

Reflections on Doubling

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ABSTRACT

This article is an effort to present a clear, detailed and interesting portrayal of doubling through highlighting what it is, and through presenting and discussing efforts to function as a double with another person. A well functioning double has a profound effect on another person's level of self-esteem and in addition gains a greater experience of the wonder and value of human life.

KEY WORDS

double, doubling, protagonist, psychodrama, psychodramatist

As I write this small piece about the nature of doubling I am recalling many experiences of being doubled myself and of functioning as a double for many people. I am very clear that the experience of being doubled has benefited me very much and that this has continued on. I imagine that I will continue to be strengthened by the actions of a double for the rest of my life. I am also delighted to have been present in situations where doubling has promoted a sense of life and of self-esteem in folk of different ages and circumstances.

I never want doubling to become something that is done by numbers. I do not want doubling to be regarded simply as a technique. I want it to be something that is expressed by people who are motivated by love. I want doubles to respect the people who come near to them. I love to be with a double who obviously has a vision of human beings becoming more and more creative in their daily lives. I want these few reflections and images to add something to our vision of what doubling is and its place in our work as psychodramatists. I am hopeful that you will be inspired to become even larger in your perception of others and larger in your capacity to be with them.

I begin with a little tale. After that I am addressing you as a group leader who is creating a psychodrama session. I suggest that which might be said and done to introduce doubling into a group, make a portrayal of a double who tunes in with a protagonist,

and discuss the effect of this on the person they are with. I then present the work that frequently needs to be done to restore broken connections between a protagonist and their double.

A Little Tale Unveils the Nature of Doubling

A cold wind is blowing across snow covered mountains in Nepal. It is a strong wind and the air is very cold. A man has been out in the snow for several days. He is so cold. He arrives at the place where a Buddhist monk lives. He thankfully knocks on the door and the monk lets him in. There is no fire inside and the man is still very cold. The monk asks if there is anything he would like. The man holds out his freezing hands and says he would dearly love the monk to light a fire. The monk indicates with his hands that there is no wood in his dwelling. Then he goes into another room and when he returns he is carrying a beautifully carved wooden statue of the Buddha. He puts some paper under the wooden carving and lights it and the man feels the warmth from the fire flowing into his frozen limbs.

Here is a simple little tale of a monk who puts his own interests on one side. Here he is tuning in with a visitor. It is a simple tale, and yet it portrays a set of actions that are an essential foundation for human growth and development. The monk lives out the essence of doubling, conveying its meaning more effectively than a mountain of definitions and explanations. Dwelling on the images presented so that they continue to play upon our soul and mind may very well result in new experience, awaken the imagination, and stir up interest in taking fresh action in response to a person in dire need.

Creating an Immediate Impression of What Doubling Is

In the course of directing a psychodrama group a psychodramatist is in the business of awakening experience, stimulating imagination and encouraging further reflection. In the beginning phase of a session, the psychodramatist works to warm up the members of the group so that they are all consciously involved. What brings this about? An important part of this work is to briefly and clearly create in each person some understanding and appreciation of the psychodrama method. There is much to be gained through doing this not only in the beginning phase, but also from time to time throughout an entire session. This piece of writing is focussed on just one aspect of the psychodrama method, namely doubling.

In my view there is little to be gained by pedestrian explanations of how psychodrama works and of the different techniques. My interest lies in suggesting a means by which group members and auxiliaries will quickly gain an impression of what doubling is. I have found that this is best activated at the point where a group member is called upon to be a double in an immediate situation. So what follows is a very simple and brief statement about doubling.

Factors to Consider in Making a Crisp Statement of What Doubling Is

The intention of this section is to suggest what is involved in beginning the task of expressing with words what doubling is. An important part of this task is the establishment of criteria for the development of usable statements.

