

Stanley as Sculptor Gene Hendrix

Abstract

As an editor of Stanley Keleman's works, Hendrix describes how sculpture was a metaphor for his work, the work of giving shape to the various stages in life. For Stanley this was the hero's journey, the formative journey.

Keywords: sculpture as metaphor, shape, formative journey

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If you visit Stanley's office, the garden at the Center for Energetic Studies or his home you will see examples of Stanley's metal sculptures — pieces of steel that Stanley shaped and reshaped until the result he wanted was achieved.

For me, sculpting is a metaphor of what it meant to edit Stanley's work. As an objectively trained academic I approached editing as a rational task — correcting spelling mistakes, seeking clarification when something was unclear, deleting repetitions, adding when necessary. But with Stanley that approach had limitations, because after reading the edits, he would often come back with a different meaning or head in a different direction. Many times, this caused me confusion.

But when I use the metaphor of sculpture, all becomes clear. A piece of metal has a shape, and a shape to-be. Using arc welding, a sculptor tries to do two things — release the shape that is within, as well as craft his image of what is emerging. Thus, a sculptor applies the heat, melts the iron, waits, looks at what is there, and then applies more heat to reveal the shape either of the sculptor's imagination or the shape that wishes to emerge.

Using this metaphor, editing with Stanley becomes clearer. Stanley would write or say something that I would transcribe and edit, then he would look at it to see what shape was there or what shape wanted to emerge —and that emerging shape might go in quite a different direction! So, editing with him became an adventure and a mutual exploration to find the shape that wished to emerge.

The sculptor image also helps explain Stanley's journey from athlete, to chiropractor, to bio-energetic practitioner, to somatic clinician and creator of Formative Psychology®, all the while continuing to engage his artist and poet in giving shape to the changing stages of his life. One could say that Stanley's journey was a series of shapes, one morphing into the other, as he shaped both his daily life and his intellectual work culminating in his masterpiece, *Emotional Anatomy* and its companion workbook *Embodying Experience*.

For those who followed Stanley closely, whether at the Center for Energetic Studies in Berkeley, or Zurich School for Form and Movement, the Centro de Psicologia Formativa do Brasil in Rio de Janeiro, and the Institute for Formative Psychology® in Solingen, Germany, his work continued to reshape and refine its form as he shaped his own accumulating years.

If I ask, does the image of Stanley the sculptor also apply to his work with individuals? The answer is yes. When a person came to present their dilemma to Stanley, it was a shape that

represented their life struggle, but to Stanley's trained eye there was, most importantly, a shape seeking to emerge and to be formed. Stanley called this formative journey a hero's journey, because for each person it is their personal adventure to form the unknown. A poetic, mythic vision suggests that formativeness is both what the sculptor sees and creates, and the journey of seeking to shape one's life.

Several times a year, Summer, Fall, Winter, Stanley conducted public workshops. For each of these, he wrote a thematic paper and as the workshop opened Stanley would ask participants to use the paper's image to respond with their questions or comments. As he lectured and conducted exercises or worked with individuals, Stanley created an image — a living sculpture — that embodied the workshop theme, his article, the exercises, and individual responses into a whole. In this way each program formed its own living sculpture.

Stanley was at once a creature of the psychology of the 60's as well as a critic. In the psychology of the day, using the sculpture metaphor, what was required was to find the hidden image, to uncover the mystery. And then what? For the sculptor knows that what lies in the steel and what appears after applying the welding arc, require acts of imagination, seeing the shape within and forming it. The shape of the iron requires the sculptor's imagination and effort to become a piece of art.

And thus, I finally realized, editing with Stanley was a formative process just as it was a formative journey that Stanley took in shaping his own life, his aging and perhaps even his dying. To see what shape was there, to see what shape was emerging, to see the contradiction between hanging onto the past or helping the new emerge, to let go of old images of performance, and explore and support what is unfolding — all these are part of the formative journey. It is fitting that Stanley's 2018 writings and Summer Institute were on the subject of aging as he embraced his own and shaped it into his final journey.

BIOGRAPHY

Gene Hendrix, PhD is an organizational consultant and retired academic who served as Stanley's editor, in particular for *Emotional Anatomy* (1985) and its companion book *Embodying Experience* (1987). During the years 1976-1995, he participated in all the Center's workshops, audiotaping many of them, as well as traveling with Stanley to Europe for his workshops in Cologne, Zurich, and the Black Forest. He currently cultivates his own garden in Berkeley, California.

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Sculpture by Stanley