which would not have an ongoing existence in the near future. (We trace ancestry through women, the matrilineal system. All of his family members were dead.) Manik, being the last member of his clan, might also be responsible for the doom of yet another clan. Despite the fact that he had wealth and money, and, you know, he could provide a very comfortable life for any woman, it was advised that Ka Lieng Makaw should not marry Raitong.

And the narrative tells us that because Ka Lieng Makaw and Raitong disobeyed, the cultural beliefs of the time meant that they eventually had to perish. But what happened out of that was that Manik Raitong, before stepping into the fire, planted his flute on the ground from which bamboo sprout up. And bamboo is a very important part of the tribal community in the hills. Bamboo stalks are used for many, many purposes, including for making musical instruments. And we celebrate these aspects. You see how culture enters stories and how these things affect the way we think. (The death of Both Manik Raitong and ka Lieng Makaw enforces the cultural belief regarding 'Ka lap Jait', while on the other hand, their union advocated strongly towards the Khasi belief in love and love marriages).

Now I'd like to talk about the Thlen narrative. The Thlen narrative is part of Khasi community till today, and I follow this narrative -- and people's attitudes towards it -- very, very closely. There has been a move by the government to make sure that there are legislative measures against such a cultural phenomenon. Because it is a pervasive issue that exists till today. And this takes its root from folklore. To some it might just be make-believe, but to some it has serious ramifications.

The Thlen narrative traces the existence of a mythical serpentine creature in Khasi folklore that was eventually brought to the verge of death by the Khasi. This serpentine entity was supernatural in nature and had the power to shape-shift. It often took the shape of a constrictor (snake) and would also attack and eat the Khasi people who ply the market route between Rangjyrteh and Sohra.

However, due to the intervention of Suidnoh who was a supernatural character, U Thlen was nearly defeated. As revenge Thlen offered to its first human keeper material wealth and riches, and in return demanded human sacrifice. In today's context, the Thlen narrative is not only looked at as superstitious, since the existence of such an entity cannot be scientifically proven, but also as a form of jealousy within the Khasi community. Affluent

families run the risk of being dubbed menshohnoh or nongshohnon (Thlen keepers/ rearers) which at times even lead to mob lynching and the destruction of property of the alleged Thlen keepers.

Then there is the story of the seven clans. The Khasi said, "We are a collective of seven clans". We are in fact a collective of 16 clans: nine above (celestial/transcendental realm), and seven here on earth. The members of the nine celestial clans are considered to be quasi-divine. Whenever they perform rituals -- just recently we had the Shad Nongkrem -- whenever they have the Pomblang, after they have sacrificed the goat, they'll take it aside, dissect it, and it is delivered to count if everything is proper or not. Usually they have to get nine shapes on the goat organs to ascertain that the Royal family is still represented by the nine clans. It's part of divination. If it's nine, the lineage is still considered proper. And so this culture continues to make sense to the chieftdom and its people. It means the blood line is still correct. The legitimacy of the chiefs and the governance of the chieftdom are still proper.

Then we have the rooster. You see for the indigenous people, fate, what we call as the Seng Khasi, we have a rooster as part of the flag and identity. But the rooster there is green, it's not red. Because that rooster is the Godly rooster. And it's a very important phenomenon in the beliefs of the people, even if they have become Christians, because without that rooster, there is no coming or return of the sun, and light. (This alludes to the story of Krem Lamet Krem Latang.)

Then there's also stories like The death in the hut, about the kwai (beetle nut and leaf) culture that exists in the Khasi community. You see, kwai is eaten by many people throughout India in various forms, but in the context of the Khasi community, kwai, even to those who have become Christians, especially during marriages, continues to be significant. The exchange of kwai is an important phenomena and it represents the gesture of welcome and kinship. You cannot omit it before entering the church (especially during marriages). People think that just because you've become Christian, you abandon it. It's not necessarily so. This is a part of how we think and many still abide by this tradition even if they do not eat kwai. The exchange of kwai is extremely important.

