

# **The “Phenomenon of Letting go” in Visual Arts and Design:**

## **An exploration into self-transformative creative experiences**

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
**Doctor of Philosophy**

by

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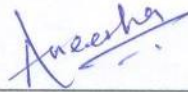
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# Abbreviations

<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b>PLG</b>	Phenomenon of Letting go
<b>HPA</b>	Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach
<b>AE</b>	Aesthetic Experience

*For Papaji...*



## **Abstract**

The act of creation is the crux from where novel and original works of art and design emerge. It is the act of creation which probably made Van Gogh paint 'The Sunflowers' in the way he did. A closer look into the study of act of creation reveals that this act has been studied from varied perspectives like the creative object, the creative process and the creative environment. But what does the act of creation mean for the creator? What does the creator experience in this moment of creation? The domains of Visual Arts and Design are creative fields and lay emphasis on the experiential dimension and its impact on the painting/design.

The thought of researching Phenomenon of letting go (PLG) has its roots in the visible disparity between individuals, personal understanding of PLG of artists/designers and the non-inclusion of experiential realm of creative experiences in theoretical foundations of domains of Arts and Design. The need to research this topic is also stemmed in the significance of the experience of PLG during the creation of novel and original work. The present research aims to conduct a focussed investigation of the phenomenon. The study stems from a belief that this significant event is a crucial creative experience which needs to be substantiated with a knowledge base that could give PLG its own identity and unique qualitative distinctness. The research aims to deconstruct the phenomenon so that the parts analysed would give an understanding of the complete picture of PLG experience.

The research starts by drafting a premise for PLG which enlists the characteristics of the experiences being investigated. The study holds the premise as central and investigates the phenomenon occurring in artists and designers. PLG is an intangible, unobservable and subjective experience. A Hermeneutic-phenomenological investigation of PLG deconstructed the nature of PLG and confirmed the characteristics as initially drafted in the premise. The study gave a tangible definition of PLG which made this experience distinct from the on-going creative experiences. The research gave a comprehensive understanding into the variations/types of PLG and its attributes. The study focussed on PLG which occurs in the domains of Visual Arts and Design. It extracted the points of variance between PLG in both the domains, thus establishing the uniqueness of PLG in each domain.

*Keywords:* Creative experiences, Visual Arts, Design

## **Organisation of Chapters**

The root of the investigation of topic of Phenomenon of letting go (PLG) initiated in the quest for that significant event which brings about a transformation in the creation of artwork/design. A personal search into artist's experience of their creative process revealed the presence of a special event which brought about a significant transformation. The finding of special experience in the creative process of artists/designers led to the topic of present research. The thesis elaborates the journey, milestones and the significant findings during the investigation. The present thesis consists of a Preface and eight chapters. In this section, we will look at the organisation of chapters in the thesis and take an overview of the salient points covered in each chapter.

**Chapter One** introduces the topic of research and elaborates the need for investigation into the topic. The chapter examines literature on creative experiences. It looks at the four types of creative experiences and places the experience of phenomenon of letting go into the fourth, intense type of creative experiences. The Chapter gives a start to the research by defining the premise of PLG which enlists an initial assimilation of probable characteristics of the phenomenon. The chapter continues to elaborate the terminology for 'phenomenon of letting go'. It further expounds the focus and scope of the study as well as explains the limitations of the present investigation. Furthermore, the chapter examines the need of the study and defines its objective. Finally, the chapter enumerates three research questions which will be addressed by the present research.

**Chapter Two** surveys the inter-disciplinary investigations undertaken for PLG. To understand an experiential phenomenon like PLG, we need to align our thinking to the dimension of tacit knowing. In this chapter, we discuss the theories about the act of creation in the area of creativity and establish that these theories are deficient in explaining PLG in experiential terms. We first review creative experiences through a discussion on how to distinguish an experience and further examine the types of creative experiences. We take a look at aesthetic experiences and understand its correlation with creative experiences. We further looked at the concepts of Inspiration and The Sublime Other. The chapter examines self-transcending experiences complimentary to the experience of PLG where we look at the characteristics and approaches taken to study spiritual, meditative and other associated experiences.

The chapter further explores each attribute presented in the premise of PLG and investigate the inter-disciplinary discourses available on it. In this we discuss the phenomenological dynamics of time, space and self where we gain understanding into how the triad of space-time and self exist in our consciousness and how they intertwine and overlap at onset of varied experiences. Furthermore, the chapter examines the concepts of Flow and Peak experiences which are closest to PLG and understand the experience that they signify and represent. We further compare their characteristics of Peak experiences and Flow with that of PLG. We establish that both the concepts cannot be used for connoting PLG. Therefore, we need a separate concept of PLG to explain this special experience that the present study is focussing on. The chapter finally assesses literature as per the formulated research questions. The present knowledge base acknowledges the presence of unusual events through dispersed descriptions, but it does not have a dedicated literature from which the creators can take learning about the experiences happening to them. The chapter establishes the need for the present investigation and refines the research questions which the present study will address.

**Chapter Three** contemplates on the research methodology to be used for the research. This chapter evaluates first person phenomenological qualitative research methods of Heuristic Inquiry, Cooperative Inquiry, Phenomenological Inquiry, Organic Inquiry and Hermeneutic Phenomenological Inquiry. The chapter elaborates the salient points of each method and then critically analyses it for the present research. The chapter further describes the historical overview of the finalised method of Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA) and looks at the process and techniques employed within this approach. Following the hermeneutic arc, the research design is devised. As per the HPA, the research design prescribes an in-depth interview method for data collection, methods of Thematic and comparative analysis for deconstruction of the data and finally eight criteria for evaluation.

**Chapter Four** elaborates the method of data collection as prescribed by the research design in the HPA method. The chapter describes the pilot studies conducted and the learning gleaned from them. The chapter elaborates the selection criteria (professional and educational qualifications, demographics, requirement of experience of PLG and so on) and enlists ten artists and ten designers as final participants of the present study. The chapter further elaborates the dynamics of the final interviews with the participants and recapitulates the interview experiences where the participants shared their experiences of PLG with the

researcher. The chapter demonstrates the significant sharing about PLG during the interview by giving glimpses of the interview transcripts which throw light on the varied nuances of PLG.

**Chapter Five** elaborates and discusses the methods of analysis. The present research utilises the methods of Thematic Analysis and Constant Comparative Analysis to analyse the transcript data. First, the chapter elaborates the approach of both the methods and then explains the process of analysis. In this phase of the research, the data was deconstructed to arrive at themes and thematic structures about PLG. The chapter enumerates the process where the transcripts of artists were first analysed by thematic and constant comparative analysis. This evolved the thematic structure of PLG for artists. The same process is followed for the transcripts of designers which results in the thematic structure of PLG for designers. The chapter further elaborates the constant comparative analyses conducted on the thematic structures of PLG of artists and designers. The chapter discusses the process of consolidation which gave the structural dynamics of PLG. The constant comparative analysis of thematic structures for both artists and designers isolated the uncommon themes thereby giving the unique structural dynamics of PLG for both artists and designers.

**Chapter Six** enumerates inferences drawn from the thematic structures of artists and designers. The chapter is divided into three parts. Each part addresses the three research questions formulated at the start of the research and answers them with inferred results. The first part (Six A) discusses the structural dynamics of PLG while addressing the first research question about the characteristics of PLG. PLG experience involves four dimensions and two aspects which are elaborated in the structural dynamics. The chapter section elaborates five distinct Types of PLG and its Stages of achievement. The section further explains approximately 200 Facets of PLG across five states of mind which influence the occurrence of PLG in its progressive temporal phases (antecedent, concurrent and temporal). The Feelings, both positive and negative across the three temporal phases are elaborated. The structural dynamics reveals that the first aspect of repeatability of PLG and enumerates the achievable facets which work towards repeatable occurrence of PLG. The Section 6A elaborates the second aspect of PLG of being comparable with aesthetic experience and elucidates the differences and points of convergence between the two experiences.

The second part (Six B) deals with the task of defining the phenomenon of letting go and contemplates on the second research question about the form of PLG. The chapter section enumerates the core facets which are extracted from the five types of letting go. Section 6B defines PLG and provides a descriptive account of the experience of PLG to elaborate about what actually happens when one experiences it.

The third part (Six C) presents the variance between the PLG in artists and designers. This section looks at the structural dynamics of PLG in artists and designers and understands the similarities and differences between the two. The similarities describe the affinities that are contained in the experiential reality of PLG in both the domains. The differences between PLG in both domains represent an account of the unique features of each experience, thereby signifying the distinctive nature of PLG in that domain. This section 6C addresses the third research question about the variance of PLG in the domains of Arts and Design.

In **Chapter Seven** of this thesis addresses the process of verification of inferred results and the evaluation of the entire research. This chapter elaborates two distinct tasks. The first part deals with the process of verification of results where the inferred results were taken back to the participants for their feedback. The feedback received was incorporated into the results thereby yielding a verification of final results. The second task was that of evaluation of the present research. The chapter further discusses three methods of qualitative evaluation through prescribed criteria. Out of the various criteria elaborated, the criteria which were comprehensive and gave an unbiased evaluation were selected for evaluation of the present research. The chapter presents final evaluation of the present research based on the eight selected criteria.

**Chapter Eight** summarises the research. The chapter elaborates the contribution of the present research on the existing body of knowledge and reviews the limitations of the present research. The chapter enumerates the implications of the present study and concludes the research for the objectives of the current research endeavour.



## Preface

“Phenomenon of letting go” is a special and unique experiential phenomenon felt by an involved creator in the act of creation. Doing research on this topic of unique creative experiences has stemmed from my personal creative experiences which have transformed not only my work but me as well. The actual thought of working on these experiences started from my struggle to find a way/method to transform/enhance a work of art/design. This struggle led me in different directions, one being investigation into the experiential world of the creator during the moment of creation. Conversations with artists revealed their special and unique creative experiences during the moment of creation. This was the source of initiation to the process of research in this area.

Since the phenomenon of letting go is an experiential phenomenon, it has to be felt to be understood. This means that the self of the person plays an important role in the experience of PLG. The investigation into these experiences would also have an infusion of the researcher’s self into every stage of research. The preface will present the background of the researcher’s personal experience of Phenomenon of letting go which will give the reader a glimpse of the researcher as well as the phenomenon under study.

‘I’ is the point from which Self starts to know, explore and express itself. The ‘I’ is the stepping stone of the self’s journey into the physical reality of the world around it. ‘I’ is the boundary between two world realities, the inner mind world and the outer physical world. It is also true that when we view the outer world of our existence, the view is completely tainted by the colours of our ‘I’. The colours of the ‘I’ are the reason why reality of the physical world is experienced differently by different people. In fact, the colour of Colour is also not the same for every person. The sky is a different blue for each eye. Probably Monet painted the ‘Impression Sunrise’ and filled it with the colours in his eyes, the colours which only he saw, which only his ‘I’ could divine. The objective reality of a pier became a sublime subjective reality and the ‘Impression Sunrise’ was born out the ‘I’ of Monet.

Every objective reality has a corresponding subjectiveness in the experiential reality of a person. When one is delving into the experiential world, one needs to always take cognisance of the 'I'. The 'I' is a canvas on which and with which the experiential reality paints a world for the 'I'. Even as we now start our journey into the various colours of the experiences within the creative process, we will take a look into the 'I' of the person who is undertaking and leading this journey: the 'I' of the researcher.

I am presently 'The Researcher'. I am a designer by profession and an artist by heart. I have been closely associated with creative experiences of varied types; creative experience while playing, creative experience while painting, creative experiences while designing, creative experiences while writing, cooking, dancing, negotiating, teaching and learning. All the experiences are similar and yet drastically different. I would like to share with you a few of my 'similar yet different' creative experiences. A good question would be, 'Why do I want to share them, what is the necessity, why should anybody read it, why should anyone else bother?'

Through this sharing, I want to present glimpses of my 'I' which is otherwise not possible to articulate through objective language. I am hoping that the reader would be able to make a semblance of the researcher's 'I' through which the present research was investigated. The reader would understand why and how the researcher paved a path for the present research, why she took turns, deviations and significant decisions along the research journey to finally arrive at the conclusions for the experiential phenomenon of letting go. I want to share my experience of special creative experiences so that the reader gets an idea of the experience which the term 'Phenomenon of letting go' signifies in the present research.

I want to share one such special creative experience which transformed not only my work but it also brought about a transformation in me. The experience is extremely personal and I have tried to grasp every minute detail about the experience so that the reader gets a comprehensive understanding into experiences of Phenomenon of letting go.

The experience: I was working in the life drawing studio. I remember sitting on the donkey, with my paper on the easel. The model was a young boy, dark face with deep brooding eyes, which probably had seen more than his age. He did not smile at all. I had spent the entire morning trying to draw this boy on paper. Usually, I had a good hand at drawing a portrait, but that day, I just could not get his face. I was just plain struggling. I had requested the model to sit for some extra time. I was still struggling for the form, the line, for



a grasp at the.....I remember feeling extremely disappointed, sad and vulnerable that I'll not be able to ever hold the pencil again. I was near tears, and I closed my eyes. And with just that, the seas opened up...there was this vast expanse, fully white with no beginning, no end....and this compulsive urge to hold the pencil on the paper...and I could see the face on the paper..on the white expanse and all I did was trace...and trace real fast as it was fast disappearing.....I was making strokes which I had never made before...I was drawing the eyes first, then the nose, lips and then the face, and then ears and the hair....the lines just kept moving, vanishing...and I had to hold them there by the pencil.....and finally the face was done. And I felt spent. And it was like...so it's done...slowly I realized me...and then the white beauty receded and I found myself staring at the black...I opened my eyes...I found that I had drawn the face on the paper slightly away from where it should have been....and I looked up to find that the model was nowhere in sight. Soon the realization dawned upon me that I had drawn the model's face without the model in front of me and surprisingly with my eyes closed. It must have been 15-20 minutes that I was drawing like that, yet it felt so fleeting and fast in terms of time. And I was somewhat sad it was over...I just wish that 'it' had stayed with me a little longer. My drawing was a surprise for me, as I did not remember myself doing what had gotten done. The face had a complete resemblance to the model and the strokes gave it a quality which were new for me...I never knew I could do this! I knew this experience was something which will be with me forever. This was perhaps one of the experiences which is marked in my memory as precious and humbling.

Post this, I stumbled upon such experiences quite frequently, and I soon started to wait for them. I still do. I know I cannot call them at my will but I do wait for them to come to me. And they come in different shades and forms.

Being a Graphic artist and a Designer, I am very comfortable with the vast scope and the constrained nature which my profession presents for creative experiences. Both my professions of Graphic arts and Design have a limited tolerance for subjective elaborations of creative experiences which bordered to ineffability or the mystical. There is not much room for 'I did it because at that moment it was just right to do it and I cannot find a single reason why I felt the way I did'. I have learned to wrap these experiences into the packages of analytical reasoning where there is not much scope for subjective 'I' of the creator.

Conversations with artist friends did give small glimpses into their personal experiences which they quickly covered up by statements about artistic temperaments or attributed it to the socio-cultural impact on the artistic vulnerabilities. I had no grasp of what

was happening in their experiential reality which I knew was an important source through which creation happened. Did the artists also have experiences like the one I had mentioned above? I never thought of questioning this line of inquiry with the artists until recently. And I never thought of asking the designers about these experiences as I was under the impression that the probability of designers experiencing such experiences was quite minimal. As again, this thinking came from my personal experiences. I have had more such experiences when I am painting than when I am designing. It is not that I do not have any such experiences at all but the quality and intensity of experiences in Graphic Arts is not of the same gravity as experiences during my more artistic pursuits.

Sadly, I had my own experiences alone which formed my thinking about such creative experiences. I had no idea what to do with my knowledge of these experiences. I could akin it to one's experiences with love. Every love presents itself in a different form and shade, and one treasures these experiences within oneself. Soon these experiences start moulding and forming the person that one is. But still one is all alone in experiencing it and then one somehow hides it within oneself. Like a treasure box in the loft, or one buries it like the message in a bottle, thrown deep into the sea, forgotten yet remembered, and which becomes a reality again when the sea throws it back on to the shores.

I have often wondered why nobody ever told me that I would face a creative experience of such form, depth and intensity. Perhaps knowing about it would have prepared me to receive it in an appropriate manner. We can take a look at meditative experiences, spiritual experiences, where one is initiated into these experiences. It is true that one cannot teach meditative or spiritual experiences, but one could intend to learn it.