Criteria for a Statement about Doubling

A primary aim of a psychodrama director is to inspire, to lift the human spirit, and to this end to fill their words and acts with a sense of life and movement. Thus a central criterion is that the statement about doubling conveys an image that is inspiring. A second criterion is that it warms up an aspiring double to the required actions, attitudes and values of a double. A third criterion is that it is made brief enough to be useable in educating a new group about the nature of doubling. The best statements are brief and include language that is evocative enough to awaken and sustain the interest of group members, or a protagonist who has just been asked to consider choosing a double.

A Practitioner Works to Convey the Spirit of Doubling

In the course of psychodrama practice lasting ten, twenty, thirty or forty years practitioners have most likely experimented with many phrases and gestures in an effort to convey the spirit of doubling quickly and easily. On some occasions psychodrama practitioners are at a loss for words. On other occasions group members may have been belittling of them and the value of the psychodramatic work, and practitioners are called on to describe or define doubling while being affected by the threatening mood of the group. Suddenly the practitioner is on the back foot. Their body tightens. Their breathing is shallow. Their face is red. Unsureness is apparent in their voice. The statement about doubling is unclear.

The Practitioner Succeeds

There have been countless occasions when practitioners have been defeated in their quest for crispness and clarity, have wanted to disappear through the floor and considered giving up the practice of psychodrama on the spot. Yet, the reality is that on most occasions they have expressed something about doubling and this something has become a seed that grows and enlivens the group warm up.

Imagine the practitioner going home at the end of the psychodrama group. There is the time of warming down, going to bed, and of sleep. There is the waking up in the morning. Then, in the course of their early morning reverie they can clearly see themselves working away in the group. They go over their actions with a fine tooth comb. They see themselves fumbling. They hear their tone of voice and identify the partial statement they have made. Then as they continue to lie in bed they imagine themselves saying other things. They visualise their body moving in another way and visualise themselves doubling in an OK way. Later on in the day they discuss doubling with a colleague. Later again they read a description of a drama directed by Moreno and look up a couple of references about doubling.

The next time they direct a group and are challenged to define doubling they are relaxed, and while making a response they sustain a visual image of someone doubling well. They are inspired by this image. During the presentation of doubling their functioning is congruent. The group warms up to doubling much more than on the previous occasion.

Persistently Generating New Words

The practitioner who keeps experimenting with different words and phrases nurtures a spirit of surprise and newness, and it is a very good thing to keep enlarging this ability. Being experimental involves a reliance on one's own resources, and this calls for strength. By contrast an external orientation is often associated with a concern to be correct, the development of a stereotyped language and a loss of spontaneity. At all costs a practitioner must get out of such a rut.

A Brief Statement of What Doubling Is

What is the essence of doubling? As I see it, doubling is becoming another person through entering their life. It is a process in which one person identifies with another person's view of the universe, with their actions, and with their emotions and feelings. In that process, the double develops a two-way interaction with the other person that is in tune with the direction of the other person's being. Thus doubling is expressive of a relationship with every aspect of another person, in contrast to one that involves a warm up to only one aspect or one subsystem or cluster of roles.

What the Double Is and What the Double Does

What language will briefly convey the essence of doubling? In my view the central idea of what a double is can be made very precise and clear by saying "the double *is* another person". Such a simple statement conveys a more precise image than "the double represents another person". The conception that the double is the person they are doubling implies that a double divests themselves of their own way of looking at things. There is a letting go of the constructs as they are applied to their own personal life at that particular moment.

The letting go of one's own personal constructs is not so simple. In fact it can be profoundly disturbing. A double tunes in with a unique individual and the more they succeed in tuning in, the more they discover the myriad of small differences between the two of them. No matter how many personal memories of similar experiences are awakened, there are still differences. The double often discovers that the person they are doubling lives in accordance with similar values and attitudes and has been involved in life experiences that appear the same as their own. The double says to themselves "I have lived through exactly the same thing". Yet the truth is, there are always countless differences. There are subtle differences in the style of thinking. Frequently the person is living through a slightly different stage of life.