Then we have stories like the child-devouring stone or the Maw-ngut Briew, and that of Ka Likai and the Stepfather. These stories also are very much inbuilt into the psyche of the Khasi, and are especially important to those of you who take up psychology. You see Khasi society for a very long time have disapproved and frowned upon widow re-marriage. They never really encourage it. And Ka Likai is a perfect example to show how such re-marriage could lead to unjust treatment of children, where the step-father would even chop the child to be consumed by the mother (the story of Ka Likai is of course an extreme narrative to reveal the worst in such a union). This kind of story creates fear. In fact, till today, we have songs of warning not just about the step-father but also about the step-mother. There's an insistence that children are often treated badly in such relationships. Sometimes they are neglected. The thinking behind this is that this may happen because they are not the biological child from the subsequent union. The unjust treatment of step-children does happen on varying levels, and such stories try to explain this to us. They touch us emotionally and psychologically.

Then of course, there are stories of supernatural entities. For examples: Suid Tynjang; and the River Nymph (Ka Puri). The function of these stories is not really to convince us that they occurred historically, but rather to explain certain customs. Like I told you before regarding the story of the broom and the River Nymph: we hide the broom because the broom represents something that's dirty and unwelcoming. How can you receive a guest with something that is dirty? You can't, right?

Similarly with Suid Tynjang. The main story associated with Suid Tynjang is that you do not wear your clothes upside down, otherwise Suid Tynjang will abduct you. And of course, it also deals with obedience towards parents. When your parents say, "Do not wear that, do not put that on", the story teaches that these instructions should be obeyed. This is about the

role of parents and the importance of parents in society. A child's disobedience could be met with untoward circumstances. This kind of story is a mechanism, a social mechanism, to guide the young.

And lastly, giants! Many giants exist in Khasi folklore. These giants tend to be reminders of how human conflicts manifest in stories like that of the conflict between two gigantic brothers – Kyllang and Symper. Brothers fight sometimes, right? In this story, the two fighting brothers are represented by two mountains in the Khasi hills whose physical features are accounted for in folklore.

There is also a story about one giant named, Ramhah. He died near a river bank. Bones are made of calcium. So his bones became the limestone that we are now digging there (in the South of the Khasi hills). There are huge limestone quarries there.

These are important aspects that influence the way we think. They influence our social and cultural environment. They even influence the social structure sometimes. Even with the seven clans and the nine clans, the stories continue to affect us. That is why until today we say that certain chiefs and queens of chiefdoms are quasi-divine, that they have the capacity to even perform divinations and perhaps heal, it's because of a belief that many still strongly consider, even some of us who are Christian. If you don't believe in their healing power, that's up to you. But if you do, then you still opt for their healing.

So these stories in our culture tend to do these things. They may portray conflicts. But the most important thing to keep in mind is that they influence the way people think. It is important to interpret, to understand the psychological impact that these stories have on us, and to think about the culture that is expressed in these stories, and that is hidden behind these stories.

EM: Thank you so much, Dr. Auswyn!

10) Active Imagination (involving imagining, visualising, and role-playing).

Now, let's do an activity. This is called Active Imagination. It comes to us from Carl Jung, who began developing it 120 years ago.

Imagine you're walking in a forest and you're on a path. You can open your eyes, close your eyes as you like, you can draw pictures if you like. And there's the different vegetation on both sides of the path. Some leaves are big, some are small, some are rough, some are shiny, and they smell, they have different nice smells of the green vegetation.

And you're walking along. It's a cool day like today, and there's a canopy of leaves which block the sun. So we're walking, walking, walking, and we come to a clearing. And it turns out that it's not just a clearing, it's the beach! We've come to the ocean. You look forward and you can see how the vast distance of the ocean. Also on either side.

Is the ocean a real rich blue that day, this day? Or is it kind of greenish, greenish blue? Make a note to yourself about this, just for the sake of having a specific vision.

And it's a calm day. So you walk to the water's edge, and there's a rowboat there with oars. You could get in the rowboat and row out into the water a little bit. You look down on the side of the boat, and you can just look down, down, down to the depths of the ocean.

In this activity, the ocean is representing your imagination, your personal and collective unconscious. So now you ask the ocean, you ask your unconscious, "Please send something up to me that I can learn from."

