



## **Imagery and metaphor**

### *Imagery Manipulation*

#### **V/O Commentary :**

Ian has now called his group back in from their story telling exercise. He's also going to demonstrate a one-to-one technique that uses metaphor on a deeper level.

The facilitator need never know the details of the problem itself, as it's dealt with entirely at a metaphorical level throughout.

#### **Ian McDermott:**

So, got an issue?

#### **Richard Morley:**

Got an issue.

#### **Ian McDermott:**

Okay. And it would make a difference if you could address that in a more creative way?

#### **Richard Morley:**

Certainly would.

#### **V/O Commentary :**

Ian now asks Richard to identify between three and six key elements within the issue. For example the elements might be the people, places or feelings involved. Richard must then allow his mind to do some associative thinking, and come up with metaphorical symbols to represent his key elements.

#### **Ian McDermott:**

So just tell me what sort of elements we've got in play, we may not be able to make any sense of them at first that's okay.

#### **Richard Morley:**

Avalanche.

#### **Ian McDermott:**

An avalanche.

#### **Richard Morley:**

That's one element...

Eddie.

#### **Ian McDermott:**

Eddie? As in a body or...?

#### **Richard Morley:**

As in Bank of England. And abundance.

#### **Ian McDermott:**

Okay and how is abundance which is a concept after all how is abundance, how is that represented?

#### **Richard Morley:**

It's represented as a massive great pile of oranges

**Ian McDermott:**

Okay, okay.

**V/O Commentary.**

Ian is careful to make sure that the metaphors Richard chooses don't have too direct a correspondence with the concept they represent. Often the more concrete and graphic images work best.

**Ian McDermott:**

So we've got an avalanche, we've got a massive great pile of oranges, and we've got Eddy, and I'm struck at how there's a difference here between the avalanche and a pile of oranges which are very graphic for me, and then Eddy I'm not quite sure what to do with to do with Eddy.

**Richard Morley:**

Eddy's symbol would be a bird.

**Ian McDermott:**

Okay. What kind of bird.

**Richard Morley:**

Blackbird.

**Ian McDermott:**

A blackbird. What sort of size is this blackbird.

**Richard Morley:**

Quite small because it's in the distance. High.

**Ian McDermott:**

Okay. So supposing we also have some sort of association for you. What might you become.

**Richard Morley:**

Well, the first thing that came into my mind was a duck, ask not why.

**Ian McDermott:**

Yeah, exactly so

**Richard Morley:**

And with clothes on.

**Ian McDermott:**

Uhuh, so this is a duck with clothes on...

**Richard Morley:**

Sort of moving across under this avalanche. Hurrying along.

**Ian McDermott:**

Hurrying along, okay so this is a this is a duck in a hurry.

**Richard Morley:**

It wants to get through that place a bit quick.

**Ian McDermott:**

Okay so this duck wants to get through that place a bit quick. So, just watch what this duck does as it hurries along, under this avalanche that's just hanging there. And what do you notice about the way it's hurrying, and the avalanche?

**Richard Morley:**

He's hurrying, but his and his eyes are straight ahead. They aren't looking at the avalanche. He's aware of the avalanche. And he's shuffling along pretty quickly.

**Ian McDermott:**

A shuffling duck. Alright. And an avalanche, and a blackbird, that's doing what?

**Richard Morley:**

It's actually not doing anything, it's just like a freeze frame. IN real life it ould plummet to the ground, but it's there.

**Ian McDermott:**

Okay. So it's like a freeze-frame, so have a look at this freeze-frame. What do you notice about this freeze-frame?

**Richard Morley:**

As I notice it, it dissolves. The blackbird suddenly becomes white like white paint running. And then it disappears as I notice it.

**Ian McDermott:**

So as you notice it, it disappears and becomes like white paint running.

**Richard Morley:**

And then that disappears and it's just gone.

**Ian McDermott:**

Okay. Just notice how the white paint runs.