In addition to the many differences between the experiences of the two people, there are the many aspects of the life of the person being doubled that are outside of the double's life experience and therefore unknown to them. What will the double do at this point? Will the double remain blind to the fact that the person being doubled may have worked through some of the difficulties and blocks that are still plaguing the double and other members of the group, and then act as if these difficulties are unresolved? Or will the double give themselves enough time and room to continue on in their endeavour to tune in with the total personality of this person? To do this is a very valuable thing and a great achievement.

A Double Begins to Tune In with a Protagonist: A Typical Example

Here is an example of a double establishing a working relationship with a protagonist. A member of a group is presenting her concern. In the course of previous group sessions she has typically warmed up to fear at the point where she is about to start something. Then after that initial experience of fear she starts to do a task and functions with strength and confidence.

During her enactment of a situation she selects a double. The double stands beside her and slightly behind, takes the same body position and approximates her movements. The following verbal interaction develops between her as the protagonist, and her double.

Protagonist Yeah. I know when I do start I feel better. It's just the prospect of starting.

Double Yeah, it's just the prospect that scares me.

Protagonist Yeah, that's right. Once you're really into it you'll just get over that feeling. You'll be good.

Double Yeah, the prospect of starting gets to me but after I start I am OK. I can see how things develop and I am good.

Protagonist I guess that you're going to get there at the end. Well then, maybe you shouldn't feel that way in the first place.

The Experience of the Protagonist during the Doubling

- Accepting the double. In this brief interaction the protagonist feels accepting of the double. She includes the double in her world. She responds to the double as if the double is herself and not another person. As she does this her body relaxes. As far as the protagonist is concerned everything that is presently happening is part of her world. In other words, for her there is now one world. There is not her world and another foreign world somewhere else. There is something coming into being that brings about an experience of connectedness, a sense of being at one with the rest of the universe. It is this relationship system that has the same characteristics as the universal matrix of identity described by Moreno in his book *Psychodrama Volume One*, in connection with the development of the infant.

- Extending experience to include conflict. There is then a further movement toward extending the exploration of the protagonist's own consciously felt experience. She warms up to her experience of dynamic forces in conflict. She starts to become an imperialistic commander who has the power to banish fear with just a word of command. Thus we see that the process of doubling can begin with a happy experience of mutual cooperation and then rapidly become a conflicted relationship that is a continuation of an earlier, unresolved conflict.
- Awakening of memories. When the double remains in tune and develops mutual interaction, the experience of being doubled becomes a profound experience. It awakens memories. These memories include oceanic experiences of oneness with the universe, the bliss of being totally accepted, as well as experiences of incompleteness, disappointment and partial or restrictive solutions.

Exploring the Functioning of the Double

- Gives value. We have been focussing on the protagonist. Now we turn to the work of the double. The double has felt accepting of the protagonist and has assisted her to accept herself. She has functioned sensitively. She has acted in a subtle way and conveyed this through tuning into the protagonist's world, valuing her ideas instead of imposing her own and by approaching the protagonist with subjectivity. All of these things are adequate and in that sense spontaneous. No doubt the spontaneity of the double is calling forth the spontaneity of the protagonist.
- Fosters self-acceptance. The double is fostering self-acceptance and in that sense is functioning like a mother accepting her baby or small child. There is much value in comparing the functioning of the double with the functioning of a mother. Without a mother of some kind we would not have survived. The mother has an unsurpassed capacity to tune in with a new-born baby. The experiences of the baby are transmitted and known to the mother. And as time passes the mother becomes increasingly acquainted with the infant's moods, needs and unique expressions. The continuation of such an extraordinary pattern of mutual interaction over a long time brings into being a glowing sense of life and an experience of self-acceptance that becomes a foundation for succeeding phases of life. Thus, when in a present day drama a double tunes into the world of a protagonist, memories and experience of the relationship with the protagonist's first double and with other significant doubles knock on the door of consciousness.

Doubling that Interferes with a Protagonist

A Double Inappropriately Imposes Their Point of View

There are numerous examples of a double persistently imposing an idea. Here is one such instance. During the drama the double persists in saying "I am angry". In response

the protagonist is saying “I’ve already worked that out” and “I’ve done that, I’ve been angry and it doesn’t do any good”.