The classic version of this activity calls for an object to appear, but if a character appears, that's okay too. Just see what comes up. If it's not interesting, let it go and wait for something else to come up.

If an object comes, you might pretend that it has consciousness. You might pretend that it has eyes and a mouth and can understand your language, whatever the language is. This is called personification. And you could thank the object for coming, and try to have a little conversation with the object. Such as, "How are you? Might you like to tell or ask me anything?" Or maybe you might like to tell or ask the object something. Anyway, try to have a little back-and-forth conversation with the personified object, just to share your thoughts or ask any questions.

Two ways this Active Imagination activity is "active" are: Number one, one is actively summoning or requesting something to **come up from one's unconscious**. And number two, one is actively engaging in a fantasy **conversation** with the object.

If you ever practice this with a client, before you do it, you might request to the client, "Please review your Life Story, the themes in your Life Story, and stories (Associative stories) that are similar to .your Life Story. And now let's begin." If you do this, it is more likely that what comes up in the client might directly relate to the above-mentioned material. And that the client might be able to use the personified object in the healing/transforming story the client would be composing, which is culminating step of the Storytelling Therapy process.

So, did an object come to anyone?

Participant 1: I saw a bottle with a message in it.

EM: Could you read the message?

Participant 1: The paper was blank.

EM: Very good! Thank you! When you do this activity by yourself or with a client, it is good to journal about whatever comes up. Write all of your associations with, in this case, the bottle, and the message in the bottle. What does it remind you of? What is it connected to in your memory and imagination? Obviously it's a message from somebody far away, and by luck it came to you. Or maybe there's no such thing as luck. Maybe it was meant to be that this message came to you.

Okay. So that was Active Imagination. Many people do this every day as part of their meditation process. Many professional writers, people who write movies and all, they do this at the beginning of their working writing day to just to open the door, to open the window, to their unconscious, and invite the breeze to come in (to use some metaphors).

As Magdalene said the other day, the arts therapies are all about letting things come up from the unconscious -- images, which may be linked to ideas and feelings -- that we're not even aware of, and that are not created and controlled by the conscious mind. This approach proposes that we live in partnership with our unconscious, not suppressing or controlling it, but in partnership with it.

11) Activity: Question-based Story-making.

Now, Question-based Story-making. Again, you can keep your eyes open or closed, and please draw if you like.

Imagine a scene outdoors, daytime. And imagine the weather. Today it's cool here for us, but it's not always cool every place, right? It might be hot and sunny. So imagine the weather. Is it hot? Is it windy? Is a storm coming? Is it humid? Here you don't have humid air so much. In Chennai the air is often very humid.

So imagine the weather, the quality of the air. And by the way, please decide: is this in the countryside? Is it in Shillong? Is it a city scene? Is it in a park in a city? Is it on the beach? It is totally up to you where this episode in your imaginary story is occurring.

So I am hoping you now have in mind an outdoors location in the daytime, and the weather there.

Now please let your imagination wander, and see if any character -- human, animal, divine, etc -- might appear in this scene. Or more than one character could appear. Maybe it's a group of characters. What character? It cannot be you exactly, but it could be somebody like you. The character has to be different from you in at least one way. The character could be male, female, or other. The character could be an old person or a young person. There could be a couple. Just imagine who appears.

Now, please look a little more closely at this character. Say it's one character. Look at the body language of the character, the posture of the character. And if the character is moving, what's the quality of the character's movements? In a rush? Herky-jerky? Calm? Smooth.

And as you zoom in, note the character's hair. And if the character is wearing clothes, note what kind of clothes the character is wearing. Is the character holding anything in her hands? (To use the female pronoun.) Look at the character's face. Especially look at the character's mouth, because that might tell you how the character feels. We express our feelings with our eyes and our mouth especially. That is why wearing masks during the pandemic was so difficult for many of us. We couldn't read other people's feelings very well. So look at the character's mouth and try to get a sense both from the mouth and from the general presence of the character, how the character feels.

Does the character want something? Does the character want to go someplace? Has the character just come from someplace?

If you can sense how the character feels, you have a story. Because the next question could be, "Why does she feel that way?" If she feels frustrated or sad in any way, then you could ask yourself (or the imaginary character) -- "Why?"