**Richard Morley:**

It has two large white runs with smaller ones at the edge. Then it spreads out and upwards, until the bird disappears.

**Ian McDermott:**

Okay and when it spreads out and upwards, until the bird disappears, how is that for you?

**Richard Morley:**

Better.

**Ian McDermott:**

Yeah, alright. Now let's have a look at the duck and the avalanche. And how is it now?

**Richard Morley:**

It was waiting while we did that other thing, so it had stopped. It's looking around now and setting off again. It obviously performs when it's being looked at.

**Ian McDermott:**

Mm... What about the avalanche? It's getting to the edge of where that avalanche could fall.

**Ian McDermott:**

And when it gets closer to the edge where that avalanche could fall, just watch, and tell me what you see.

**Richard Morley:**

I see .. there's a shad, it's been moving through a shadow under the avalanche, the edge of the avalanche is bright sunlight, so it moves into this bright sunlight, with snow behind it.

**Ian McDermott:**

And when it moves into bright sunlight with snow behind it, how is that?

**Richard Morley:**

Very good.

**Ian McDermott:**

Okay. And what then.

**Richard Morley:**

White snow, no duck. Sun. Avalanche now over there. Passed

**Ian McDermott:**

Avalanche passed. And what of white snow and oranges, piled high?

**Richard Morley:**

They stand out very well.

I mean the two things, the two images were separate, then you mentioned them together, and then I saw the oranges against the snow. And they don't disappear.

**Ian McDermott:**

And it seems like that's important to know.

**Richard Morley:**

Yes.

**Ian McDermott:**

It's important to know that those oranges don't disappear, they can in fact be highlighted in contrast against the snow.

**Richard Morley:**

Yep, absolutely.

**Ian McDermott:**

And how is it to know that?

**Richard Morley:**

It's very good. Very good and very useful.

### **V/O Commentary**

Later on, we asked Richard what meaning he'd made of his session. He let us know a little of the content that had sparked off his metaphors.

**Richard Morley:**

Yeah, what the issue was is that there's a number of opportunities sort of opening up, and to do all of them requires a certain amount of risk taking, and so a part of me wants to hang on to what I know is going to produce the income and all that stuff. So that was about that, and very much seeing those oranges not disappearing but remaining, and the other things disappearing helped me clarify viewing what's right for me what I know is right for me.

**Interviewer (Claire Sandry):**

So the oranges were ...

**Richard Morley:**

The oranges is the future, bright, something that for me is good. I haven't made all the connections yet, but that for me is good and the other bits obviously were either something I'd passed through or, and I don't need

**Interviewer (Claire Sandry):**

The avalanche, what ...

**Richard Morley:**

The avalanche - the risk, is the risk. So, yes it's just being aware of the risk.

**Ian McDermott:**

There's a very fine line between elicitation and installation. If I begin trying to get clear by saying "so you see a cat, and is that a black cat" and they might go "well no it wasn't until you said that thank you very much". So even asking a question is potentially installing something. The less intrusive the language can be the better, and the best way to achieve that is to stay with the language you're given.

**Diana Brown:**

The badger on the ground just has to look sideways at the cat.

**Ian McDermott:**

And what happens then?

**Diana Brown:**

Oh the cat disappears

**Ian McDermott:**

That's pretty effective. So it just, just looks and the cat disappears.

**Diana Brown:**

Yeah, yeah.

**Ian McDermott:**

The only thing I'm gonna be doing is inviting them to witness the unfolding of the story by offering instructions like 'just notice what happens next.' And 'notice what's happening now'. Now, if they do that for any moment, what'll happen is the experience will change, because whenever you pay attention to your experience, you engage with it. When you engage with it, it begins to move on. Gesture can be incredibly important. You'll see the shoulders (sighs), a moment of resolution maybe. Breathing changes it's almost like it's punctuating their experience, and that's frequently a very useful clue to me and a cue to me to tell me when to keep quiet and when to say okay, what's next.