A Protagonist Suffers Through Accepting Inaccurate Doubling

Suffering is sometimes brought on through inaccurate doubling, as seen in the following example. A protagonist has passively gone along with inaccurate interpretations by the double. Afterwards he realises that he has entered into areas of his life that did not concern him at that time, and that the double is working on self-initiated areas with which they themselves are pre-occupied. The protagonist is upset. He is irritated at having spent his time this way instead of doing the work he had actually wanted to do.

The Double Misinterprets the Protagonist’s Area of Concern

A protagonist has been acting in a drama. She feels unattractive. She constantly refers to her body image. She stands with her back to the audience. She says she does not want people to see her. The following interaction with the double then occurs.

Double You make me feel there is something wrong.

Protagonist I am feeling embarrassed. I feel grotesque.

Double You are grotesque.

Protagonist I don’t talk to myself like that. I just feel like crying. I am scared of talking about myself like this in front of everyone. It’s as if it’s making it worse. I’m frozen.

Here and throughout most of the drama the protagonist has been experiencing shame. She is focussed on the attitude of other people towards her. She feels ashamed. She is not feeling wrong. At the point where the double refers to something being wrong, the actions of the protagonist are demonstrating her warm up to embarrassment. However, the double’s incorrect statement stimulates her to verbally express what her experience actually is. The incorrect doubling has in fact warmed up the protagonist to her experience even more and has assisted the protagonist. At the same time the double has assisted the director in their investigation of the protagonist’s social system, or, if you like, the protagonist’s social and cultural atom.

However, the protagonist and double end up being isolated from one another. The double is not able to tune into the protagonist’s experience of isolation and assist her to explore it, so that her warm up enlarges and new perceptions develop. The double was herself preoccupied with the business of getting things right in her life and, in particular, being correct in her functioning as a double.

The Opening Up of the Self through Doubling

A basic notion of a psychodrama session is that a dramatic portrayal of events is created that is as close as possible to life itself. In life itself there are the words, actions, emotions and feelings which can be seen and heard and smelled through the senses. Then there is

another realm in which there are all kinds of unspoken thoughts and countless numbers of deeds that are never enacted in the everyday drama of our lives. In the same way, in the course of a psychodrama session, there are those things that are expressed in an obvious way and also many unspoken thoughts and deeds left incomplete at different moments during a drama. In the case of the psychodramatic enactment, emphasis is placed on creating an outward and obvious portrayal of unspoken thoughts and of deeds that have previously been left in the realm of contemplation. When this is actualised on the stage the protagonist's drama becomes larger than life. The expression is larger than life and yet is still the drama of that protagonist. The unexpressed thoughts, feelings and actions that lie above and beyond what has been expressed in life itself are technically known as surplus reality. Every one of the psychodramatic techniques has been devised with a view to bringing about an expression of the surplus reality level on the stage.

To the protagonist their drama is more true to life than that which they have previously experienced. At another time of life they were cowering in a chair, conflicted, frozen and tongue-tied in the presence of threatening and superior forces. Now, they have warmed up to this same scene, and are living through the same script. Their ideas about life, physical responses and emotions are the same as in a situation that occurred at another time and place. But there is a difference. This time the protagonist is living through the experience in the context of a group. Through participation in a group there has come about a forging of new ties that are unlike the old ones. There are auxiliaries. There is a director. And there is a method that assists a step by step unfolding of events and which works through a judicious expression of humane principles, through artistry and through application of a range of psychodramatic techniques.

Doubling is one of those techniques. When adequately done, doubling assists a protagonist to open up to the breadth of their experience. It stimulates a renewal of consciousness of the many abilities that have been developing over the whole course of life. A person's abilities may be forgotten or left sitting in the background. During the enactment of an event, doubling will often result in an easy recovery of resources. A protagonist who is being doubled may quite often think to themselves "Of course, I should have known that all along", or the following interaction with the double may take place.