Additional questions could include: If she indeed does want something -- What does she need to do to get what she wants? Does she need support from friends, teachers, and/or family members?

What obstacles might be blocking her from getting what she wants? Whether it is something small and immediate, such wanting to purchase some milk in a shop across the road; or something large, involving a long-term process such as wanting to be Prime Minister. Whatever she wants, I am hoping you can see it on her face. And then the rest of the story is, well, what happens? Given her resources and the obstacles -- How does the situation develop? Is there a compromise? Does she get some of what she wants? How does the story end?

So this is called Question-based Story-making. You just ask questions -- to yourself, and in a pretend-way, to the imaginary story characters (in which case, you might, "play" the character, and answer as the character).

Might anyone like to share any aspect of your story?

Participant 2: When I was closing my eyes, the first thing I saw was the blue sky. It was sunny. I was in my family's backyard, and the person I saw was my daughter. She was wearing her red jacket and red cap. And as you said, I looked more closely. What I saw was that she was smiling. She had a hairband in her hand, and she was running around in the playground area. Then she was looking at me, smiling, and saying, "Mommy, mommy!", and wanting to hug me. That was the end. Yes, that's what I saw.

EM: Wonderful! I did suggest that the character might not be you exactly, although it could be someone very much like you. The reason for this is to make the story and its characters a little removed and distant from you, so the story would be a metaphor for an aspect of your life, and working with this material would be a projective technique. Anyway, what you have done is also fine.

Anybody else?

12) Brief review of the Storytelling Therapy method.

Given your Life story and some of the outstanding events in your Life story, do you have a sense of, **what work needs to be done on you**? Whether for healing; or just for growing, like a seed? (To use a metaphor.) A seed does not need healing. A seed just needs proper conditions by which to grow, such as: Shade, but not too much shade. Water, but not too much water. And a nutritious earth environment.

What do you want to be doing five years from now? Is there anything that seems to be blocking you? If not, great! What are the conditions that you need? Do you have those conditions? If not, how can you get the conditions?

Regarding healing: You know, the word, "healing", originally referred just to a physical injury, which can be also called, a trauma. If our flesh is cut, it needs to heal. The blood coagulates and the flesh knits itself back together. And then we have a scar, which is often very strong, but not as flexible as the original flesh.

"Healing" has also become a metaphor for recovery from psychological traumas.

So, "Do you have a sense of what work needs to be done on you -- what work you need to do on yourself -- in order to get to the next stage in your life (that you want to get to)?"

Or maybe you feel you're well on your way and there's no need for any extra help, that's great too. But people who come for therapy or life coaching, they might feel they need some help in figuring out how to get to the next step. And this Storytelling Therapy work is designed to help them do that. As mentioned, the process culminates with one (with assistance from a facilitator as needed) creating and telling an imaginary metaphorical story that, in a nutshell, portrays where one is, and where one would like to go.

In the Active Imagination activity, one asks for material to **come up** from the unconscious mind to the conscious mind.

Every word of a story that one tells or writes **goes down** into the individual and collective unconscious of whoever hears or reads the story (including the teller or writer of the story). There the words of the story mingle with one's unconscious, and if things "click", one's path forward, as represented metaphorically in the story, becomes more clear, inviting, and manageable for the story teller and writer in real life.

13) Activity: Reflecting on the Workshop.

At the end of a workshop, I think it's a good practice to ask people for feedback. Many of you might be going home now, to your mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, and so on. They might say, "What did you do at college today?" And you might say, "Oh, I attended a workshop relating to storytelling". And they might say, "What? We can do storytelling right here". And you might say, "No, no, it was different". And they might say, "Tell me one thing that was interesting today, one thing that might be useful to you as you go ahead in life". What might you tell them? What is one interesting idea that was discussed today?

Participant 3: Sir, one part that I really liked was what we did just now, when we tried to imagine and all. I think this can be used under hypnosis with people who have trouble remembering their traumas. We can use that in the process.

EM: Thank you! Anyone else?