I was lucky to have had the opportunity to teach design students to enhance their creative capabilities. When I searched for matter on teaching techniques for creative enhancement, I found precise curricular coursework which would do the job. But this worked only to a certain extent where I could not find an improvement of more than 25-30%. It was my experience that I could provide the right environment, the right amount of self confidence, the right skill sets, and after that I had to wait. And wait. Wait for the student to take the leap. Only minimal students took the leap. Depending upon the depth of the leap, one could glean an enhancement in the work of the student. It was amazing and I am extremely thankful to have witnessed this in my students. The students would come with their work; I could find a different energy in them, the light in their eyes, and the restrained excitement of watching my

reaction when I saw their work. The work would be having an enhancement in terms of creativity alright, but the transformation that it brought about in the student was immense.

Others remained where they were. Not knowing what they had missed. They had done everything that was prescribed. And then they probably attributed it to their lack of talent, and lost the confidence. Perhaps, if I had a curricular knowledge of the creative experiences as a teacher, I could facilitate their growth differently. For that matter, if the students knew about creative experiences, they could prepare themselves to receiving these transformative experiences or at least work towards it. During my teaching time, even through these instances, I had very little grasp of what actually happened to their work or them. As with everyone, I was more concerned with creativity rather than the creative experience. I had found the crack of ignorance within me. I did not know what was happening. And I wanted to know more.

During a research project about the investigation of creative process of artists, I got an opportunity to look deeper into these experiences. Conversations with artists about their creative process revealed some areas where they expressed their experiences of the creative. What caught my attention was when the artist described the instances when she was very deeply involved in her work, a special experience happened which brought about transformative changes to their artworks. She claimed that these events were somehow beyond her 'Self'. Other artists reported to have experienced the presence of Other person and some claimed that the canvas bade them to act the way they did.

These conversations resonated with the core of my own personal creative experiences. I got curious to know more about what other artists and designers experienced, and what this experience actually is. I completely identified with the experience itself. Though I was deeply inspired, I was assailed with numerous doubts about the feasibility of the research and its potential at the initial parts of the research. I tried to venture into safer areas where I knew that the probability of acceptance of the research would be more.

Even as I looked at different areas, there was this compulsive drive to find out more about these intense and special creative experiences so much so that I had to give in to my need to investigate this area. Even when I dabbled into other areas I found myself riveting back to this area and I just could not let go. I understood the reason with which I required to be practical and distanced from the topic to be able to do justice to it, and I also knew I could not rest till I found out all there was about it. I would be honest here and profess that at that

time it seemed a very daunting task to get a distance from the topic itself, I was already deeply involved. But as the need to investigate this topic to the exclusion of all else matured, so did the mind equip itself with required bracketing and objective distance to explore and investigate the topic.

I threw myself into the whirlpool of existing knowledge of creativity and luckily came out of it, though a lot battered and bruised with nothing substantial in my hand. I was in a very confused state, more confused than when I had started my exploration. I still had no idea how to go about it. But soon the researcher in me took over and the paths of research opened themselves. I tread very slowly and carefully as I knew the pitfalls involved in doing experiential research. However, this worked more than an impediment for me. It made me more responsible towards my work, towards the gaps in existing knowledge, towards the methodology that I adopted for the research. I was very critical about the method of analysis and the inferred results. This criticism helped validate the research within the existing parameters so that the body of knowledge generated could contribute towards enhancing the existing knowledge base.

As we take the reader through the journey of research, it is hoped that the reader understands the researcher's person and views the entire research and the research process by keeping in mind the 'I' of the researcher.

## **Acknowledgements**

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# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1. Creative experiences during the act of creation – *Why bother?***

All creators engage into creative experiences and produce artworks and design which sometimes have the capacity to awe the entire world. The Sunflowers of Van Gogh, Water Lilies of Monet, Monalisa of Vinci, Alessi's kettle, all evoke images of the masterpieces created. The images of these masterpieces flash into our minds even before the image of the person who created it (we do know how Vinci and Van Gogh looked, but Monet and Alessi and many other artists and designer's faces are relatively unknown). In fact, many a times, the image of the creator does not appear in our minds at all. There is only a fuzzy grey which is quickly replaced by the letters of the name of the creator which is probably reminiscences from the books where the names were read. Who can claim to know the face behind these masterpieces, the person who made and who, in some way, is a part of that masterpiece? What made these people create these artworks and designs? What was Alessi thinking when the kettle emerged from his consciousness? What did Van Gogh experience when he painted the Sunflowers? Were the experiences of Alessi and Van Gogh the same?



These questions have been dealt-with in the area of creativity for quite some time. The theories of creativity tell us that the act of creation could be understood from the perspectives of the creative product, the creative person, the creative environment and the creative process. This means that one could understand the experience of Van Gogh if one studied the personality of Van Gogh, knew the environment that he worked in, and understood the process he followed during the creation of his paintings. One could understand the creative experience of Van Gogh from the analysis of the painting of 'The Sunflowers' itself.

But would these deliberations glean a glimpse into the creative experience of Van Gogh, the creator in the act of creation? The study of the creative person and the creative product is a mere analysis done by other people to get a better understanding of the creation, especially in case of the paintings. The viewer needs to understand what has been expressed and why it has been expressed in that particular manner in the painting. Both these instances are a third person view or judgement of the actual person or product. The study of creative environment gives an understanding of the optimal parameters that would be required to make the environment conducive for creative expression. This study would give the parameters of optimal space in which creation is likely to happen. But this in no means ensures that an optimal environment alone could lead to the creation of a masterpiece. The creative process followed by the creator is a much analysed area to get an understanding into the act of creation. There are varied theories about the creative processes employed by the creators and which give an in-depth understanding of the events that occur at different stages of process. But these give explanations about the physical events during the creative process. There is negligent knowledge base about the experiential dimension of the creative process. The artists/designers are very much attuned with their experiential stand points and they are very much aware of the significance of the experiential into the act of creation. Hence a study was undertaken to investigate the creative process of artists. The study focussed on the creative process and the various events and experiences during the process. The researcher explored the processes through in-depth conversations with artists about their personal creative processes. The study resulted in a concept model of the creative process in which there were many interesting events within the conceptualization and execution phases of the production of the artwork.

Apart from the concept model, the study also gave insights into the experiences that the artist undergoes during the creative process. The results of the study revealed that the creative process is a series of events occurring in the physical reality, and the artist was

simultaneously experiencing these events on a parallel experiential mental plane. There seems to be a dynamic interaction and agile movement between the physical events and the experiential events. It was observed that the experiences of the physical reality determined the experiences of the artist and the experiences in turn shaped the events that occurred in the physical reality. This effect of the experiential reality of the artist also shaped the painting as well as the process of painting. Both the events of creative process and the creative experience of the events run parallel to each other and the artist is an integral part of the process and experience. He is a witness to the physical events of the creative process as well as the creative experiences occurring in the process of creation.

The conversations with the artists revealed many interesting events and experiences. But what was conspicuous was that when the artists were deeply involved in their creative process, there were instances that brought about transformative changes to the artwork. Perhaps, Van Gogh experienced similar transformative experiences while painting ‘the Sunflowers’. The artists claimed that these instances raised them to a higher mental plane from where the artist viewed both his experiences and the progress of his artwork as an outsider. The artists claimed that these events were somehow beyond their Self. They reported to have experienced the presence of ‘The Other’ person. Some claimed that the canvas bade them to act the way they did.

Like one of the artists said,

“There’s a sense of madness in things. It’s beyond creativity. A madness which becomes a material for doing some things. I think that’s impulse. So many things are intuitional. I have seen that in my work, my experience with that is very consistent. I take a lot of direction from the work itself. It’s not like my creating abilities, I put into it...I make the work....but the work directs me ...in that way it’s very much intuitional.

That’s why aesthetics also has a big role. So it becomes a combination of a lot of things. Your experience, your things...the position of the work at that stage and where it can take another shape...I don’t know whether one could call it a creative moment. I think it’s more of an intuitive moment. Your work is actually directing you to take it to another level of interpretation. That happens a lot in my work. Sometimes I change the work completely, and then I don’t think its creative direction. It’s something else. Its impulse. It’s because you’re not the person who started it, like you’re also growing with your work.”

These expressions slipped from them, while they were engrossed in reporting their creative process to the researcher. These expressions were very fast covered with the exciting revelations about physical events of the creative process. The artists seemed embarrassed by these revelations. But these events seemed marked in their memories; they brought about a turning point in their artworks and changed the direction of the artist's thinking. The artists also shared that their best works were created when they had completely "let go", or suspended logic. They were completely unaware of their surroundings and even themselves. They seemed to have very little control over their thinking and movements during these events. They said that they experienced these periodic shifts into the subconscious, which resulted in novel or unforeseen additions to the painting.

The artists said that the formal education provided them with the required skills but it had not prepared them for these deep creative experiences. They had no idea that they would feel such experiences, and hence their dialogue with such experiences started more as an accidental stumble. As these experiences became more frequent, they soon formulated their own explanations and theories to comprehend and understand them. They found personal methods by which the probability of the experience coming to them increased. They all agreed that this was an individual experience which was highly personal and repeatable, though a bit unpredictable.

This experience marked the core of the creation of artworks. Like in the data collection stages of research, one of the participants had commented that the researcher was asking for the "very core of the creative act, the very core of the being of creation".

The researcher herself is an artist and designer and the above event found a deep resonance in her own creative experiences in the domains of arts as well as design. This developed a deep urge to find more about the creative experiences and this unique event within the creative process. The researcher was aware that the most prevalent theories in study of the act of creation did not include the perspective of creative experiences since the experiential realm is treated as subjective and personal to each artist and designer. But the 'let go' event within the creative experience was a significant find. The researcher embarked into the journey to find more about this special event within the artist/designer's creative experiences.

## 1.2. Creative experiences

A creative person, who is intending to involve him/herself into the creative act, follows the creative process which results into a manifestation artwork as per the domain s/he is working in. Since this study is about creators within the domain of visual arts and design, the artists and designers create a manifestation in the form of an artwork or art form. One could say that the creation of the artwork or painting is a physical reality into which the artist and designers are involved. But within this physical and observable reality, there exists an inner experiential reality. When the artist/ designer is involved into the creative process, he goes through a myriad of experiences, which is a reality for the creator himself. The artists/designers experience this reality in the form of creative experience within the creative process.

This gives a glimpse of what a creative experience is for an artist/designer. But what is actually a 'creative experience' and what does existing literature say about it?

We started the investigation into creative experiences by looking at the dictionary meaning of the phrase 'creative experience' The English Dictionary treats the two words of the phrase 'creative experiences' separately as 'creative' and 'experience'.

### ***Creative:***

(Adj) 1. Marked by the ability or power to create: given to creating

2. Having the quality of something created rather than imitated.

(n) 1. One who is creative

### ***Experience:***

(n) 1. Something personally encountered, undergone or lived through

2. The act or process of directly perceiving events or reality.

(Webster, 2007)

The phrase 'creative experience' is used to label any experience which involves the creative faculty. The experiences of the artist/designer during the creative process could be loosely termed as creative experiences. A study of literature into creative experiences revealed a remarkable lack of a distinctive definition of the phrase '*Creative Experiences*'. The phrase includes a vast variation of creative experiences, be it very initial experience to the very highly intense sublime experience. There are no distinctions as to what exactly constitutes a creative experience and whether the creative experiences could be qualitatively typified.

An initial literature review about creative experiences revealed that there is no defined distinction attributed to creative experiences. The creative experiences are studied through existing and established concepts of similar experiences. Smith (1973) describes the creative experiences from the perspective of the peak experiences (propounded by Maslow). He attributes the dimensions of peak experiences to creative experiences. Interestingly, Smith's mirroring of the attributes of peak experience on creative experiences reflects a distinct lack of vocabulary/language to describe the dimensions of creative experiences. One needs to identify and understand creative experiences from dimensions of peak experiences. Though the peak experiences do have a dimension of strife towards self-realisation, the creative experiences as elaborated by Smith do not touch on this aspect of self transformation of the creator. Thus the study of creative experiences from the perspective of peak experiences does not do justification to vast ambit of creative experiences.

Our present research explores the creative experiences that are 'self-transformative'. We turned our attention to the literature in the domains of Creativity and Aesthetics which are the closest related fields. The field of Creativity, to a larger extent, examines the events within the creative process rather than concerning itself with the experiences of the creator. The domain of Aesthetics gives consideration to the experiential dimension, but from the point perspective of the viewer. The contemporary theories of Aesthetics refer to the experiences of the creative, but they are equated with the viewing experience of the observer of Art/design.. And it would not be justified if one equated a creative experience of the creator with the aesthetic experience of the viewer (Sharma A. , 2011).

From initial talks with artists about their creative process, we realised that a creative experience is a private experience of the creator while he is in the physical reality of the creative process. The creative experience is not a separate entity which exists independent of the creative process. The creative experience initiates at the start of the process and is the self-perception of the process in the inner consciousness of the creator. The creative experience is influenced by the events of creation, and it, in turn, influences the course of events that happen during the creative process. The intensity of the creative experience depends on the intensity of the creative process and involvement of the creator into the creative process. But the literature within these domains does not note this variation in the creative experiences, nor does it signify any categorisation according to the intensity of the experience.

We undertook a separate study to investigate the creative experiences of the designers to get an understanding into these variations. This study was initiated with a prior

understanding gleaned from the talks with artists. The study elaborated that the creative experiences are of varied types. The depth and intensity of the events within the process and the experience of the artist decided the type of creative experience that occurs during the creative process. The study revealed four different types of creative experiences, Assimilatory creative experience, Involved connectedness, Creative leap and Letting go phenomenon (Sharma, 2011). The type four, letting go experience is the most intense and deepest of the creative experiences. The description of this type of creative experience resonates with the descriptions of the '*let go*' experiences as recounted by artists while reporting about their creative process. The letting go experience is the experience through which a transformation manifested into the creator's work and the creator was a changed person too.

Looking at our present research on Phenomenon of letting go, we will be focussing on the above mentioned type 4 creative experience: letting go phenomenon. The research will examine the qualitative aspects of these experiences from the perspective of the creator's experiences.

### **1.3. Phenomenon of letting go (PLG)**

We have titled our current research as 'Phenomenon of letting go in visual arts and design: An exploration into self-transformative creative experiences.' The earlier section elaborated about the creative experiences, and how and why it is necessary to understand the experience of PLG within the creative experiences. One needs to explore what exactly is the phenomenon of letting go and then further embark upon a study to understand the phenomenon.

#### **1.3.1. What is letting go experience?**

What is phenomenon of letting go? Which is the event which would mark itself as PLG within creative experience? Is the phenomenon a single event or a series of events?

One needs to ask these questions to know what this present study is investigating and what is the core that the present investigation is addressing. In the earlier section we have mentioned that our research would be directed at the type four creative experiences (Sharma A. , 2011). In this section, let us first look at the different types of creative experiences, and get an understanding into the qualitative variation of each so that we can demarcate the boundaries within which the phenomenon of letting go occurs.

The creative experiences occur as the following four types:

*Type 1: Assimilatory creative experience* is purely analytical in nature. The creator is thinking critically and analytically about the subject and is involved in finding a solution to the problem at hand.

*Type 2: Involved creative connect* is an experience where one finds that the self/ other of the creator is also involved. The designers claimed that they felt an excitement and a passionate connect with the problem.

*Type 3: The creative leap* involves a deeper involvement of the creator. One finds that subjective self of the creator prevails over his/her analytical self. The designers claimed that they were able to create more novel solutions within this experience as compared to the type 1 and 2 creative experiences.

*Type 4: Letting go phenomenon* is that creative experience which is the deepest and the most intense of the four creative experiences. The creator is totally absorbed in the subject of his work. The designers claim that in these instances their analytical mind seems to have been suppressed completely and they are on a different mental plane altogether. They lose the sense of time, space and also the self. The descriptions of their experience matched with the concept of phenomenon of letting go (Sharma & Poovaiah, 2009). During such instances, the designers claim to create enhanced quality of outputs which was beyond their normal capacities. (Sharma, 2011)

Thus the phenomenon of letting go marks the *type 4* of the creative experiences, and the creators experience greater depth and intensity within this experience. The creative experiences in which the creator loses the sense of time-space and self are the experiences which are described to be of deep intensity. The intense creative experiences have the capacity to bring about a transformation. Our present research is about these deep and intensely transformative creative experiences which are termed as **‘phenomenon of letting go’**.

Now that we have elicited the experience of PLG from within the creative experiences, we will first turn our attention to the terminology and then proceed to defining the premise of PLG.

### **1.3.2. Terminology: Phenomenon of letting go**

The type four creative experiences were earlier termed as letting go experience (Sharma A. , 2011). But for this research, we have changed the terminology to ‘phenomenon of letting go’.

Let us now look into why we have used the terms ‘phenomenon’ and ‘letting go’ to describe the type four creative experiences.