An Example of Doubling Resulting in an Opening Up of the Self

- Double This situation is not so bad, is it? I think we might have dealt with other situations like this one.
- Protagonist Why didn't I think of that?
- Double That's right. I wonder why I didn't think of it.
- Protagonist Well, I didn't think of it, that's for sure. I guess I can't think of everything all the time. Most of the time I do come up with ideas about what I can do next.
- Double Sometimes I am focussed somewhere else and I just don't warm up to the whole situation.
- Protagonist Yes, that's exactly what happens. I become anxious and narrowed

down and I only see part of the picture. I see the difficulties and feel defeated.

Double I am able to deal with complex situations even when they are new to me, but when I first encounter the difficulties I want the task to be simple and easy.

Protagonist That's right. Once I realise the problem isn't going away and that I have to enter right into the situation, I start to feel a sense of challenge. In fact I am quite exhilarated.

The Work of the Double in this Interaction

In this example the double tunes in with the protagonist at a point of distress. The protagonist has taken the view that she is in a disastrous situation and lacks the resources to deal with it. She wishes to give up. The double, on the other hand, realises that this person is possessed of considerable life experience and must be more able to deal with the situation than she thinks. As an expression of this conclusion, the double says "This situation is not so bad, is it? I think we might have dealt with other situations like this one".

The double is saying something here that the protagonist has not articulated. Is the double imposing his own ideas or prejudices on the protagonist? The succeeding events suggest this is not the case. The protagonist gives every indication that the double has been expressing something that is harmonious with her own view as to how things work in the world.

We may also want to know how the double knew that this was in tune with the psyche of the protagonist. The fact is that doubles have tuned in with those who have been protagonists in a psychodrama session countless numbers of times. The greater the training and experience of a double the more frequently this occurs. The notion that a special relationship develops between a protagonist and the double within which each one taps into the unconscious level of the other, is consistent with repeated patterns of interaction. Moreno presents this point of view very clearly when he writes that "the technique of the double duplicates the unconscious processes" and that the double provides a protagonist with "an auxiliary unconscious". In the above interaction the double picks up on something that the protagonist has not been conscious of, and yet as soon as it is expressed, the two of them enter into an exploratory dialogue that flows freely and makes sense. Both the protagonist and the double warm up more. Their abilities increase, both to perceive different elements of a system and to integrate them into a new whole.

The Protagonist and the Double Both Benefit

On the face of it, both protagonist and double have benefited from being together. They have both entered into a fluid situation within which neither imposes their views on the other. The double has been involved in the same way in which Raymond Corsini perceives a non-directive therapist at work with a client. Such a therapist is non-directive, permissive and accepting, in contrast with one who utilises an approach that is directive,

analytic, interpretative or repressive. In the course of his discussion of Moreno's lecture on 'The Function of the Unconscious' in *Psychodrama Volume Two* (1959:71-72), Corsini characterises the non-directive psychotherapist as one who sees the person with whom they are working "as a living, self-directed, goal-seeking, socially responsible individual for whom reality is his perceptions, who is living here and now and who possesses the potentialities for self-improvement". In the same way, the double bases their approach on their living experience with the protagonist. The approach is open-ended, fluid and unpredictable. This is not a doctrinaire approach based on preconceived views. In the example given, the sense of challenge that wells up in the protagonist is an indication that the idea and expression of the double is beneficial.

The Director Responds to Both the Protagonist and the Double

The director of the drama is also active while the protagonist and the double are developing their relationship. But experience of the director is *now* quite different. The director is now in the presence of the protagonist, the double and the relationship developing between them. Previously the protagonist alone stood out in the foreground of the director's consciousness and this influenced the intensity of the relationship and the warm up of both of them. The director warms up in a different way now that there are three significant entities in the foreground.

Sometimes, and hopefully most of the time, both protagonist and director are seething with spontaneity. Where this is the case, their relationship becomes more and more fluid and the director is more focussed on the movement that is emerging in the drama, and on the direction of the forward movement that is apparent in the enactment. The old static ideas with which the director has been inevitably dabbling now become increasingly irrelevant. The director becomes more and more absorbed in the process emerging between these two people. The roles and role relationships become more interesting. Patterns of interaction develop with which the director identifies. Areas of life open up that demand to be enacted and investigated.