Participant 4: Hello, sir. Thank you for your wonderful storytelling! I like the way you explained how to use stories in therapy. For me the biggest takeaway is what occurred just a few minutes ago when you conducted the activities called, Active Imagination, and Question-based Story-making. We closed our eyes, and you asked questions, and we saw in our imaginations. It can be something which is there in your unconscious mind. So it really made me think like, okay, maybe I need more time for myself to reflect, and to see what comes up, and how can I help myself to grow and become a better person. So, yes, Thank you.

EM: Wonderful! Thank you!

Participant 5: Hi, sir. One takeaway I get from this workshop would be making therapy indigenous by working with local folktales and other folklore. And how those stories can be related to the experiences we have. Because culturally we're all different. And people in my community may not be able to relate to the stories from Greek mythology and folklore. But if they're able to relate their life experiences to the folktales we have in our culture, then maybe therapy could be improved, and as counsellors we might be able to help our clients better. So thank you for that.

EM: Great! Thank you!

Participant 6: Firstly, I would like to thank you, Dr. Miller, for such a wonderful session! For me, I have three perspectives, if you might allow me to share what I've learned.

In the morning session, when we talked about using stories for teaching, many times I was writing in my pad when you were asking us to think about situations, and about what types of stories we might use for lessons. I was thinking about real-life stories, because using real-life stories can be very effective, they can really instil and intensify learning in individuals.

The second thing is, when we look at culture, and in psychology in particular, many times we do use a lot of western knowledge and terminology. But looking at the local folklore we were discussing, taking those narratives and bringing our own cultural perspectives into the understanding of the psychology of individuals coming from this part of the land -- that makes much more sense. One of the animal-related metaphors you mentioned, "Stop horsing around", which you said is popular in the USA -- that was not familiar to me.

But looking at sayings and proverbs and stories from our culture -- that would be much more effective for us because we could relate to them instantly.

And thirdly, when you were inviting us to look at ourselves and our experiences, what I learned from that was -- well, I saw my daughter and all of that. And I realized that sometimes because of the tensions and stress of life, sometimes we forget to smile and just have fun. These are the things that I feel are missing in my life, that I need to do more. So from reflecting on myself and understanding, those are the things that come to mind. Because sometimes we get so caught up with the work of life, and we forget to just release and just run around. As I was imagining my daughter, she was running around and having fun. So I think I also need to do that -- I also need to let loose and have fun and smile a little bit more.

All three of these things I feel were great teachings. Thank you, sir.

EM: Thank you! I'm sure that in Khasi language there are many sayings and proverbs in which people are compared to aspects of nature, both plants and animals. But often such sayings, such metaphors, are so much a part of the language, people don't even notice them. So I suggest that you might be on the lookout for such metaphors in Khasi language, and develop a collection of them. And keep them ready for discussion with clients who might mention related ideas and feelings. When people realise there are sayings in their language that refer to experiences that they are going through, they realise they are not alone, and that their language and culture have resources to support and assist them. Anyone else?

Participant 7: Thank you so much for your session! I also have three take-aways. But first, I am recalling a moment from the Folklore Seminar we had in Nartiang the other day, when Dr. Gideon asked, "What is your story?" He actually ended the Seminar on that note. There are 8 billion people in the world, and each individual has a story, a Life Story. So there are 8 billion such stories. And as Dr Gideon said, each life is influenced by the folklore one grows up in the midst of. So it is quite apt that we should end Folklore Week with this session relating to storytelling.

My first take-away from this session is: We're aware of our folklore, our stories. But it is my opinion and belief that we have not really considered deeply these stories or their presence in our minds. Why am I saying this? I am saying it because when I read other books by other authors, I might say, "Here is this book and it has changed my life". I am saying there is a huge possibility that if we might steadfastly look at our own stories and the ways they have influenced our minds -- this could be life-changing for our people. This is one take-away for me.

Number two: This is a concern. We've done the active imagination exercise. We've done the question-based story-making. I like these activities. But then suppose I do it with a class -- I'm connecting this with the "Storytelling for teaching and learning" session we had this morning. So suppose I say, "Okay, let's do this in class". And then from there, maybe as a teacher I come across real issues of students when they share. I do not have a psychology or counselling background that would enable me to guide them through that kind of a process. So how do I aid anybody at that moment in terms of healing? Because now we are talking about therapy.