### ***Why the term ‘Phenomenon’?***

As per Sharma (2011), the deepest and the most intense creative experience is the point where there is a manifestation of the experience of letting go. An ‘experience’ is something which is personally encountered and lived through. The artist/designers also experience and live through the letting go experience. But it would not be appropriate to call the letting go experience as an ‘experience’; simply because it is more than an experience. The letting go experience has a separate entity, a separate experiential form and body which is identifiable as being distinct from other ongoing experiences of the artist/designers. The letting go experience is a significant spatio-temporal object of sensory experience which is distinguished from the noumenon<sup>1</sup>, which is the knowledge of things in themselves.

Within this present investigation, we intend to understand the letting go experience (thing in itself/noumena/concept) through its appearances/phenomena which are perceived as the spatio-temporal forms and sensory images. Phenomena are the appearances of the noumena. But the phenomena are not mere appearances ‘to the mind’, but appearances of something that makes itself manifest into one’s mind. (Hegel, 2005). In this investigation, we intend to study the appearances/causes/facets of the letting go experience which are about something that makes itself manifest into the creators experiential reality. This manifestation and the appearances are both the phenomenon of letting go and about the phenomenon of letting go. And hence, it is appropriate that we term this as ‘**Phenomenon**’ of letting go. The phenomenon of letting go is not just a singular experience, but it encompasses of a series/cluster of deep creative experiences in time and space, through its varied forms and qualities.

### ***Why the term ‘Letting go’?***

One of the significant aspects of the PLG is that it is perceived and remembered as a distinct and exceptional event within the creative experiences. In spite of the PLG being a

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<sup>1</sup> In Critique of Pure Reason, Kant explicates noumena as those that are the (presumed) things themselves, which constitute reality and Phenomena are the appearances, which constitute our experience. The phenomena/noumena distinction is the distinction between ways of considering the same object. Noumena refers to different entities or meta-physical attributes of entities, and phenomenon would refer to different ways of perceiving, considering and knowing entities. Thus, one could probably say that the Noumena of an entity could make itself known through the phenomena of that entity. (Gardner, 1999)



phenomenon with spatio-temporal conformation which is experienced by self-senses, it is also an unusual event where there is a complete loss of time, space and self.

Initial study revealed that the artists and designers recollected these significant events within their creative process but were not having an articulated phrase for this experience. All of them had their own words; most of them had more of phrases and descriptions. There was no common terminology for this significant experience. Phrases like ‘deep creative experience’ or ‘intense creative experience’ were listed to signify the phenomenon under study. But these terms were giving variation and degree or hierarchy to creative experiences.

Most of the artists/designers used the description, “*We let go and let things happen*”. “*We allow things to happen and we trust that it will.*” These descriptions give more about the phenomenon than just deep/intense creative experiences. After a discussion with the artist and designer participants of the study, it was decided that the phenomenon would be termed ‘**letting go**’.

The participants were apprehensive about the term initially due to its negative connotations, but when they were in deep conversations about their experiences of letting go during the interview stage, they themselves sometimes realised and reported that, “*yes, now I feel it’s true that I let go...I let go of myself! The term is quite appropriate*”.<sup>2</sup>

Even as the study deepened, the term resonated its soundness/appropriateness in terms of what the creator actually experiences. During this significant event the creator lets go of himself or herself, trusts that he will be held, not allowed to fall, and that the event will show its mark on the manifestation such as a painting/idea/solution. The creator surrenders to this belief and allows for manifestation to show itself.

**‘One lets go. ‘**

Based on the qualitative aspects revealed in the conversations with artists/designers and upon their favourable response to the phrase, the event was appropriately termed as “*Phenomenon of **letting go***”

We will now further look at the various usages of the term ‘letting go’ to understand the various existing connotations.

***Current usage of the term ‘letting go’***

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<sup>2</sup> Excerpted from interview with Artist #4 dated 9 June 2010

Once the phrase “letting go” was arrived at, it became important to get an understanding of its existing meanings and current prevalent usages. This would give background of the current application of the term ‘letting go’ in different fields and domains.

First, we delved into the dictionary meaning of “letting go”

**Letting go:**

1. To abandon self restraint: let fly
2. To relax or release ones hold

(Dictionary M. W., 2007)

**Let go:**

1. Allow to escape, set free, as in, *The police decided to let him go.* [c. 1300]
2. Release one's hold on, as in *Please let go of me*  
or *Once he starts on this subject, he never lets go.* [Early 1400s]
3. **Let it go.**  
Allow it to stand or be accepted. For example,  
*Let it go; we needn't discuss it further.* This usage is sometimes amplified to  
*Let it go at that,* meaning "allow matters to stand as they are." [Late 1800s]  
*Let oneself go.* Behave without restraint; abandon one's inhibitions;  
(The American Heritage® Dictionary of Idioms by Christine Ammer)

The above dictionary meanings resonate with the meaning of the phrase intended to term the events happening within the phenomenon of letting go (PLG).

The term letting go is used abundantly in various fields of literature, psychology, philosophy and so on. Various authors have used the phrase letting go in prose and fiction and more frequently in poetry. In literature, the phrase letting go is used with two types of meanings. The first one implies sadness, as one would give up something one cherished, and the second meaning is in the positive sense where one would give up the negativities and make place for glow of happiness.

Apart from literature, the phrase letting go is used as an important concept in psychology, psycho therapy. In this area, the phrase letting go entails the giving up of one's inhibitions within framework of time, action, senses, emotions etc. to affect a transformative healing (Dow, 1999). Recent review of book by Shaun McNiff (1998), titled, “Trust the

process: An artist's guide to letting go" revealed that the term letting go is used for the event within the creative process where the artist lets go. This is in complete resonance with the term 'letting go' used within this study. Shaw has emphasised on the theme of 'letting go' in his investigation of the creative act in which he assigned the cognitive and affective states to the experience (Shaw, 1999). The meaning that McNiff assigns to the theme letting go is that the artist should let go his previous prejudices and thoughts for the new ones to be let in.

Thus, it is seen that the term letting go is used in various domains and has a multiplicity of meanings. But depending of the context, the term is accordingly used in that field. It has been seen that in many instances, the term 'letting go' is used by the exact connotations as are used in this present study. This is favourable for the present terminology as this makes the term 'phenomenon of letting go' simultaneously unique and familiar.

To counter the negative connotations of the phrase, we will now demarcate the scope of the PLG so that we can clearly focus and distinguish the form of the phenomenon. This will enable us to proceed with the further investigation with a clarity and focus about the phenomenon being studied.

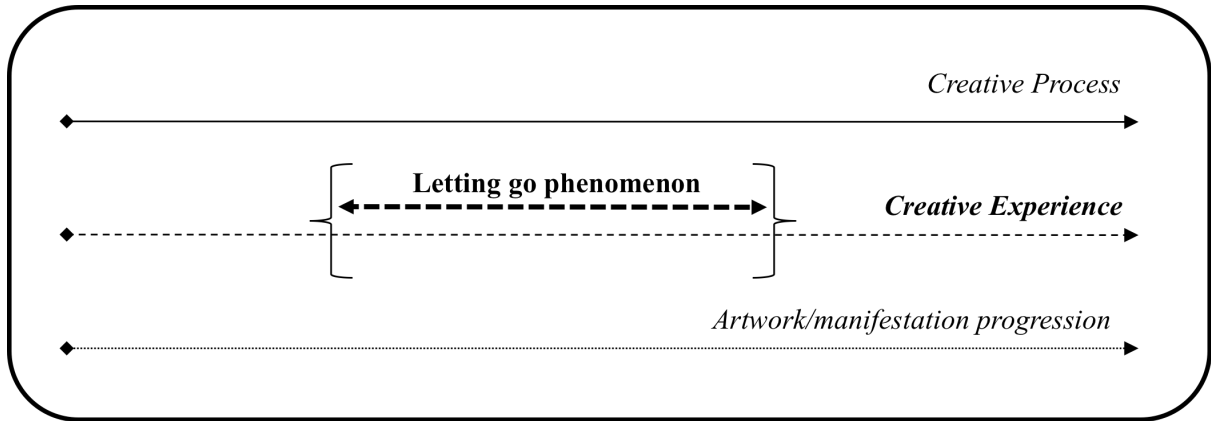
### **1.3.3. Premise of phenomenon of letting go (PLG)**

To get a clear understanding of the phenomenon under study, a premise of the phenomenon of letting go (PLG) has been chalked out. The premise would help identify the phenomenon within the myriad creative experiences of the artists and designers.

Premise of the phenomenon of letting go is :

*"The phenomenon of letting go is an experience within the creative process when the final thing that the creator remembers is letting go. S/he achieves a state of higher consciousness. The creator loses the sense of time and space, s/he loses the sense of self, s/he is very alert in terms of emotions and feelings. And after the episode, s/he is left with a sense of deep satisfaction and an artwork which is almost always beyond his/her usual creative capabilities."*

A creative experience having the above characteristics would be termed as '*letting go experience*'.



**Figure 1.1: The event of phenomenon of letting go within the creative experience**

The phenomenon of letting go happens within the creative process. The stages of the creative process do not have much bearing on the phenomena. The phenomena could occur at any of the stages, be it the preparation, incubation, illumination or execution stage<sup>3</sup> of the creative process. The stage of the artwork or manifestation also does not have any bearing on the occurrence of the phenomena. PLG could occur during the entire making of the artwork, or only at the time of making of a miniscule part of the work, at the start, middle or end of the artwork. The phenomenon of letting go is a creative experience which stands apart from the ongoing creative experiences due to its dimensions and its implications.

Now that we have bracketed the phenomenon of letting go from the creative experiences and defined the premise of the phenomenon, we need to further explore and define the objective of the present research. For the sake of simplicity and convenience of understanding, the phrase phenomenon of letting go would be addressed as “PLG” within the thesis. The PLG could be investigated from multiple perspectives. Our research will explore PLG from a pre-defined intent and according to the postulated need of the investigation.

#### **1.4. Research Need and Objective**

Apart from a deep personal interest about the topic of letting go, the researcher realised that the artists/designers also underwent PLG in their creative experiences. The conversations with the artists revealed that they had never given much thought to their PLG experiences, till the

<sup>3</sup> The creative process has been categorized by Wallas (1926) into the stages of preparation, incubation, illumination and execution. These stages give comprehensive understanding of the thinking processes involved within the creative process and how these thinking processes evolve into the creation of an idea, or solution to the problem or an artwork.

researcher mentioned about them during the interview. Some of them had verbalised their experiences of PLG for first time during the interview. They mentioned that these experiences were, perhaps, only for experiencing and which they neatly tucked away into their memory. But in the process of stashing these experiences of PLG into the memory box, the artists report that they find a thick cloud over those events which lead to the occurrence of PLG experiences. It was surprising since the PLG experiences transform the artwork and many a times the creator too.

They mentioned that the formal Art Education caters to the development of artist/designer's skill sets and inculcates knowledge about theories of Art/design through the study of Aesthetics and Art/Design History. The student is completely equipped to handle the nuances of creative application. Though the artist and designer have a full understanding of what s/he should expect during the creative process, his/her knowledge is limited to the physical reality of the creation of the artwork or design. The artist/designer also knows about the thinking processes expected during the creative process; he knows the methods to overcome challenges that his work may present to him. To some extent the artist/designer has an intuitive knowledge about the obstacles he might face while thinking about the design problem or while visualising or conceptualising. He is, in some way, ready for these creative blocks and expects to face them during the creative process. He is also expecting a creative leap<sup>4</sup> in the thinking process, but he's not really expecting a phase in the creative experience where thinking is lost or stopped. This might be the reason why the experiences of PLG are remembered with such clarity by the artists and designers. These experiences make them very much aware of the significance of their experiential faculty. And the artist/designer attributes this due credit in the development of his practice. It is a fact that the formal education does not prepare the artist/designer for his first encounter with the transformative experience of PLG during his creative experience. The artist/designer is not always prepared when s/he accidentally stumbles upon PLG in the creative experiences. And the artist/designer who has never experienced PLG, he does not know what he has missed. He is not even aware that he has never ever experienced the beauty of PLG within his/her limited creative experiences and that he needs to explore more into his creative experiences to comprehend the PLG experience.

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<sup>4</sup> Creative Leap is a concept propounded by Nigel Cross where he explains the spontaneous jump in the thinking process in the creative process of designers, where the designers take the leap or jump and reach the idea or solution to the problem at hand. (Cross, 1997)

Since PLG forms an important juncture in the enhancement/transformation of the creative output, it is imperative that we get more information about this experience. The initial literature review yielded insignificant information about this experience and this makes it even more important for us to study PLG. This formed the major reason and the primary need to investigate into PLG. It was also realised that there is a qualitative variation in the PLG experiences occurring to artists/designers. But the existing literature does not have any information about either PLG or its variations. Hence there is a need to study this variation which might throw some light on the domain as well as the experiences of artists/designers.

The present research has aimed at the above needs to get an understanding into the PLG experiences.

The objective of the present study could be stated as the following:

- Getting a comprehensive understanding into PLG and its qualitative dimensions.
- Understanding the variation in PLG of artists/designers.

The experience of letting go is responsible for the transformation of the artwork and also of the creator. It is important then, that apart from the formal education of visual arts and design, the artist/ designers need to be aware of the existence of PLG during the creative process so that they can make themselves more receptive to experiencing it

The existing literature and knowledge base is profuse with theories that explicate concepts from creativity, aesthetics, and spirituality and so on. These theories do touch upon the concept of the brush with sublime, but very inadequately. There is an obvious lack of in-depth information about the experience of PLG. One could find eloquent quotes by artists about their experiences which are sometimes metaphysical or inclined towards the mystical/ magical. This could be the reason why scientific community probably looks at the reports and eventually the artists with disdain. Due to this, the scientific community has stayed clear from touching upon this important event. They shy away from subjective, unobservable experiences due to the failure of scientific thinking and methodologies to accommodate such transient and intense experiences into their logical and analytical frameworks. In fact, one could say that the experience of PLG defies all analytical logic as the experience owes its existence to the loss of self, time-space and hence a loss of any meaningful thought.

The artists/designers emphasise the importance of imagination and intuition to the works of art, but they shy away from the topic of experiences of the sublime. They seem to be comfortable to embark on a more clarified and safe scientific deductions about thinking processes, mental imagery, cognitive processes etc, even as the practitioners (artists/designers) of the fields reach the peaks of their creative pursuits on the basis of the experience of PLG within their creative endeavours.<sup>5</sup>

This hesitation to share these experiences with the public is possibly rooted in negligible mention of PLG experiences in the theoretical domains. Hence the present research recognises this urgent need to create a knowledge base which addresses the crucial experiences of PLG of artists/designers since they treat the PLG experiences as sacred and significant to their work and to themselves.

#### **1.4.1 Scope**

Before embarking onto the varied phases of research, it is very important that we get a complete idea of scope of research. This would give a clear idea of the boundaries within which the research will be done and it will also help get an understanding of what the research will not cover within this endeavour.

While enlisting the scope, the premise of PLG is the most paramount. Our present study will look into the experiences which qualify as PLG as per the characterisations enlisted in the premise. Other experiences which do not conform to the premise would not be a part of this study.

To reiterate the premise, PLG is a series of creative experiences where the artist/designers are deeply involved in their creative process and they lose the sense of time and space, they lose the sense of self and reach a plane of higher consciousness where they sometimes experience the sublime. Once the experience is over, they return back to awareness with a sense of deep satisfaction and a manifestation which is usually beyond the artist/designer's usual creative capacity.

The present study will also investigate the PLG experiences during the creative process of artists/ designers and evaluate the variation which makes their experience different and distinct.

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<sup>5</sup> Sharma's (Sharma & Poovaiah, 2009) study of the creative experience of designers showed that the phenomenon of letting go helped in the enhancement of the creative quality of the creative product the designer was involved with.

### **1.4.2 Focus**

We have marked the boundaries of the present research by formulating the scope of the research. We will now determine the focus of our research.

The present research will focus on the broad areas of:

- Experience of PLG
- Experience of PLG in the domains of Visual Arts and Design.

The present research will investigate the experience of PLG to understand its aspects and nuances which make a distinct identifiable experience. The research will focus on the PLG in the domains of Visual arts and Design to discern the distinctiveness which arises due to the constraints of a particular field.

### **1.4.3 Limitations**

The present investigation into PLG aims to venture into an in-depth exploration of the creative experience to give a wholesome and comprehensive understanding of the phenomena.

In spite of being comprehensive, the study has its limitations in terms of:

*The literature:* The domains of Arts and Design have a limited literature about creative experiences. The researcher had to largely refer from literature available in related fields of creativity, aesthetics, psychology and philosophy. The present knowledge about intense self transformative creative experiences is based on the theories existing in similar experiences, rather than directly from the knowledge base of PLG (PLG is a term that we have coined as a part of the research and the phenomenon is not speculated much within various domains of study).