The director finds that independent thinking must be brought into being. They have to stretch themselves. Stereotyped responses simply will not do. New concepts must be generated that are in line with the new expressions that are coming forward. Thus, the director is caught up along with the protagonist in a real learning process. Any tendency on their part to be a superior 'know-it-all' is called into question. Now that the protagonist and the double have become an independent force, the director cannot fall back on functioning that draws the protagonist back into a dependent relationship with them.

The Multi-Faceted Work of a Double

A capable double who is also warmed up, is actively involved in the development of different kinds of relationships with the protagonist, the director, the auxiliaries and the audience. In my writing here I am focussing solely on the relationship between the double and the protagonist.

Possibilities for the Relationship between Protagonist and Double

There are a multitude of different relationships that emerge between the protagonist and the double. In fact each relationship is unique. This opens up a range of possibilities for generating new experience.

What are the types of relationships? Most obviously, there is the relationship within which both the protagonist and the double are dealing with matters of which they are both fully conscious. Less obvious is the relationship within which the protagonist is conscious of their experience, and possibly expressing it, but the double is not conscious of that experience. There is, of course, the reverse of that, where the protagonist is not conscious of their expression and the double is. This is most often the case where the protagonist is expressing something with their physical body and the double moves the same way and is conscious of their experience. But the protagonist remains oblivious of both their own physical movement and the experience associated with it. That circumstance is also frequently reversed. Then there is that important relationship between the two of them when they are both unconscious of what is going on. This relationship is filled with opportunity. At this time a double who is well grounded and unworried by their experience, has a powerful effect on the protagonist. Surprise and delight well up in a protagonist while being with such an unruffled person, who is also sustaining strong feeling contact. Their new response often develops into an ability to sustain a satisfying pattern of interaction that had formerly been completely unknown to them.

Expansion of the Double's Flexibility

There is much to be gained through imaginatively entering into these different types of communication. An aspiring double does well to identify these communication pathways through utilising their own experience. Many, many examples of these relationships can be remembered and relived. Small nuances of feeling and cognition can be identified. These situations can be lived and relived in so many ways. Such imaginative reliving introduces an expanded flexibility. The development of such flexibility is very desirable since doubling requires movement from one situation to another and from one warm up to another. The double lives in different worlds as the protagonist focuses on one idea and then another. The double may warm up with a protagonist to an emotion and then suddenly to a profound philosophical thought, or to a feeling and then to an action, or from fantasy to reality and back again.

A good time to develop such flexibility is upon awaking in the morning. It is then that the psyche can more easily remember and visualise events, and make it possible to play at living through interactions with people. A scene involving many different friends can be brought alive by entering into the role of each person, being each one as they express things that they may never have said before and then entering into the being of each of the others. Each one of us is a multiple role player and the double who loves the work and who frequently practises their craft soon discovers the truth of this. New experience constantly emerges while they are with a protagonist, and new actions that are based on that experience also emerge.

The double is like a person who has developed peripheral vision. They are able to

take into themselves a sense of the total environment they are in. They may be with a protagonist who is expressing happiness while they are walking freely through the countryside and the interaction develops as follows.

Double I wonder what is under that culvert over there.

Protagonist I did see that culvert and I was worried about it, but then thought I was being silly.

Here the double relates to the psyche of the protagonist as they move through the world. Every aspect of the protagonist's environment is affecting the double. This particular double has developed an imaginative consciousness. As he imaginatively puts himself into the position of the protagonist and begins to see the world through her eyes, there is an enlargement of the ability to use the senses. In this example the double is most likely sensitised to small movements of the protagonist. The double has picked up something from the movement of the protagonist as they have approached the culvert. And right away the double says "I wonder what is under that culvert over there". The double, at this point, does not understand that there is a threatening person under the culvert. Rather, they are in a living, moving relationship with a protagonist who is expressing happiness, and who also senses that something is wrong and has projected an uneasy feeling toward their double.