My third idea is: When we are reading folktales -- yes this can be a therapy in that identifying with the stories can help us. I would like to connect this to the performing arts. I teach English. Say I take one of these stories from our books and give it to a student who is studying music. How does the student connect the story to music? How could I coach the student to do so? I am thinking that one way the creativity may come might be through the composer's understanding of the characters. You talked about studying the characters -- the physical and emotional aspects of the characters. I am wondering if a composer could create music to express emotions of a character, or emotions about a character. During the creative process it might also be important to keep in mind where these stories have come

from, of the time when the stories were composed. Most importantly, the composer would need to relate to the stories. Only then could the composer create music that would express the essence of the character and the story.

So these are the three things that I have in mind.

EM: Thank you for these very thoughtful comments! To respond to your question about what to do if you come across "real" issues of students in the stories they have created. If one feels the student is overwhelmed or confused by what the student has brought up from the student's unconscious imagination, I recommend the following procedure: First of all, the student should be congratulated for the student's abilities to be introspective and honest; and the student should be praised for working so hard to explore the student's ideas, feelings, and identity. Then the student should be referred to counselling staff with whom the school works. The situation you have described is one reason that every school needs to have convenient access to counselling staff.

And to respond to your question about inviting music students to compose music in relation to folklore stories: All of your ideas about creating music in relation to the stories are wonderful! I would suggest, offer them all to the music student, and also ask the student to tell you the student's ideas and experiences regarding the student's creative process -- before, during, and after that process. You might invite the student to write an essay about this process -- because education is not only about doing things, it is also about thinking about what one has done.

Now I would like to say something about the northeast. In Tamil Nadu, very few of the tribal people, including tribal people I did my doctoral fieldwork with, have attended college. But the level of modern education here in the Shillong area among tribal people is much, much higher.

And as I was saying the other day in Nartiang, in the academic field of folklore there's a general feeling that we want members of communities to take the lead role in presenting, documenting, and interpreting their own cultures. Our leading ethnographic filmmakers are saying, for example, that they want to see what documentary movies a Navajo person might make about Navaho culture. In general, regarding the culture we're studying, we want to learn from what the people are thinking about their culture, and how they are interpreting their culture.

So in the northeast -- for example, at Martin Luther Christian University -- most of the administration, faculty, and students are tribal people. You have a wonderful opportunity to inform the rest of India, and the world, about your culture. And, you know, tribal cultures tend to be especially related to nature. These relationships with nature, and the traditional knowledge, have been developing for more than 50,000 years. So it is a service that you can do for humanity to present your cultures to the non-tribal members of the public in a way that they can learn and benefit from your knowledge. It's really a unique situation that the tribal people here are administrators and faculty of universities. As far as I know, it's not like this anywhere else in India, or anywhere else in the world. So there is a great opportunity here to inform, contribute to, and affect, what we call "mainstream culture".

14) Vote of Thanks.

Dr. Porsara: Thank you so much sir! On behalf of the Department of Psychology, I would like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Eric Miller. I believe all the students, the teachers, counsellors have learned a lot from the workshop today. Yes, you know, we know all these folklores from our grandparents. For me, I have a grandmother, but today I could learn from a different perspective. So we've learned a lot. I would also like to extend our gratitude to the

Department of Art and Culture, Government of Meghalaya, for partially funding this program as part of tribal pride week. I would also like to extend our gratitude to our chancellor, Dr. Glenn C. Kharkongor. Sir has been guiding us from the beginning of this, from the first day we started planning this workshop. So we extend our gratitude to sir and also to all my students, and my colleagues. Without you this workshop would not have been a success. You were there, sir, and my students were there, from when we first started working on the decorations, the paintings, you were there from the beginning. And my colleagues, they have their own responsibilities and they did a great job. Let's give them a round of applause. So thank you everyone. And I also would like to thank to all of the students who are not here, the event management team, the media club, the performance art club. Thank you everyone. Thank you for being here. God bless you. Thank you.

Note: This transcript is slightly-edited, and a small amount of material has been inserted that was not mentioned during the actual workshop.