*The methodology:* The phenomenon of letting go is in the experiential realm, and hence the present research has utilised phenomenological methodologies, more specifically Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA, henceforth). The entire process of the research should be viewed from the framework of HPA. The method of data-collection and the method of analysis followed the HPA. This in turn means that the data elicited and the inferences drawn owe their roots to the methodology employed.



*Participants:* The Research Design<sup>6</sup> formulated that the data should be gathered from ten artists and ten designer participants. The analysis and the inferences reflect the data elicited from the twenty participants. This does not mean that the dimensions of PLG are limited to the experience of PLG of twenty involved participants. But one could view this research as a start point which gives dimensions to PLG and to which more additions are always possible.

*The researcher:* The Research Design allows for interpretations of the researcher to be included within the investigation. Hence it is required that reader takes into account the individuality of the researcher. The background and perspective of the researcher has been given in Chapter 4 of the thesis. It is requested that the reader views the entire research from the perspective of the researcher and her personality, and her thinking trajectories.

*Domains:* In this present study, PLG is investigated in the domains of visual arts and design and the dimensions/attributes elicited from the analysis are contextualised within these two domains. PLG might occur in other domains as well. But as per the scope of this research, we will be restricting ourselves to PLG in Arts and Design.

The research has formed its focus areas. It has handled the various stages of research like literature review, methodology, data collection, analysis and inferences in the framework of the above mentioned limitations. This is akin to the Design process which passes through various phases of creation to arrive on the optimal solution even as it negotiates the constraints of the design problem. These constraints not restrain the process of design but they guide it to the formulation of the most optimal solution for that problem. Similarly, these limitations should be viewed not as restraints but as guidelines to reach the optimal inferences for the present research problem.

## **1.5. Research Questions**

We have, now elaborated the scope and focus of the research and also understood its limitations. Even though the focus of the research explains the area which the study will target, the focus area is still very broad. We need to further converge on the exact problem

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<sup>6</sup> Research Design: After reviewing the various methodologies, we arrived at HPA as the research methodology for the present research. According to the framework of HPA, the research design was formulated which decided the method of data-collection, analysis and verification. This has been elaborated in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

that this research will be investigating. We have condensed the research problem in the form of three research questions.

The research questions for the present research are:

- **The phenomenon of letting go (PLG):** What is it and what are its qualitative aspects?
- **The dimensions of PLG:** What are the aspects that make up PLG, what are the stages, the varied types and so on?
- **The variance in PLG between the domains of arts and design:** What are the specific aspects of PLG in the domains of visual arts and design and what are the points of variance in both the domains?

The entire research will focus to find answers to the three formulated research questions.

## 1.6. Summary

Summarising the work that we have done in this chapter, we started with understanding the existence of PLG within creative experiences. PLG are the higher order, type four creative experiences which sometimes bring about transformative changes to the artwork and the creative person. We defined the premise of PLG so that we could understand the characteristic of the experiential phenomenon that we would be investigating in this research. Once the phenomenon is identified, we proceeded to argue for the terminology of PLG, where we looked at the reasons for using those particular words within the phrase and pre-existing meanings and usage of the terms used. Once the phenomenon and its terminology were determined, we then moved ahead to establish the need for research investigation of PLG and set an objective to the research. This helped in realising the scope and focus of the present investigation. We also enlisted the limitations of the study in terms of the methodological limitations, the researcher limitations and so on. This gave us a fair idea of constraints within which the research was conducted. Finally, we converged on three research questions which the present study will specifically address.

With the background and the boundaries of the research in place, we are now set to start the investigation on formulated research questions. The next chapter would scrutinise the

literature from the perspective of experiences whose characteristics are analogous to the premise of PLG (defined in chapter 1). It will also review concepts and theories in various domains to understand the phenomenon and identify gaps in the theoretical positions in various domains.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

*“No finite point has meaning without an infinite reference point.”*

*~Jean Paul Sartre*

#### **2.1 Introduction**

We made a start to this research by identifying the finite point, which for this study is ‘Phenomenon of letting go (PLG)’. PLG as a term is very new since we coined the name and the terminology as a part of this study. PLG is not a novel concept. It is probably known by different names. PLG as an experiential phenomenon is not new at all. This phenomenon is extensively experienced by artists and designers as part of their everyday work life. It is also a part of experience of practitioners of other fields as well. It may be known differently for

different domains and its practitioners. Hence, to gain more understanding into PLG, the meaning making process undertook an in-depth review of the literature.

Due to the newness of the term PLG, the literature has nearly no references to PLG as an experiential phenomenon. But when one looks at the premise and characterisation of PLG, one does find analogous and parallel phenomenon which are dealt with in varied disciplines like psychology, philosophy and so on.

We will now start our review of literature by exploring into the various analogous and parallel concepts present in varied disciplines of Arts, Design, Psychology, Philosophy, Theology and Indian Psychology. Before we move ahead one needs to get a complete understanding of what the phenomenon of letting go is, what exactly are we talking about, where does this phenomena occur and how does one get to know/feel or perceive it. Also one needs to comprehend the type of knowledge that we are seeking.

PLG as described in the earlier chapter is an experiential phenomenon which occurs to artists/designers involved in the creative process. These experiences are intense and self-embodying. The artist/designer lives through these experiences in the present moment. Within this moment there is perhaps no apprehension or articulation of the experiential events happening to the artist/designer. But there is definitely knowledge of what one is experiencing.

In this chapter we are starting a discussion on the knowledge available on the experiential reality of the PLG. The present research is focussing on a subjective experiential realm which is a little bit far from the physical reality of three-dimensional space where all objects reside in linear time. During the PLG, there is an amalgamation of the artist/designer's work-body which are in this three dimensional physical reality and the mental actions and responses which are residing in the experiential reality. One needs to then turn focus on the space and time dynamics in both the realities when the experiential event of PLG occurs. In the case of PLG, one needs to look at a place where no space-time or self coordinates are present. When does PLG occur in a place without space, time and self? How does the artist/designer know that they experienced something like PLG?

One good start point would be to talk a little bit about how we know a few things without ever knowing that we know. All the artists/designers experience this phenomenon, they know that it is going to happen and so they let go. PLG is as ephemeral as the feeling of knowing that someone is watching you without knowing who or when. The phenomenon

occurs in that mental space as this knowing. It is knowledge that Michael Polyani terms as ‘Tacit knowing’ (Polyani, 1966, 2009). Polyani (1966, 2009, p. 15) explicates that “wherever some process in our body gives rise to consciousness in us, our tacit knowing of the process will make sense of it in terms of an experience to which we are attending”. Tacit knowing is the key to apprehend the PLG when it is in progress in the experiential reality of an artist/designer. And it is the confidence and trust in this tacit knowledge that allows the artist/designer to let go. Polyani elaborates that, “To hold such knowledge is an act which is deeply committed to the conviction that there is something to be discovered. It is personal, in the sense of involving the personality of him that holds it, and also in the sense of being, as a rule, solitary; but there is no trace in it of self-indulgence. The discoverer is filled with a compelling sense of responsibility for the pursuit of a hidden truth which demands his services for revealing it. His act of knowing exercises a personal judgment in relating evidence to an external reality, an aspect he is seeking to apprehend (Polyani, 1966, 2009, p. 25).

The artist/designer is akin to a discoverer who is seeking knowledge in his painting or design. And within this process he finds his self in the marks in his works which appear unknowingly.

While we start on our search of literature for the knowledge of the self-transformative creative experiences like PLG, it is requisite to state that the knowledge of such phenomenon needs to be viewed in a slightly different light. We will follow Polyani’s statement that ‘Tacit knowing achieves comprehension by indwelling and that all knowledge consists of or is rooted in such acts of comprehension.’ We will start the literature search with an approach where the existing literature could be comprehended with not just by looking at it, but by indwelling in it, so that the complete joint meaning can be comprehended.

Since we have termed the self-transformative creative experiences as phenomenon of letting go (PLG), it is difficult to find direct literature about the phenomenon itself. So the next best way to go forward was to look for literature about experiences which share the premise or some parts of the premise of PLG.

Let us start with reiterating the premise of the PLG as described in chapter 1.

*“The phenomenon of letting go (PLG) is an experience within the creative process when the final thing that the creator remembers is letting go. S/he achieves a state of higher consciousness. The creator loses the sense of time and space, s/he loses the sense of self, s/he*

*is very alert in terms of emotions and feelings and after the episode, and s/he is left with a sense of deep satisfaction and a transformed artwork.”*

*A creative experience having these characteristics would be termed as ‘letting go experience’.*

In this chapter, we follow the characteristics of PLG and tackle them with literature from various domains. The review process starts by selecting the phrases from the premise and reviewing them. The review process starts by looking at the phrase creative experiences since PLG is an event within the creative experiences. We look into the theories of Creativity to find explanations for the phenomenon. We also look at creative and aesthetic experiences as creative experiences are closely dealt with in the area of Aesthetics. Once we have thoroughly studied creative experiences, we relook at the premise and find that it is explained by an analogous concept of Inspiration. The concept of Inspiration shares the characteristics of PLG as described in the premise. Here we study the expressions of art and design practitioners. These expressions reveal an element of self-transcendence (which is also a part of descriptions of PLG) within the event of Inspiration. We study the next analogous concept of self-transcendence which arises out of the study of Inspiration. As per the premise, Self-transcendence is a core event in PLG. In the literature review of self-transcending experiences we examine the like Meditative, Spiritual, Zen-koan experiences which are similar or parallel to PLG.

We closely examine the three important elements described in the premise of PLG which is time, space and self. We look at the literature and understand the phenomenological dynamics of all the three elements and their interactions in experiential realms. Since the premise treats PLG as a self-transformative experience, we examine the literature on experiences which transform the self and work. We then relook at the premise and examine those concepts which bear a strong resemblance to PLG. Two such concepts are discussed in this chapter and their scope and uniqueness are understood.

Let us now start the review of literature by examining creative experiences through the theories in the area of Creativity to get an understanding about the approach and concepts dealing with the creative process and the act of creation.

## 2.2 Creativity

The area of creativity is a vast arena where psychologists have propounded theories about the creativity of humans (and non-human animals too!). The field is abounding with multiple perspectives about the act of creation. The word ‘to create’ is a verb but it has been tackled by the theorists as a noun, ‘Creativity’.

The dictionary meaning of the word Creativity is

*Noun:* 1: The quality of being creative

2: the ability to create (Webster, 2007)

We will, now, look at the various approaches taken to understand the act of creation, its causal and influential factors. The domain approaches ‘creativity’ multi-dimensionally in terms of the creative person, the creative product, the creative environment and the creative process.

### *The Creative person*

How does one know whether a person is creative? How does one glean the potentiality or capability of creativity in a person during a particular creative act? What connections are established in the creator’s thinking processes which results in novel and creative outcomes? Guilford explicates that creativity entails a particular type of thinking called the divergent thinking. Divergent thinking is a non-linear mode of thinking which is characterised by flexibility, originality and fluency (Guilford, 1959). Guilford devised tests which could gauge a person’s creative potential (creativity index) by measuring and analysing various types of thinking and their parameters. These tests provide an index of creative potential of the creator as per pre-defined personality types. This classifies the creator into generalised types without providing any specifications about the ‘person’ of the artist/designer who is involved in the creative process and whose person is being instilled into the painting or form being designed.

### *The Creative product*

Some theorists consider the creative product to be the main factor to decide the depth of creativity. How does one know that the product created or designed is creative? How does one understand the degree of creativity for a creative product? What are the criteria which will decide that the product is creative and hence the creator is a creative person? Haussman considers that that act is creative whose outcome is new, valuable and intelligible (Haussman,



2009). Hence the degree of novelty, value and intelligence shown through a product would decide the creative capability of the creator. To some extent, it is true that the outcome of his creative pursuits could decide the degree of creativity potential of that person. But the judgement of novelty is a subjective understanding of the judge and hence cannot give an accurate map of the creative capability of the creator. For example, Van Gogh's work was never judged as being up to the mark by the peers/ critics of his time. So should one assume that Van Gogh was not creative?

### *The Creative environment*

What are the various environmental factors which affect the making of the artwork or a product? What are the varied motivations which impact creative capability of the artist/designer and the creative product which they create? Amabile identified the impact of social influences on creative capability of the creators and formed a framework to measure creativity based on the creator's extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Amabile, 1996). This should mean that any person who is given a motivated and creative environment should be able to produce a creative product. But this is not always true. Similarly, it is not the case that a creative artist/designer would constantly produce a novel innovative product given a proactive/ positive creative environment. There is never a consistency in the degree of creativity of the product designed by the same creator at different instances even though he might be given similar extrinsic and intrinsic motivation at all times. The act of creation needs more than a creative environment.

### *The Creative process*

Perhaps the understanding of the creative process could give insights into the creative act. What is the process which leads to the emergence of a highly creative artwork or design? Does the creative process adapted by each creator impact the outcome and determine the creative capability of the creator? Wallas (1926) delineated four phases of the creative process, namely, preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. According to Wallas, the preparation stage focuses the mind on the problem at hand; in the incubation phase the mind withdraws its attention from the problem and allows internal processing to happen; in the illumination stage there is a spontaneous presentation of insight or intuition to the mind; and in the final stage of verification, the creator returns back to his rational mind and analytical thinking processes to evaluate and refine the solution/insight. More recently, Nigel Cross has talked about an event within the creative process which he has termed as the

‘Creative Leap’. He explains that there comes a time within the creative process that one can identify a leap in the work which leads to the emergence of novel ideas (Cross, 1997). In this case, the identified ‘leap’ is in the novelty of the artwork and it is again the apprehension and judgement of the viewer of the creation. This is in contrast with our present study since our study puts the focus on the creator and his experiences without any references to the manifestation. That the manifestation or the creation is of transformed/enhanced quality is incidental and our research does not scrutinize this aspect/outcome of PLG.

The above mentioned insights throw light on varied aspects of creativity in terms of

- Personality traits of a creative person and methods to evaluate the creative capacity of a creator
- Criteria to evaluate the creativity of an artwork or design
- The motivation factors which impact the creativity of creator and methods to evaluate the factors
- Creative process adapted during the act of creation and the stages within it.

The literature does provide substantial data about creativity and its methods of evaluation. But there might be some instances where one would be impelled to view these theories as methods of judgment. They implore, in a way, to view the creative person and the creative products from jury’s perspective where the jury is viewing the evidence and passing judgement on an event/ outcome of an event they have not witnessed. One could then question whether a third person judgement of a manifestation is the right method to evaluate or assess the creative capability of a creator. These are questions which are rightfully posed, but right now are not within the scope of the research.

These approaches do not talk about the act of creation from the perspective of self within the act of creation. It is our contention that one would not get a true and complete picture of capability of the creator by assessing all the elements surrounding him and excluding him. It is said that an iceberg is only the tip of the mountain which is visible out of the sea. Our research on PLG stems from the belief that to know the depths of creativity and its potential, the creator has to be put under the spotlight. He has to become the centre of all investigation. Even as we say this, there are still many pertinent questions about PLG during creative experiences which need to be answered. How does the creator view his own creative process? Does the creator view his creative act with clarity and as empirically an analyst

would view it? Would one get a clear picture of the ephemeral act of creation by viewing it empirically or by living through the infinite depth of the experience of creation or at least empathically get close to the experience through the articulations of the creator?

Let us now move away from the empiricist creativity to the rich space of creative experiences. This is also in conformity with the premise of PLG. In the premise, PLG is defined as a self-transformative creative experience.

## **2.3 Creative Experiences**

An artist/designer who is involved in the act of creation is going through a series of events in both the outer physical space and the inner experiential space. Theories of creativity address the outer physical space of the creative process. It is equally important to understand the artist/ designer's inner world where the experiential events occur. The creative process is not just a sequence of events in physical reality but it has a parallel correlating experiential reality in the artists/designer's inner world or mental spaces.

It is well known that the artist/ designer's subjectivity has a major bearing on the artwork/design which the creators create. Hagman reiterates Milner and Winnicott's thoughts on the creative process where they describe "how the artist is in dynamic encounter with the real world, inner and outer impacting and changing each other and bringing about in the potential space which is both physical and psychological, a brand new object, an artwork or a design" (Hagman, 2010). Here Hagman indicates that the artist/designer simultaneously apprehends two types of realities- physical reality and experiential reality. He explains that there is a reciprocal relationship between the physical reality in which the artist/designer creates the artwork/design and the experiential reality in which he apprehends the physical world and interacts with it. This interaction of the physical and experiential realms creates and impacts the creation of the artists/designers.

The experience of PLG involves the interaction of the inner psychological world of the artist/designer and the outer physical world of the painting/design. This interaction of both the worlds starts at a single point for the creator, the urge to create.