The vision of the double also includes what is very close at hand. In the previous example, the double has been alert to an environment that contains delights and hazards. When the double concentrates on the wider world other important aspects of the protagonist's psyche can easily be missed or forgotten. So here again we are confronted with the need for the double to ensure that they maintain a wide range of interests in their life. The double who is genuinely interested in the sociological area and equally interested in the fine workings of the protagonist's mind, is not nearly so likely to intrude their own skews and prejudices into the protagonist's experience. There is a good chance that there will be a genuine exploration of both the larger context of a scene, as well as the small things that are emerging in another person and in the relationship with them. This includes such things as different facets of the views about life, and nuances of the experience of another person who may be standing very near to them in the drama.

The Double Enhances a Protagonist's Warm Up to His Resources

There are occasions when virtually every protagonist is frozen with fear, overcome with a sense of inadequacy or withdrawing from a situation for a variety of reasons. The work of a double is usually very effective in such circumstances. Let us imagine a man who is acting a scene in which he is frightened to go into an office to apply for a job. The name of this man is Tim. He is sweating. He is standing still. His body is tight. His face is pale and drawn. His actions say that he is avoiding something very distasteful. The following interaction takes place.

Protagonist I can't go in there. It's impossible. I just want to get away.

- Double I am going to stand here. I don't think I can go in, but at least I can stand here.
- Protagonist *relaxing a little and then tightening up again before speaking.* . . I can't stand this sort of situation. I hate going into this type of office.
- Double I am going to keep my feet firmly on the ground.
- Protagonist *relaxing again, looking thoughtful and then tensing his body again.* . . There's no point in going in. There will be so many other people wanting this job.
- Double I am going to relax for a moment and then tense up again. And I am still standing here with my feet on the ground.
- Protagonist *relaxing.* . . Yeah. I guess I am still here. I haven't been blown away yet.

Features of this Doubling

There are several significant features of the work of this double and the relationship that starts to develop with the protagonist.

- All of the words of the double are highlighting the physical body of the protagonist. Each time this happens, Tim relaxes.
- In response to the first two statements by the double, the body of the protagonist relaxes but the views about life continue to be expressed with words.
- In response to the double's third statement, the protagonist's verbal statements are quite different from those uttered previously. There is now a clear relationship with the content of the double's expression.
- The protagonist is initially unaware of how he has been affected by the double and then there is a dawning of awareness.
- Throughout the work, the double has accented an element of role that has been neglected by the protagonist. The double has focussed on the action component of role. The protagonist has focussed on his view of life or map of the universe and the emotional element. Some might say the protagonist has focussed on the components of thinking and feeling. Others might refer to the set of values and the set of feelings. Other people may prefer to speak of a person's view of life or a person's value system. These latter two terms accent the interpretations about life that an individual person makes that are designed to guide them in their personal decisions. The term 'map of the universe' highlights the fact that at any moment of time a person develops a connection with the universe based on the interpretation they have made of the relationship between them and everything else. The term thus highlights a person's view of the totality of things and the relationship between them, and has a slightly different accent. The fact that it is a systemic term no doubt helps to make it a meaningful word.

Concluding Remarks

Doubling is an extraordinary thing. It results in an enlarged sense of the value of one's own life and of the value of human relationships. It is a creative endeavour that calls on each one of us to review our personal values, attitudes and actions in relation to the people with whom we work. To act as a double with another person requires all the flexibility that we are able to muster and a willingness to be a genuine explorer. To be a double opens up fresh worlds and brings much satisfaction.

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Max Clayton writes

I was taught to be a double in 1967 and continued to be coached for many years after that. I practised doubling in a big way with patients at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington D.C., and have continued to practice it in my work in California, Perth, Melbourne and so many other places. It has given me a great deal of satisfaction to be able to tune in to so many people and to see their experience and abilities blossom.