Arieti speaks of the longing to create

“The creative process is a way of fulfilling the longing or search for a new object or state of experience or existence . . . This longing can be observed not only during the creative process but also in the creative product” (1976, p. 6).

It is interesting that Arieti mentions about a start to the experiential process through a longing which initiates in Hagman’s ‘inner world’ and which later finds its manifestation in the creative product in the ‘outer world’ (Hagman, 2010).

Similarly, in case of PLG, the events starting with longing and urge in the artist/designer’s inner world find its manifestation in the outer world of artwork. The artists/designers experience PLG as a part of their inner experiential space. PLG is not externally observable event, but one can see its imprint in the artwork/design being created which underwent through the creative process. In addition to an external manifestation, the experience of PLG leaves a mark on the experiential reality of the creator as well.

Before venturing into specific creative experiences like PLG, we need to understand what an ‘experience’ actually is and what sets it apart from other ongoing perceptions of events. Dewey speaks about an experience as:

“An experience has a unity that gives it its name. The existence of this unity is constituted by a single quality that pervades the entire experience in spite of the variations of its constituent parts“ (Dewey, 1939).

This means that any meaningful experience has an integrated existential living of the experience, followed by the reflection on the experience. This demarcates the set of experientially lived instants/moments as a separate experience. Mathur explains that an experience unfolds in phases. An experience starts with an initial phase of qualitative instances in which doing-undoing things give rise to a reflective experience. Within the next phase of reflective experience, the mechanical doing and undergoing achieves significance, meanings are perceived and relationships are understood. In the final phase, significance is incorporated to meanings and inter-relationships are perceived. Then this experience is termed as an experience or a consummatory experience. (Mathur, 1992)

An artist/designer’s creative process is filled with various kinds of consummatory experiences through which the artist will reflect, signify and accumulate (store in memory for future) varied kinds of experiences. Since consummatory creative experiences involve the self of the artist/designer in the experience. The self further reflects and signifies meanings to the various instances in the experience. Aristotle states “From Art proceed things of which the

form is in the soul of the artist” (Rothenberg & Hausman, 1976) Aristotle talks about the inner-most self of the artist being represented in the form created by the artist. Collier (1972) explicates that physical body of the artist, in simultaneity with his experiential self, dances out his emotions which are registered by the creation of painting in its form. It is interesting to note here, that the dynamic interaction of the physical and experiential realities of the artists is amalgamated together within the act of creation. This is in resonance with the premise of PLG where the personal self of the artist/designer finds itself in the created artworks/designs.

Thus, there seems to be a deep relationship of self within the creative experiences. Fromm writes of the artist’s creative experience as:

“The artist has to give up holding onto himself, as a thing and begin to experience himself only in the process of creative response; paradoxically enough, if he can experience himself in this process, he loses himself. He transcends the boundaries of his own person and at the very moment when he feels “I am,” he also feels “I am you,” “I am one with the world” (Fromm, 1959, p. 51).

This description is very similar to the descriptions of the artists about their experience of PLG. Some of the artists/designers express that PLG involves someone beyond one’s self.

The psychologist, Otto Rank, speaks of creative experience as coming from beyond the personal self. He writes, “When one begins the creative process, one leaves the ordinary world behind. One steps into the unknown and comes into contact not only with the material from one’s personal, deeper self, but also from the universal creative source. The ‘creative experience’ takes place at a psychic level deeper than rationality, and its result is a sense of connection to life that extends beyond the present moment in all directions of time . . . a sense of more than personal participation in everlasting life” (Proffoff, 1992, p. 250).

Thus, the literature shows that a creative experience starts with an urge to create and involves a deep longing for the object. The creative experience is an experience within the inner reality of the artist/designer’s mind. PLG is an event within the creative experiences and when this event happens, one can find a deep involvement of the self with the object, so much so that one can find the mark of the self on the artwork/painting. PLG is a very private and personal experience where the artist/designer makes personal connections. This levitates the artist/designer beyond his self and in the process he finds oneness with his self.

When one looks at literature, one finds that more knowledge base exists in the domain of aesthetic experience of the viewer as compared to the creative experience of the creator.

This is quite surprising and could be attributed to the fact that the theorists of creative/aesthetic experiences were not artists/designers themselves and had restrictive access to creative experience in arts. The only access they had to art was through viewing of art and this experience has been theorized in the field of Aesthetics which deals with aesthetic experiences. Let us now look at aesthetic experience to learn more about the experiential realm in art and try to find knowledge about deep creative experiences like PLG.

## **2.4 Aesthetic Experience**

When one looks into the creative process of artists/designers, one realizes that the aesthetic and creative experiences are intertwined for the creator. The process of creation includes the process of viewing and there is a continuous alternation of the two processes. From the point of view of the artist/designer, the aesthetic experience is an integral part of the creative experience (Sharma, 2011). Sharma states that the creative experience includes the aesthetic experience within it since the process of creation implies the inclusion of the aesthetic experience.

Since we are talking about PLG within creative experiences, there is an analogous concept in the domain of aesthetics which is known as concept of intuition. Through intuition, an artist/designer is given the inspiration to enter into new areas and thoughts and this manifests in the artwork/painting. Croce (1913) states that to intuit, is to express. Hence the aesthetic experience involves an intuitive absoluteness which is an integral part of the experience (Croce & Romanell, 1995). The act of intuition is always accompanied by the act of expression. In fact, the expression will vouch for the existence of the moment of intuition. When the artist is involved within the creative process, the moment of intuition is accompanied with expression, which is visible in the manifestation of the artwork/design. The experience of PLG transforms the artwork/design. This transformation is evidenced as marks/expressions in the painting/artwork. Thus, one can say that the artwork/design is another window from which one can find evidence of the intuitive moment or PLG which might have occurred within the creative experiences. But to locate a moment of intuition or PLG through the viewer's eyes would not always give an accurate diagnosis since we would be relying on his empathetic prowess and interpretive judgements.

Another concept in the literature on aesthetic experience is the concept of play. Gadamer takes play as the basic clue to the ontological structure of art. He states that play is

not a form of disengaged, disinterested exercise of subjectivity<sup>7</sup>, but is rather something that has its own order and structure to which one is given over (Cooper, 1992). PLG is a series of events when the artist/designer is in complete subjective engagement with his work, in a completely engrossed and certainly not in a disinterested state. We observe that the artists/designers report of an element of play with their work which results in the experience of PLG. This interactive play of self with the artwork results in multiple planes of thinking where thoughts reside and from where they emerge.

PLG could be compared to a parallel concept namely play experiences. Ackerman describes the experience of deep play where the individual is in a state of un-selfconscious engagement with his surroundings. This experience takes the person into an exalted zone where he transcends time. When the person reaches such a state, he achieves an optimal creative capacity (Ackerman, 1999). The state of deep play, as described by Ackerman, completely resonates the character of PLG as described in the premise of this research. One could get a better understanding into PLG by identifying and understanding presence of play experience with aesthetic/creative experiences.

Going back to aesthetic experiences, Dewey talks about the viewer's response and elaborates that the subject i.e. the viewer undergoes alterations, and the process continues until the self of the viewer and the object i.e. artwork/design are mutually adapted, ending with feeling of harmony (Dewey, 1939). This is a perfect description of a deep aesthetic experience. Interestingly, it is similar to PLG in terms of the self being mutually adapted and harmoniously involved with artwork made by the creator. Perhaps the self is in a relationship of play with his artwork. And when the self experiences a deep play within this interaction, one could then identify the occurrence of PLG within the aesthetic experience. Sharma (2011) reports that there is a co-relation between the deeper aesthetic and creative experiences that involve the occurrence of PLG.

There is no doubt that the very first viewer of any artwork is the artist/designer himself. As Rothko remarks "The most important to the artist is faith in his ability to produce miracles when they are needed through constant practice. Pictures must be miraculous. The instant one is completed; the intimacy between the creation and creator is ended. He is an outsider. The picture must be for him, as for anyone experiencing it later, a revelation, an unexpected and unprecedented resolution of an eternally familiar need" (Protter, 1997) .

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<sup>7</sup> Kant, in his *Standards of Judgment*, propounds that disinterestedness is one of the crucial constituent in the understanding of Beauty.

Rothko expresses about the states of mind of the artist while creating and that of the viewer while viewing. It is interesting that Rothko indicates the dual role of the artist who moves from being an involved creator to an outsider at the end of the painting. This would mean that the artist/designers are both the creator and viewer of their creation. This means that there is a positive correlation between the intensity of aesthetic experience of the artist and its impact on the intensity of his creative experience. This brings a positive consequence to the overall intensity of his creative experience. This could mean that when the intensity of aesthetic experience is high in the creative process, there are higher chances of the creator experiencing high intensity creative experiences, perhaps experience PLG as well.

In Indian Philosophy, according to *Abhinavagupta*<sup>8</sup>, aesthetic experience is, the act of tasting of *Rasa*<sup>9</sup>, of immersing oneself in it (*rasa*) to the exclusion of all else (Gnoli, 1985). He talks about the aesthetic experience as being characterized by a state of self-centred consciousness, implying the suppression of any practical desire. He states that there is merging of subject to object to the exclusion of all else. *Abhinavagupta* states that the *rasa* experience is similar to Supreme bliss which arises out of the tasting and cogitation of the interacting instances in an experience. According to *Abhinavagupta* this bliss is accompanied by a sense of wonder, *Chamatkara*. *Abhinavagupta* says that due to his intuitive powers, an artist is capable of creating new and original objects. In this process they produce an experiential entity, *Rasa*. He says that the *Rasa* belongs to the artist alone, it is a part of his generalized consciousness. (Gnoli, 1985)

*Abhinavagupta* explicates the *rasa* concept from the point of view of art where the creator and the viewer are in the same timeframe. The art is created at the same time as the viewer perceives it (e.g singing, performance and so on). Hence *Abhinavagupta* maintains that the *Rasa* that is produced in the artist during the act of creation is transferred to the collective consciousness of the viewer/s. We need to investigate whether this would hold true in case of visual arts and design where the creator and viewer are not in the same physical time/space.

The concept of *rasa* speaks about the essence of an experience which is very similar to the experience of PLG. It is in fact explicating the essence of PLG to a large extent. Though

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<sup>8</sup> Abhinavagupta was a prominent Tantra philosopher in 10<sup>th</sup> AD whose noted contributions in the field of aesthetics include commentaries on Bharata's *Natyashastra* and *Dhvanyaloka*.

<sup>9</sup> *Natyashastra* talks of drama where the stimulated faculties of both sight and hearing collaborate in arousing in the spectator a state of consciousness conceived intuitively and concretely as the juice and flavor called 'Rasa'. *Natyashastra* talks of eight *rasas*, Erotic – *Shringara*, Comic- *Hasya*, Pathetic – *Karuna*, Furious- *Raudra*, Heroic – *Vira*, Terrible – *Bhayankara*, Odious – *Bibhatsa*, Marvelous – *Adbhuta* and the ninth Quietistic- *Shanta* *rasa* was added later by *Abhinavagupta*.



there are similarities between the concepts of *rasa* and PLG, one needs to keep in mind that PLG is an actual physical and mental experience of an artist and *Rasa* is a philosophical concept borne to explicate the physical experience of viewing, or tasting. The concept of *Rasa* also establishes that the experience of PLG is a very real experience and not just a mystifying experience of an artist, and a powerful concept like *Rasa* was derived to explicate it.

Even scientific fields report the experience of the aesthetic. Ghiselin (1952) explains the thinking process of the mathematician Henri Poincare. He states that aesthetic emotions play an important role in bringing certain unconscious elements to the realm of consciousness. He insists that the unconscious elements (solutions/ideas and so on) which are brought forth are the ones which appease to the scientist's aesthetic sensibility. Thus the acts of creation or discovery in the field of science also find the creator or the inventor scientist to be experiencing moments similar to PLG. Ghiselin states that mathematicians would be in complete agreement with the artists regarding the dependence of the creator on the affective guides rather than the intellectual processes. The artists follow similar preferences during the act of creation. Scientific discoverers/ inventors along with artists/designers describe that the act of creation involves a moment of inspiration.

## **2.5 Inspiration: Higher states of consciousness**

The experience of PLG takes the creator (artists/designers) into a state of higher consciousness where the solutions or ideas are presented to him. The creators describe that they were inspired and the solution just presents itself to them. Plato emphasised the importance of inspiration from an external source and a state in which the creator is out of his senses. He says "*For a poet is a light and winged thing, and holy and never able to compose until he has become inspired, and is beside himself, and reason is no longer in him*" (Rothenberg & Hausman, 1976, p. 32). Plato talks about the poet who creates when he is besieged by inspiration and he finds himself with a deep longing and intense passion to express himself. Even in the domain of Art, one sees a similar inspiration fondly termed as 'muse' which has been assigned the power to make the creator do what he would normally not have done. R.J.Clements attests this thought in his seminal works on Michelangelo's theory of Art, where he mentions that:

“Crocce felt that Michelangelo received the thrills of the rapid visitation by a muse or daemon...Crocce adds that this exaltation was not unknown to Michelangelo who created, “out of his nights without rest, out of his meditations, dreams, ecstasies...” It is true that Michelangelo admitted that if he had not taken up the fine arts he would not always be “in such a passion” (Clements, 1963).

The Russian painter Malevich comments on his withdrawal from the world during the act of creation: “...a blissful sense of liberating non-objectivity drew me forth into the desert where nothing is real except feeling” (Herbert, 2000, p. 94) He talks about the movement of the artist to a different mental plane where objectivity paves way for subjectivity. Max Beckmann talks about a similar transformation, “When the artist is completely involved in his work, he is taken over by insights, images and feelings which represent a transformation of consciousness” (Beckmann, 2003).

Both the artists Malevich and Beckmann relate their experiences to the transformative quality of the moment of creation. Sometimes this state is referred to as ‘inspiration’. The moment of inspiration describes the moment when the artist/designer lets go and enjoys the bliss of the experiential events happening to him. Koestler explicates that the creator creates out of his own depth. He says that objective novelty comes into being only when the subjective originality operates on the highest level of hierarchy of existing knowledge. (Rothenberg & Hausman, 1976).

The artist Emile Nolde speaks about inspiration within his creative process, “The artist knows the right moment, and also the relentless, tireless depth- probing urge. The moment is a flashing spark, the relentless urge, the ever-lasting holy fire” (Nolde, 1965). Piet Mondrian describes his moment of intuition as “Art shows that...intuition becomes more and more conscious and instinct more and more purified...Intuition enlightens and so links up with pure thought. They together become intelligence which is not simply of the brain, which does not calculate, but which feels and thinks; which is creative both in art and life” (Herbert, 2000).

Many artists have described their experience of the transformative creative experience in the form of other lived experiences like urge, inspiration, intuition, spiritual experiences. It is difficult to expect the scientific community to believe and accept the descriptions as valid data of a significant phenomenal event. The scientific community views the artist and his creative world as being shrouded with mystery. E.g. Van Gogh was considered as being psychotic, even while he created paintings which astound the artist community with his

expressive bold strokes. Van Gogh's accidental cutting of his ear was termed as horrifically neurotic to the point of madness, but Archimedes running naked shouting 'Eureka' is revered as being highly respectable. They both would have gone through similar highly intensive creative moment which drove them to the point of non-self-awareness. With such a biased historical worldview about artists, it is quite an uphill task to make the scientific community understand the artist's language. It is not fair to expect an artist to speak scientific language and vocabulary just so that the scientific community would term his experience valid. The artist is sometimes at a loss to explain the ineffable transcending experience in an acceptable language which is free of the magical, mystical and spiritual even though in reality, the experience is magical, mystical, and spiritual to him. The experience holds real to him because he lives it. He knows the significance of PLG since he can see the impact of the experience in his artwork.

The admissions about the moment of intuition are varied. Frank O'Hara speaks about Jackson Pollock's creation of art, "In a state of spiritual clarity there are no secrets. The effort to achieve such a state is monumental and agonizing and once achieved, it is a harrowing state to maintain. In this state, all becomes clear and Pollock declared meanings he had found with astonishing fluency, generosity and expansiveness. This is not a mystical state, but the accumulation of decisions along the way and the eradication of conflicting beliefs toward the total engagement of the spirit in the expression of meaning...His action is immediately art..." (O'Hara, 1959). What is very interesting here is O'Hara's admission that to achieve a state of spiritual clarity, a monumental effort is required. This state is very volatile and hence very difficult to maintain. Indian Contemporary artists who were interviewed by the researcher as an initial study to understand the creative process admitted to the effort required to reach this state though they did not mention it to be spiritual in quality. O'Hara's explication of Pollock's experience is similar to the experience of PLG in terms of the qualities of clarity, astonishment, and sometimes spirituality.

The main proponent of art being spiritual is Wassily Kandinsky who wrote about it in his seminal treatise, "Concerning the Spiritual in Art". Kandinsky describes, "The spiritual life to which art belongs and of which it is one of the manifest of agents, is a complex but definitive movement above and beyond....Although it may take different forms, it holds basically to the same internal meaning and purpose". (Kandinsky, 2008). Many artists had been describing their experience as spiritual earlier, but it was only Kandinsky's treatise which brought this quality to the fore. This, to a great extent, gave credibility to creative

experiences of the artists, though these are still considered as experiences of artists which are not valid enough to be taken up for scientific study.<sup>10</sup>

One need not call the experience of creation of art as spiritual in a strict sense. But as Lipsey speaks of the spiritual in art, “The spiritual in art offers a transient experience of intensity, of a larger world and a larger self. One begins to care again, reawakened to old longings, to remorse, to new thoughts and feelings, almost to a clarified sense of direction. This blend of hope and remorse is a sign that one has encountered the spiritual in art” (Lipsey, 2004).

We can say that a spiritual encounter during the creative experiences results in a clarified emergence of a direction, a solution, or just plain clarity of vision or thoughts. Kandinsky describes the creation of art as, “The work of art is born from the artist in a mysterious and secret way. From him it gains life and being. Nor is its existence casual and inconsequent, but it has a definite and purposeful strength, alike in its material and spiritual life. It exists and has power to create spiritual atmosphere... The inner voice of the soul tells him what form he needs, whether inside or outside nature. Every artist knows, who works with feeling, how suddenly the right form flashes upon him” (Kandinsky, 2008).

Kandinsky expresses that the solution is presented in the form of a flash to the artist. Sometimes the experience of the presentation of a solution is more than a flash. Ferdinand Holder speaks about this experience of empathy where he says “...the deeper one has penetrated into the being of nature; the more complicated is the experience which one is able to create” (Protter, 1997). Within the creative experiences, PLG is an experience of empathy where the self of the artist/designer’s person guides him and at the same time it is guided in the right direction in the artist/designer’s journey of painting/design. PLG is a deep creative experience which starts at the onset of the inspiration; it delves deep into the depths of the artist/designer’s soul and creates significant experiential reality for the artist/designer. The experience of PLG finds its manifestation in the artwork/design; and it transforms not only the manifestation, but the creator (artist/designer) in the process.

Like D.H. Lawrence speaks about the painting ‘The Sunflowers’ by Vincent Van Gogh, “When Van Gogh paints the sunflowers, he reveals or archives the vivid relation

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<sup>10</sup> There have been a lot of scientific studies on experiences of spiritual practitioners where the experiences are studied for their qualitative aspects. Empirical investigation into spiritual experiences provides an understanding into the depth and intensity of these experiences and the impact of these experiences on the self of the practitioner.

between himself as man and the sunflower as the sunflower at that quick moment of time. His painting does not represent the sunflower itself. We shall never know what the sunflower itself is. The camera will visualize the sunflower more perfectly than Van Gogh can. The vision on the canvas is a third thing, utterly intangible and inexplicable, the offspring of the sunflower itself and Van Gogh himself....It is a revelation of the perfected relation at a certain moment between a man and a sunflower..." (Lawrence, 1956). Thus the painting is now not just about sunflowers but about that moment of dynamic interaction of the artist with the physical sunflower and the mental form of the sunflower in the artist's mind. Collier says that the most powerful symbols within a painting cannot be deliberately or self-consciously produced. These symbols are not produced but discovered by the unselfconscious involvement with the developing image. Collier says that these powerful symbols are born in the deeper regions of the self, from beyond the fringe of reason (Collier, 1972).

When one looks at the descriptions of PLG, one finds that there is a deep involvement of the self with the object of art and this dynamic and intense interaction results in the transcendence of the self, which finds the manifestation of self within the painting/design.

## **2.6 Experiences of self-transcendence**

There is a deep unself-conscious interaction of the self of the artist/designer with the object of creation which could be the artwork/design. This can be clearly gleaned from the descriptions by the artists and theorists of creative experiences. The self is involved in terms of intellect and analytical thinking of the brain with the object on one hand. On the other hand, the deeper, more primitive regions of the self are in interaction with the object of work. Let us now move towards gaining an understanding into Self and the intricacies of its involvement with the object. It is now evident that the creative process is not just a simple linear analytical process, but it is a dynamic arena where the self plays an intimate duet with its object of work. This interaction is lived and experienced by the self in a very personal and unique manner.

Downey (1999) talks about three types of interaction of self during the act of creation. He explicates that the self is involved with the act of creation in an interaction of aesthetic empathy. Downey speaks of an Ecstatic self for whom all the self-consciousness is merged in perfect unity with the subject and objects that are created. During this type of interaction, the self identifies itself with the object so deeply that there is a complete loss of 'I'. This self which is completely identifying itself with the object is in unity not only experiences a loss of

self but also experiences a lapse in time and space orientation. The creator's self moves into a state of trance. The second type is that of the participant who can identify oneself with the other self and play multiple roles. The third type is the spectator self who is a witness of events of creation. This self retains its own identity. (Downey, 1999)

Downey's first ecstatic self and its experiences within the creative act resonate completely with the premise of PLG in artists and designers. The second type of participant self and its interaction with the object conforms with the interaction of the designer's self with the user experiences and role playing during the process of design problem solving.

Another view on the self similar to that of the Ecstatic self is given by Collier. Collier (1972) says that the world of self of the artist/designer provides the chief motivation for all absorbing involvement of the self into the creative act and experience of the moments of vision or inspiration. Collier very aptly states that "The individual comes face to face with self at such times, experiencing new levels of intensity and awareness. For he participates with his whole being, while at the same time contemplating his newly realized self with a proprietary delight. It is the joy of complete possession of the self that gives the life-enhancing quality to the art that result from these moments" (Collier, 1972).

This involvement of the self and the separation of the self from itself in the act of viewing at itself is a description which resonates with the premise of PLG. The experience of PLG involves the loss of self which in turn results in the finding of the self. This self-finding leaves its mark on the painting/design.

Artist Piet Mondrian suggested that "some essence of the self is discovered when time is intensified through creative action and that this, paradoxically enough, enables the artist to gain insights into an ultra personal reality – one in which truth pertaining to the nature of things are revealed" (Herbert, 2000). Here, Mondrian is referring to the revelation of the forms which were earlier not known to the painter and which he suddenly finds painted on the canvas by himself. Mondrian talks about revelations about self which had remained hidden till then. The revelation of form is also referred to by Kandinsky in his experiences of creating a painting. Kandinsky states that "All the forms which I ever used came 'from themselves'. They presented themselves complete before my eyes...they created themselves while I was working, often surprising me" (Kandinsky, 1913). Kandinsky gives a full account of his experiences of creation as: 'I did many sketches – these tables and different ornaments. They were never trivial, and so strongly painted that the object dissolved itself in them...I have for

many years searched for the possibility of letting the viewer ‘stroll’ in the picture, forcing him to forget himself and dissolve into the picture. Often, too, I have succeeded. I have seen it in the observers. From the unconsciously intended effect of painting on the painted object, which can dissolve it through being painted, derived my ability to overlook the object within the painting’ (Kandinsky, 1913).

Dewey says that self-transformation will occur when there is “a complete interpenetration of the self and the world of objects and events. Instead of signifying surrender to caprice and disorder, it affords our sole demonstration of a stability that is not stagnation but is rhythmic and developing” (Dewey, 1939). This means that there is a cohesive and rhythmic interaction of the self and the other, the subject and the object. But Dewey points to interpenetration of self, thereby reducing the space between the subject-object, or between the self and the other. There is a movement of interaction during self-transformation from being dualist to non-dualist within the experience of PLG. In fact, during the experience of PLG, there is a constant movement of the self alternating between duality and non-duality.

Krausz says that during creative experiences, there are episodic shifts from duality to non-duality which results in artistic development and self-transformation (Krausz, 2007). The dualist nature of the creative experience denotes the reflective and analytical phases of art making, while the non-dualist experience implies towards the experience of PLG. It is these shifts into the non-duality i.e. the perfect unity of self and object, that the artist/designer experiences the transcendence of self.

The notion of duality and non-duality is treated at length in the area of spiritual, mystical and meditative experiences. Though these experiences might seem to be far from artist’s and designer’s creative experiences, there is a link between the two. The artists claim to experience the spiritual, meditative or the mystical while working on the artwork. We will go back to O’Hara’s explication of Jackson Pollock’s creative process and creative experiences. He says, “In a state of spiritual clarity there are no secrets. The effort to achieve such a state is monumental ... a state of conflicting beliefs toward the total engagement of the spirit in the expression of meaning...His action is immediately art...”

Kandinsky speaks of Art as “The spiritual life to which art belongs and of which she is one of the mightiest elements, it is a complicated but definite and easily definable movement forwards and upwards.”

It is befitting to say that there are elements of spirituality in the experience of PLG as is described by O'Hara and Kandinsky. At the onset, it seems quite improbable that there might be any kind of correlation between PLG during creative experiences and spirituality. Both the experiences appear very far from each other in terms of the origins and orientation. But they seem to be showing a slight resemblance in terms of quality. For example, quality of spiritual experiences bears resemblance to PLG in terms of loss of self, space-time leading to unity of self with object. Therefore it becomes essential to look critically at all experiences which show similar qualities to PLG and understand them so that it may give insight into how one could study an ephemeral and sublime experience like PLG.

## **2.7 Complementary or associated self-transcending experiences**

As has been noted above, there are varied experiences whose qualities parallel with the qualities of PLG. Most artists/designers talk about the brush with the divine or a spiritual experience when they achieve PLG. We will now look into various aspects of spiritual experiences to get an understanding into what the artists/ designers refer to when describing their creative experiences.

The spiritual experiences are studied at length in the area of spirituality as well as mysticism. There are many theories and classifications of spiritual/mystical experiences. We will get an understanding into the character of mystical experience and how the experience is studied and classified.

The most notable work on religious experiences is by psychologist, William James. He describes religious experience as mystical experience in his book 'Varieties of religious experiences' A mystical experience has four aspects ineffability, noetic quality, transiency and passivity (James, 2002). James points out that once the mystical experience is initiated, the mystic feels an abeyance of his own will and he experiences himself as being held by a superior power (James, 2002).

Otto identifies a mystical experience as being numinous. "Numinous experience" is an experience, allegedly of a reality perceived of as "wholly other" than the subject, producing a reaction of dread and fascination before an incomprehensible mystery (Otto, 1957). Stace categorises mystical experiences into two types, introvertive and extrovertive experiences.



Both these experiences utilise different paths of externalisation and internalisation, to arrive at a blissful and unitary consciousness. (Stace, 1961)

When we turn to look at PLG, we find a similarity between the descriptions of artists/designers and James's aspects. The descriptions of the types mentioned by both Otto and Stace resonate the experience of PLG, in terms that both the experiences arriving at bliss and unitary consciousness, although the methods of arrival may be different.

R. C. Zaehner identifies three types of the mystical experiences. Firstly, the "panenhenic" extrovertive experience which is an experience of oneness of nature with one's self, secondly the "monistic" experience of an undifferentiated unity transcending space and time, and lastly the "theistic" experience where there is a duality between subject and the object of the experience (Zaehner, 1961). As per the premise PLG would most likely resemble Zaehner's monistic experience which points to the non-dual experience where there is unification and transcendence of time-space and self.

Apart from western theories of mystical experiences, there are multi-fold theories in Indian psychology which aptly describe mystical experiences. Though the Indian psychological theories do not give a direct explanation of the experience of PLG, they offer parallel concepts that provide insightful explanations to various aspects of PLG experience. Let us now turn to look into two important streams of *Yoga*<sup>11</sup> and *Advaita-Vedanta*<sup>12</sup> in Indian psychology which gives an Indian perspective to self-transcendence the concept of duality-non-duality.

Within *Advaita-Vedanta*, there is a significant treatise of *aparokshanubhuti* (self-realisation) by *Adi Sankaracharya*. In this treatise, he describes the process and methods of attainment of self realization. He says that self-realization, is an immediate and direct perception of one's own self. He further explains that when one attains *aparokshanubhuti*, a state of pure reality is reached which is said to be the *Brahman* (Supreme). In this way alone there arises in the pure minded a state of awareness of *Brahman* which is afterwards merged into *Brahman* (v:137). A person, who meditates upon a thing with great assiduity and firm conviction, becomes that very thing. (v.140) (Sankaracharya, 2005)

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<sup>11</sup> Yoga is a field of Indian philosophy and also a meditation technique first propounded by Patanjali in his treatise Patanjali Yogasutra. The Yogasutras are a collection of hymns which explain the philosophy of Yoga.

<sup>12</sup> Advaita-Vedanta is a branch of Indian philosophy where the concept advait refers to the identity/unity of self with the Supreme (Brahmn) and hence non-duality.

*Aparokshanubhuti* explicates the state of mind of the Yogi in the state of self-realisation. There is a reporting of ‘beyond speech’ similar to Jame’s ineffability. The state also involves a merging with the Brahman, like in the experience of PLG, where the artist/designer’s self merges with the object of thought and in the process transcends the self, time and space. But one has to realise here that *Aparokshanubhuti* is talking about self-realisation as a philosophical concept where as the PLG is an experience of artist/designers within the creative process.

Considering self-realisation as a transcending experience, we would then look into meditative experiences of *Yoga* where one can find a very significant concept of *Samyama*. *Patanjali’s Yogasutra* ascribes methods of *Samadhi* (meditation) to achieve the stage of *Samyama*, which is a stage that passes beyond the changes that happen in subtle and gross matter in terms of changes in time, form and condition (v.3.13). Through *samyama* one can witness the transition of thoughts and master it. This process of subtle discrimination brings a higher, intuitive, transcendent knowledge to lead towards a final liberation/ enlightenment or *kaivalya* (v.3.56). (Swami Prabhavananda, 2009).

In the stage of *Samyama*, a *yogin* (meditator) achieves a meditative state which is beyond the usual, where the *yogin’s* consciousness is in perfect rhythm with its elements and objects of meditation. It is quite evident that the *Samyama* of the *yogin* witnesses a transition of thoughts and finally enlightenment. A parallel quality is witnessed in the experience of PLG in the domains of visual arts and design, where one finds the artist/designer in a meditative state with the object of creation.

Hans Hoffman in his book, ‘Search for the real’, presents the way an artist masters his thoughts and skills to a point where he expresses himself through his paintings. He says that each expression medium can be mastered by intuition during the act of creation. He explains that when two thoughts are placed with each other in an environment of empathy, it produces a higher third order experience which is spiritual in nature. This spiritual carries with it the emotional content, as also the reality of the spirit which is seen within the expression of the artwork (Hoffmann, 1967). This resonates with the *Samyama* stage where the *yogin* (artist/designer) witnesses the transition in his thoughts and time and masters it by capturing the transcendence in the painting/design. Interestingly, the aspects of his pure self are also captured in that moment of intuition onto the painting/design.

Let us examine the various religious practices which lead towards self-realizing meditative experiences. Various religions and cults have practices of reaching a meditative state where the meditator is in a state of bliss, lysis and unity with the object of his meditation. One can find this in the cult of Tantra, where the *Sadhaka* (meditator) discovers universal emptiness by constant concentration and visualization on the *mandalas* and their geometric images in accompaniment of the mantras. He then transcends the emptiness to find and experience the 'Truth' (Eliade, 1958).

The Buddhist meditative scriptures give a vivid view of the attainment of *Nirvana*. The scriptures explicate the step by step process whereby the *sadhaka* achieves higher states of consciousness. Once the *sadhaka* has achieved an optimal state through meditation, he is ready to take the next step. He has to let go of all the distinction and concentrate in the infinite character of space. His mind is consciousness of space. He then, becomes conscious of the infinity of cognition. In the next *samapatti* (stage), his mind is concerned with the unreality of things. In the last *samapatti*, he realizes that there is nothing more to do and he reaches into a state of trance (Eliade, 1958). Eliade describes the eight stages to attain nirvana and each stage presents the mental movement of the *sadhaka*. This gives us a method by which we could look into PLG and probably look at it temporally in terms of stages that the artist/designers achieve towards their movement towards PLG.

Apart from the Indian philosophies and practices of attaining self-transcendence, we looked into similar practices in other parts of the world. The *Sama dikhr* (Whirling Dervishes) of the Sufi sects of Islam, the *Satori* of the Zen Buddhism and the Chi and Tao of the Chinese meditators, all propound the achievement of the state of oneness. The *Satori* marks the first step towards the journey of enlightenment of the Zen Buddhist practitioners and the state of *satori* refers to a sudden flash of awareness of the Self. (Austin, 1999)

Interestingly, all the experiences exhibit an integral and intimate similarity with the experience of PLG in artists and designers. Another interesting study by Krausz indicates the existence of a tao (spiritual) experience within the creative process of painting. In his book, 'Interpretation and Transformation: Explorations in Art and the Self' Michael Krausz describes artist Chang Chung-Yuan's articulations of Tao painting where he describes that "Tao is an ontological experience by which subjective and objective realities are fused into one. This interfusion initiates the process of creativity, which in turn establishes unity in multiplicity, changeless in the ever changing. The artist who has reached this state of oneness

is supported by all the powers inherent in multiplicities and changes and his work will be far beyond what his ego-form self could accomplish” (Krausz, 2007).

Going back to the experience of PLG in creative experiences, PLG has similarities with the above discussed experiences. Artists/designers reports show that there is an element of spiritual, religious or mystical within the PLG experience. One needs to investigate whether there is actually a presence of spirituality in PLG experience or it is only the ease of language and lack of vocabulary which makes the artists/designers use these words in connection with PLG experiences. Whatever the reason for inclusion of these words into the articulation of PLG, it is important to note that there are aspects which point at a resemblance of quality between PLG and its parallel experiences.

As mentioned above, there are moments of non-duality or unity between the self and the Other, between the artist and artwork, designer and the design problem. These moments are episodic. Apart from this, there is a deeper relation of the self and the Other. Within the above mentioned religious and meditative experiences, the self is in unity with the other- God, Brahman etc. But in case of creative experiences, the Other with which the self of the artist and designer indulges in uniting is the painting/design. What is interesting is that while the artist/designer is involved in the Other which is the painting/artwork, and the Other/painting/artwork is transformed. Within the moments of experience of PLG, artist/designer loses the sense of self and in this moment of loss of self, space and time, they report to be experiencing the Sublime Other which is something beyond the painting/design.

This is an interesting fact that the loss of self, time and space leads to chancing upon the Sublime Other. But before we get into the Subliminal realms let us look at the facets of time, space and self and their dynamic interactions during creative experiences.

## **2.8 The triad of Time, Space and Self during creative experiences**

As per the premise, the experience of PLG is a dynamic experiential and self-transformative experience which is marked in the memory of the creator. During the process of self transformation, the artist/designer reports of an alternate experience of self, time and space. To understand the experience of time and space and hence self, we will examine the reports of the artists/designers as they speak about their experiences. We will further look at the literature available on the three (time, space and self) in relation to the descriptions of PLG.

### 2.8.1 Time

Humans perceive time and space in two-fold manner. On one hand, time is perceived as linear which could be called the clock time while on the other hand; there is the internal time that is perceived within oneself. This internal time is not always linear; it doesn't follow the linearity of past, present and future. In the presence of self and personal memory, the perception and experience of time defies order and becomes multidimensional. Within experiential realm, time becomes episodic and could be chunked into 'durations' which could be Bergsonian<sup>13</sup> in character. Hence, the experiential time could be determining the distance between two instances. An individual would, then, perceive multiple temporal realities simultaneously (Krausz, 2007).

In the domain of Arts, many artists speak of their experience of an altered perception of time during their creative process. Mondrian says that "Both Science and Art are discovering and making us aware of the fact that time is a process of intensification, of the subjective towards objective; toward the essence of things and ourselves" (Mondrian, 2000). Our usual objective perception of time is highly linear and of constant dimensionality. It tells us nothing in terms of depth and intensification of time in the subjective experience. Collier expresses that we experience time in two ways. Firstly, time is the duration of an event in consciousness. Secondly, time is the intensity by which it grips our consciousness. (Collier, 1972). According to Collier an individual would then experience reality in simultaneity as an objective experience of the physical reality of the event and also as a subjective reality of what s/he feels or experiences of the event. Depending on the intensity with which the event is experienced, it would leave a mark on the mind of an individual. There is a linear time in which the event of the creative process is happening and the artist/designer is physically working in an environment and making the creation of an artwork/design. And during this linear time, there is a simultaneous intensified time of the subjective experience of the creative process where there exist multiple durations which are continuous, but also of different intensities. Please refer to the Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1 regarding the simultaneity of experience of PLG within the linear progression of creative experiences. It can be understood that the creative process exists in linear time while the creative experiences and experiences are perceived in a different and simultaneous time.

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<sup>13</sup> Bergson defined time in terms of units termed 'durations'. He proposed that these durations were time intervals between two experiential events. Bergson propounded that internal time could exist in simultaneity when the duration between two experiential events is negligible.

Taking from the Bergsonian concepts of duration and simultaneity, it can be assumed that the simultaneity of time makes an artist experience multiple aspects of external events as merged with the events in his inner consciousness. The continuous combination and connection of the present with the past and back to present lead to the creation of a third entity which is out of the linearity of time. This time is neither of the past or the present, but it maybe a result of the connection with perhaps, the future, which becomes foregrounded into the present. This might have been the reason why Van Gogh and Picasso were said to be way ahead of their times and their works bore evidence of their experiential connections and intersections of, perhaps, time.

The newly emerged event is associated with the Self of the creator. The new event/entity/duration belongs to the self only when our consciousness makes our Self aware of it. Self becomes equally one with the external events and embraces all the flowing events into a single indivisible act (Bergson, 2002). This resonates with the premise of PLG and the consciousness of artists/designers is completely absorbed with the design problem or art making. During the experience of PLG, the Self of the artist/designer merges with the object of work, with the complete non-awareness of linear physical time. During this experience the artist/designer experiences time in a more horizontal expanded sense, thus making it possible for the Self to make connections across this expanded time plane.

Mullarkey elucidates that our states of mind are characterised by varying degrees of rhythmic tension or relaxation roughly corresponding to the degree of freedom inherent in a given activity. The highest degree of psychic tension occurs through the effort of willed empathy which Bergson refers to as intuition. During the moment of intuition, one enters into the concrete flow of duration. As a result of this intuitive experience, the artist himself is transformed (Mullarkey, 1999). It is interesting here that intuition could be explained in terms of willed empathy. In the field of Arts and Design, there is ample evidence of intentionality of will to enter into the creative space. The artists/designers willingly empathise with their work at hand and thereby enter into the concrete flow of duration where they report to have lost the sense of space-time and self (premise of PLG). Bergson's intuition resonates with the premise of PLG in that the experience does start with a strong intentionality and a strong presence of self at the initial stage of creative experience. This later leads to a surrender of the self with the object. The artists/designers admit that within the intense moments of intuition, there exists an absence of self and will and there is an experience of merging and emergence. The intuition is grasped as a moment in linear time, but in case of simultaneity intuition is

stretched in the experience and has many aspects and dimensions inherent and embedded within this stretched/expanded time.

An entrance into a concrete flow of duration also entails entry into a new space during the experience of Bergsonian intuition or PLG of artists/designers. Let us now look into the aspect of space and literature available on the transformations of the experiential space.

### **2.8.2 Space**

As per the premise of PLG, the core of the PLG experience consists of an absence of time, space and self. The earlier section gave us an understanding into literature of time and the transformations into time-space during the experience of PLG. Now, let us get an in-depth understanding about experiential space and its multidimensional aspects. Space as time has a two-fold reality for an individual. First, there is an external physical space which corresponds to linear time where physical objects and events are occurring. The second spatial reality is the internal space or the experiential space in which the individual experiences the events happening in the external space. Any event occurring at any time has existence in external space as well as an intensified experience in internal space.

Space is a very important element in the work, thinking and life of artists/designers. Space means to Arts and Design as Time means to Music. The artists and designers play with spaces, transforming it again and again. At a very basic, physical level, an artist transforms the 3-dimensional physical space on a 2-dimensional space of the canvas. In doing so, his mind is constantly shifting from external to internal mental space. Hence, it can be said that the artist is manipulating the external space in the arena of his internal space. This can also be explained with the fact that even before an artist paints on his canvas; he paints on the canvas of his mind. During the creative process, the artist shows a strong intentionality when he willingly paints a particular stroke on the canvas and then sometimes he applies the strokes quite unintentionally. In the earlier case of strong intentional painting, the artist has already formed the picture on his mind canvas and is now simply recreating the same on the external canvas. But in case of intentional emergence of strokes on the painting, the artist is simultaneously creating the picture in his mind and on the canvas in the external space. He is in two spaces at the same time. In this case, he is moving from being in the external space back into the internal space and so forth, without actually being aware of doing this in simultaneity. This is a continuous process and is an integral part of the act of creation.

The artist/designer moves not only across internal/external space, but he also leaps across different spaces across time which exist in expanded time during the moment of intuition or experience of PLG. Artist Max Beckmann remarks that “To transform height, width and depth into two dimensions is for me an experience full of magic in which I glimpse for a moment that fourth dimension which my whole being is seeking” (Beckmann, 2003). Beckmann here talks about a movement into the fourth dimension which is a leap into a shifted space which could be above or parallel to the spaces in which he is traversing while in the act of creation. Perhaps he could be transporting the external space in which the three dimensions of height, width and depth exist onto a parallel internal space. Now, this internal space which comprises of the three dimensions and also varied internal thinking spaces starts to make numerous unconscious connections which initiate the creation of a new space.

Lefebvre states such a space has an organic property about it. It is in constant dynamic momentum especially when conceived within the experiential realm. He talks about an ‘absolute space’. This space is conceived at a particular intuitive moment and has been assigned properties like transcendent, magical, and sacred. Lefebvre states that absolute space is a highly activated space which produces time-cycles. He identifies absolute space with mental space where the consciousness of self-consciousness takes form (Lefebvre, 1991).

Though Lefebvre talks about absolute space more in terms of the religious and sacred, the characteristics ascribed to such a space are very similar to the premise of PLG. The experience of PLG is set off by a moment of intuition and is perhaps a higher parallel internal space. In the experience of PLG, this space is highly stimulating and results in the formation of new connections across time. Beckmann associates this space with the finding of Self, and the experience of PLG results in the finding of Self with, interestingly, the loss of self, space and time.

In the above discussion, it seems that it is the artists’ mind that is hopping from one point to another in a pre-existing static space and time. But in actuality, it is highly improbable for such an action/event to occur. The reason for this could be that nothing ever remains the same. With every single moment, change occurs to the space where the Self exists and experiences life. Due to this interaction with a changing time and space, the Self is also continuously changing. Wallace states that an individual is no longer seen as a passive observer of an already existing reality but instead determines the ‘shape of space and time for him or herself’ (Wallace & Hodel, 2008). Carr explains that space and time surround us and both are inhabited by shapes and forms. These shapes and forms of space and time are



determined by the ongoing experiences and events in which the self is projecting the future while retaining the past. (Carr, 1991) This implies that the Self would define the shape of the space and time and hence the experience. Since there is a dynamic relationship between the space-time, the self would also, be dynamically changing as a result of this interaction. Thus the entire experience would be dynamic transformation of the self, time and space due to the ever-changing self and space-time.

This brings us to the concept of 'Being in Time' or Heidegger's '*Dasien*'. Malpas analyses "Being in Time" from the perspective of spatiality. Malpas argues that spatiality of Heidegger's '*Dasien*' should be understood not through the combination of existential spatiality (spatiality of being there) and equipmental spatiality that he attributes to Being and time. Instead it should be perceived through a conjoining of bodily space (the space of acting body) and the objective space (Malpas J. , 2006). Hence, the experience of being in time would entail the presence not just of Self but also the bodily-self within the experience.

The body forms an integral part of the experience of the act of creation. Collier observes that in the act of painting, the painter lets the body act, dancing the emotions out while the board or canvas records the action in abstract line and color (Collier, 1972). Lefebvre states that, 'space is lived and produced by means of the body' (Lefebvre, 1991). Since the consciousness of space-time is happening within the limits of the body, body becomes central to the discussion. The body seems to form a border line which separates the external and internal entities. External space-time and body action is experienced by the internal Self within the internal space-time. Hence the sense of body would be intimately linked to the sense of Self. By body sense one doesn't always mean the brain works and the working and sense of the internal organs, but more a sense of space both internal and external in which the body exists. R.D Laing talks about the embodied person as having, 'a sense of being flesh, and blood and bones, of being biologically alive and real. To the extent that he is thoroughly 'in' his body, he is likely to have a sense of personal continuity in time...The individual thus has as his starting point an experience of his body as a base from which he can be a person with other human beings' (Laing, 2010). This clearly shows that the embodiment is a key element in the constitution of Selfhood. (Porter, 1997)

This takes us to our next significant element of the triad, the 'Self'

### 2.8.3 Self

Since both space-time-bodies are concepts which are perceived by humans, the next natural question which needs to be addressed is that of the human Self which feels, or thinks or the Self that acts. The Self is the indivisible part of the triad, and the most important one since the Self seems to be the one who is feeling, thinking, and acting in the space-time playground and also simultaneously perceiving the space and time.

When Wallace says that an individual determines the shape of space and time for his own Self, he is probably pointing to the binding, underlying and uniting principle of the experience of space and time- the Self. Self is defined in the dictionary as ego and the uniting principle, as a soul, underlying all subjective experience (Collins, 2009). Philosophers, from ages, are trying to comprehend the meaning of 'Self' and there are manifold theories about 'Self'. We must ask what is Self and what has art-making got to do with Self? Is it the object or the subject? Is it a property or a quality? And of what or of whom?

If we discuss about the Self in art, we are talking about the Self of the artist/designer who experiences PLG within his/her creative experiences. During the experience of PLG, the artist/designer loses his/her Self completely accompanied by a loss of sense of time and space. The artists/designers claim that they end up finding their Self through the PLG experiences. How does one explain either the losing or finding of Self when one has very little knowledge and awareness of who Self is and where self resides? And is there only a single Self in one person or there are multiple Selves?

We will look into the concept of self-sense to understand the self in intense and complex experiences like PLG. As we have seen earlier, the self-sense is closely related to the body sense. The body sense is perceived by the body's actions and movements, and the self-sense would then be linked to the concept of intentionality. The body's actions/movements could have their sources in the willed or the involuntary. The intentionality also deals with the willingness of the Self towards an action.

The willingness behind the existence of an action points to the existence of Self within that body. Leung states that the Self is not perceived but manifested through various aspects of our perceptual experiences. We get a sense of Self or Self-identity through our experiences of events (Leung, 2000). Malpas says that Self is to be understood as constituted through the complex unity of actions and attitudes that are themselves constituted in terms of their relations to one another. To have a Self identity would then mean to have a sense of different forms of spatiality in which the Self is placed (Malpas J. , 2004). When the Self is placed in

the space and within that time, it strikes a rhythm which endures the experience and enriches it. The deeper the rhythm, higher is intensity of the experience.

Bergson says that the acting Self cannot conceptualise the real time duration while involved in action. Hence there is a cognizance of the flow of action rather than the flow of duration. This could explain the loss of sense of time in the artist/designer in the experience of PLG.

Schatzki notes that “ what in human existence, consequently, promotes Bergson’s idea of an inter-penetrating, separation-less flow is the continuum of performance, in conjunction with the continuousness of attention and the fleetingness of the details of action and experiences’ (Schatzki, 2010). PLG is a very intense experience and within the experience, the artists/ designer’s Self is placed at an extrapolated space-time plane, where the Self loses the awareness of the space-time coordinates. The Self of artists/ designers loses the sense of time and space.

The losing of sense of Self is talked about by Collier who states that the painters give themselves up to that transitory and intense state of being when feeling finds its inner echo in feeling. (Collier, 1972) This would mean that the Self of the artist/designer intentionally loses the Self into the expanded space-time of his experiential reality during PLG. And though the artist/designer is aware of the experiential performance, they slowly lose the awareness of everything else except feeling in the vastness. This slow withdrawal of awareness is described as ‘Soun Gui’, an experience of fading away, by Nancy and Sparks. The Soun Gui experience is an experience within the contemporary arts where the artist experiences of a certain fading away. The experience of Soun Gui entails a time of dissolution, of a disappearance, of effacement or blurring. (Nancy & Sparks, 2006)

The Soun Gui experience talks about the disappearance, blurring of senses within highly intense experiences where everything else seems to fade away. The only thought, idea, object with which the artist is in union with is the only thing in focussed clarity, so much so that there is an apprehension of newer thoughts, ideas etc. This fading away reverberates with the temporary loss of space-time coordinates and Self which is very much similar to the experience of PLG. But during PLG, there is not just fading or loss of senses but a throbbing pause in the awareness of senses, a pause in the intense rhythm of the experience. Like a pause in between the notes of song, the pause accentuates the rhythm and tone of the music.

The Self thus, loses itself during the throbbing pause and in that loss finds itself. The artists/designers report that in such a moment, they experience an out-of-body experience in which their Self is a witness to the experiential events. The intentionality of the Self is lost at that moment and hence there is feeling that the doer of the events is the Other. This makes the event to be felt as surreal, and mysterious. Depending on the intensity of the PLG experience, the artists report the touch of the Sublime Other in this moment,

## **2.9 The Sublime Other**

As discussed in the earlier section, experience of PLG brings about a pause in the intentionality of the Self which leads to the loss of Self. There is a complete collapse of space-time in the experience (mainly due to the loss of sense of Self), and hence there is an impression that the events are happening at a higher mental plane which is spaceless and timeless and also self-less. In this higher mental field, there is a discernment of the presence of an Other in that ephemeral moment, which many-a-times is reported as the Sublime Other. This must be due to the reverence which might be accompanying the event in which everything is stripped off from the artist/designer and he stands in total surrender to that moment. Many a times, the artists/designers say that ‘I was standing there naked before my canvas and the canvas bid me to do the work.’<sup>14</sup> Hence onus of the painting is given to the Sublime Other rather than the Self.

The artists report that this encounter with the Sublime Other brings about a complete transformation in their work and also in their Selves. This can be gleaned during the interview sessions when the artists /designers treated the experience of PLG as a blessing, which they look upon with complete humbleness and a naked surprise. They recall the moment as nothing short of a miracle that it happened at all. This encounter brings a change in their Self and this transformation is captured in their painting/design and also in the artist’s/designer’s memory.

Let us now get an understanding into transformation of Self from the existing literature. The concept of the Sublime is elaborated lucidly by Longinus who states that ‘Sublimity tears everything up like a whirlwind, and exhibits the orator’s whole power at a single blow.’ (Shaw P. , 2006) The force of the encounter with the Sublime is congruous with the artists/designer reports of the experience of PLG. Experience of the Sublime has the property of bringing about changes or transformation to the artists/designer and it comes as a

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<sup>14</sup> Excerpted from the interview of artist 5

blow, as a swell and sometimes also as a whiff or a whisper depending on the type of PLG that one experiences. But whatever the type, it almost always brings with it a change, a transformation which is intense and profound.

Newman states that the sublime emerges as the result of the event of the act of creation and is usually accompanied by a feeling of beyond. This probably explicates why the artists/designers report about going beyond oneself or presence of guidance during the experience of PLG. The artist/designer experiences this in their creative endeavours, and in the process, discover themselves.

Mondrian suggests that some essence of the Self is discovered when time is intensified through creative action and this enables the artist to gain insights into an ultra personal reality – one in which truth pertaining to the nature of things are revealed (Mondrian, 2000). A brush with the sublime alters the subjective Self of the person who experiences it since it brings about a transformation in Self and all elements associated with it.

The experience of the sublime also leaves an impact on the artwork/design. The artwork/design is transformed. One can see a clear mark on the canvas, as the transformed Self does actions which were, before then, not a part of itself. This empathetic Self brings about body actions which alter the work of the artist/designer during the event of transformation. This novel action on part of the Self brings about a novel transformation of the idea or painting/design. Whether this transformation is good or bad for the painting/design is a judgemental decision of the artist/designer. But the transformation happens. If the transformation is deemed good then there is a novel or an original idea/painting/design. If it is not considered good for the work, then it is either scrapped or put under the wraps. It is moved somewhere into the archives of the mind or personal diaries, to be read later, which could lead to new connections that finally evolve into new works.

Then one can surmise that the experience of PLG could lead to novel enhancements in the painting/products. Sharma and Poovaiah (2009) demonstrated that the experience of PLG brings about enhancements in the designs/design thinking during the creative process of designers. As said earlier, these transformations could be conceived as being good or bad for that current work at that point of time. The transformations are certainly an enhancement in the creative capacity of the designer.

The artists/designers seek the experience of PLG not just for the enhancement it brings, but also for the experience itself. They consider that the experience of the Sublime is

bestowed upon them as a blessing. They wait for the time when the experience of PLG comes to them yet again. Most artists have found their own tricks and methods to achieve an experience of PLG, but strictly speaking, it is not possible to learn to reach the Sublime. Shaw states that the sublime is instinctively known, one cannot learn sublime, one needs to experience it (Shaw P. , 2006). That is very true. One can do a complete research on the experience of PLG and get an understanding of what the phenomenon actually is, but one cannot explicate the sublime. One has to experience it to fathom its transformative tide. The PLG experience of transformation is self-transcending and hence akin to the spiritual experiences encountered by a reverent.

Thus, the experience of PLG has the capability to bring about a transformation in the artist/designer's Self and also in their painting/design. Amazingly, the transformed artwork holds the power to affect the viewer and transform him too. There is a correlation of the creator's brush of Sublime during the creative process with aesthetic experience of the viewer (Sharma, 2011). *Abhinavagupta* states as *rasanubhuti*<sup>15</sup> of the creator and the viewer is the same (Gnoli, 1985) which would mean that the spectator is also enchanted by the reflected glory of the creator's brush with the sublime, Thus, the experience of PLG brings about a transformation in the painting/design, the personal Self of the artist/designer and many-a-times in the viewer who views the painting/design.

## **2.10 Concepts similar to Phenomenon of letting go**

Till now, we have scrutinised the literature related to various aspects of the experience of PLG in artists/designers as put forward in the premise of PLG. Apart from the literature available, there are two significant concepts which are close to the concept of PLG. One is "Peak Experiences" conceptualised by Abraham Maslow and second is "Flow" by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi.

The experience of self-transformation has been dealt by Abraham Maslow with the concept of Peak Experiences where he explicates the experience of self actualization. He coined the term 'Peak Experiences'<sup>16</sup> to denote the experiences which lift the mental plane to a state of higher consciousness. "All peak experiences may be fruitfully understood as

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<sup>15</sup> *Rasanubhuti* is the experience of the *rasa*, the tasting/cogitation of the *rasa*. (Gnoli, 1985)

<sup>16</sup> Maslow stated that peak experiences are especially joyous and exciting moments in the life of every individual. Maslow notes that peak experiences are often inspired by intense feelings of love, exposure to great art or music, or the overwhelming beauty of nature.

completions-of the-act ... or as the Gestalt psychologists' closure, or on the paradigm of the Reichian type of complete orgasm, or as total discharge, catharsis, culmination, climax, consummation, emptying or finishing"(Maslow, 1970). He believed that self-actualizing meant a full and vivid experiencing with full concentration and total absorption. Maslow states that peak experiences express qualities like ecstasy, rapture, bliss, joy, awe, surrender and worship. (Ackerman, 1999). Peak experiences connote highly positive experiences which have the capacity to bring about self-actualisation in an individual. These attributes resonate the premise of PLG, though one might find some dissimilarities between the two.

Another concept which is in alliance with the experience of PLG is the concept of 'Flow'<sup>17</sup> by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. He identifies the attributes which accompany an experience of flow:

- Concentrating and focusing, where a person engaged in any activity receives a possibility to focus and get engrossed in it
- A loss of the feeling of self-consciousness, the merging of action and awareness
- Distorted sense of time, one's subjective experience of time is altered
- Direct and immediate feedback
- Balance between ability level and challenge (the activity is neither too easy nor too difficult)
- A sense of personal control over the situation or activity
- The activity is intrinsically rewarding, so there is an effortlessness of action

An experience which has any of these attributes (it is not necessary, that the experience has to have all the seven characteristics) would be said to be in 'Flow' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991).

Both Peak experiences and Flow aim towards the transcendence of an individual to make him get in touch with his self. Maslow has conceptualised peak experiences as a mode to bring about self realisation for the spiritual well being of the person. The concept of Flow looks at attuning an individual into the rhythm of his inner self.

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<sup>17</sup> Flow is the mental state of operation in which the person is fully immersed in what he or she is doing by a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and success in the process of the activity.

Both the concepts show a similarity with PLG in terms of getting in touch with the rhythm of the inner space (flow) and self (peak experiences). These two form the initial stages of the experience of PLG where the artist/designers need to get into the rhythm or flow of the work and then delve deep into their experiential world. Peak experiences and flow are generalised concepts which describe deep satisfying experiences in everyday life. Both the concepts could connote experiences in any field or domain of life which also includes creative experiences. Peak experience has its origin in spiritual experiences and experiences of well-being. Flow has its origin in positive experiences which also include creative experiences in any field. In case of both the concepts, they need not always have a physical manifestation. But PLG is an event in the creative experiences, and hence, there is always a tangible outcome of the experience in the form of an idea or artwork/design. The experience of PLG is much deeper than Flow and Peak experiences, in the sense that, the artist/designer loses his senses of Self and space-time to find Self in the experience of PLG. But this is just the beginning of the experience, where he not only finds Self, he also witnesses the Sublime. The experience of PLG takes the artist/designer from being a mere skilled artisan/thinking human to a creator who has been elevated to reach the subliminal heights where he becomes one with his Self, and also with the Other (often described as a 'guidance', 'cosmic presence', 'divine other'). All these interactions are taking place in the experiential realm, and they are brought back to the physical present at the consummation of the experience. At this point, the idea, artwork or painting bears the evidence that the artists/designers have experienced PLG. The experience of PLG is not just a mental experience, it has a physical dimension of 'doing the painting' as well. While the artist/designer experiences PLG, they experience an automation of their motor capacities. This results in a manifestation of the artwork/painting which bears a mark of the experience of PLG. This might be the reason why the artist/designer is able to go beyond their usual creative capacities.

Thus, it can be surmised that even though there are a lot of similarities between experience of PLG and Peak Experiences and Flow, the experience of PLG describes a very specific and intense experience which are not touched upon by the concepts of Peak Experiences and Flow. The character of the experience of PLG goes beyond the attributes prescribed by Peak Experiences and Flow. Hence, we're proposing a specific concept of PLG to signify the deep, intense, self-transformative creative experience within the creative process of artists and designers.



## **2.11 Gap in knowledge**

The experience of PLG is a unique event during the creative experiences in the domains of Arts and Design (we're studying only the domains of arts and design, as is mentioned in the scope of present study). The review of literature takes us into various directions of psychology and philosophy of experiences, and the experiential realm of Arts and Design. We traversed this journey through the spectrum of theories and concepts where we used the premise of PLG as the compass which directed the course of study. The journey gave valuable insights into the highly positive experiential realm, as experienced by practicing individuals in varied domains. We embarked on a search for literature about experiences and concepts which had characteristics similar to those prescribed in the premise of PLG.

The review of literature took us to areas which seemed highly improbable and unrelated to PLG, for example, the concepts of time, space and so on and similar experiences like meditative, spiritual experiences and so on. Even after venturing into these areas, it was very difficult to find direct literature into transformative experiences. For example, in case of the domain of time, there is immense literature on time, its varied concepts, but when one seeks material on transformation of time, the data is limited and sometimes tucked in deep corners. One has to unearth the thoughts and ideas from these depths and make connections to get an understanding into the concept under study, that is PLG.

The literature review relied heavily on the descriptive articulations of artists/designers. Interestingly, this was also very difficult to find and sparse in terms of data. This could be attributed to the fact that literature on creative experiences is generated by researchers who were not artists/designer themselves. Most of the concepts are derived from the studies on the works of art rather than focussing on the experiences of artists/designers. Hence, the review of literature has focussed on the articulations of the artists/designers about their experiences of the creative. Many artists have articulated their experiences using the terms from the terminologies on existing similar experiences like meditative, spiritual etc, probably due to the lack of any dedicated language to explicate these experiences. In fact, this might also be due to the lack of literature about these experiences in the public domain and hence inaccessible to the artists.

The present literature study is heavily relying on the descriptive experiences of artists rather than designers. In fact there is complete lack of articulations by designers of their creative experiences. This is not due to the fact that they did not experience them. This might be more due to the fact that the language used by the designers, is analytical and scientific

rather than the poetic, magical and mysterious vocabulary of the creative experiences as given by the artists. Due to the domain constraints of their profession, the designer is probably not able to let the onus of his design ideas and work rest on some mystical spiritual experience. He keeps the intentionality factor always rested within himself. The artist in contrast can allude to the spiritual, mysterious more easily; he is able to embrace non-intentionality in his work more favourably. Hence the literature review has references of artist's descriptions, so that these first person articulations would throw light on the experience of PLG.

We started the review of the literature looking into the domain of creativity and the creative experiences. The literature gives glimpses into the experiential quality of intense creative experiences. There is literature available about personality types of artists, or creativity capability assessments and so on. Even though there are in-depth studies of positive and humanistic experiences, there is a glaring lack of analysis of creative experiences which bear resemblance to PLG. Though there are fragmentary admissions of such experiences, a critical review and theorisation/conceptualisation is missing.

Experiences similar to creative experiences are treated at length in the domain of spirituality. Though spirituality does not talk about creative experiences per se, the experience of spirituality bears resemblance to intense creative experiences like the PLG. The domain of spirituality looks at religious and meditative experiences which result in the self-transformation of the individual. The literature on creative experiences does not touch the points of self-transformation. Self-transformation is dealt by its closer relative 'self-realisation' achieved through peak experiences.

The main aspects of the experience of PLG, as described in the premise are the self and space-time. Surprisingly the field of creativity and creative process do not provide many details about these subjects. The subject of space and time are treated in the field of physics, mathematics and philosophy. Philosophers give an analysis of simultaneity of space and time in the experiential realm. Psychologists find deep interest in the Self from the point of view of psycho-analysis and psycho-therapy. Self is a favourite of philosophers who have given an elaborate theoretical background to the subject. Even after the theoretical background of existence and presence of the Self is established, we still need to search into the experience of 'no-self' or the experience of the 'Sublime Other' which is an integral part of PLG. The literature on the sublime gives a good view of the mental state of the individual who is in the state of experiencing PLG.

Thus, it can be seen that the literature about the act of creation is present in varied domains, and they give only glimpses of understanding into the transformative experiences. When one pursues an investigation, one has to dig deeper to find relevant data about the precise experiences resembling the PLG. But there is a complete lack of literature which is talks about deep creative experiences directly. There is no area which is dedicated to experiences like PLG in creative experiences. There is no language; there is no understanding into the actual event of the phenomena. There is an urgent need to make a compilation of data within the domains of arts and design where this experience of PLG actually happens.

Thus it could be concluded that there is a necessity to make a space within the literature for the specific subject of self-transformative experiences in the domain of creative process. We have termed this experience as the phenomenon of letting go(PLG). In this present study, we hope to find the deeper nuances and aspects of this experiential phenomenon, which is very crucial to the creation and transformation of artworks/design.

We will look back at the research questions formulated and presented in Chapter One and analyse them again:

- *The phenomenon of letting go: what is it and what are its qualitative aspects?*

The literature review gave glimpses of understanding into experiences of self-transformation. It also gave an understanding into the existing knowledge about the various aspects of the PLG as enlisted in the premise. But the literature does not give any concrete understanding about PLG. We will need to investigate further and undertake an in-depth study of its qualitative aspects. This will help to formalise PLG as a concept dedicated solely to explicate the intense self-transformative creative experiences.

- *Dimensions of phenomenon of letting go: what are the aspects that form the phenomenon of letting go?*

The present literature in varied domains has a lot to offer on experiences which are similar to PLG and not much about PLG directly. The second research question directs attention to detail about characteristics of PLG which the present literature could not cater to. The existing literature does mention some aspects like time, space, self and so on. This does not give complete and sufficient information about PLG as is expected in the research question. The existing literature still does not answer some questions about dimensions of PLG like what are the types of PLG, what are its stages and Facets. What are the feelings which accompany the

experience of PLG? Further study into this phenomenon will generate enough knowledge to answer all the questions to get a comprehensive understanding into the varied dimensions of PLG.

- *What are the point of variance in the phenomenon of letting go in the domains of arts and design?*

The existing literature acknowledges the existence of deep and intense creative experiences in the domain of arts. But there is negligible data on similar experiences in design. The researcher's own experience and initial talks with contemporary designers show that designers experience PLG. The talks reveal that the PLG experience in the domains of Arts and Design present similarities as well as differences. The existing literature does not throw light on this variance and hence the present research will search for points of variance which make the experience of PLG similar for both artists and designers. It also aims to find the points of divergence to get an understanding into the uniqueness of PLG in these domains.

Thus, one can see that the present literature review does not answer the research questions formulated within the present study comprehensively. There is a glaring gap in the available literature about the self-transformative creative experience of PLG. We need to further the present investigation by taking these research questions as the base and focus of our research.

## **2.12 Conclusion:**

The chapter of Literature Review examined the existing body of knowledge on self-transformative experiences to get an understanding of PLG. The review examined the theories of creativity, creative and aesthetic experiences. The review also examined the theories of Space-Time, self and self-transformation to understand how the aspects of space-time and self transform during PLG. It examined concepts similar to PLG to get an understanding into various aspects of PLG like Flow and Peak experiences. This critical review not only helped in understanding PLG from outside but also helped get an understanding into how experiential phenomenon are studied, conceptualized and theorized. The entire review helped position the concept of PLG in the current body of knowledge. This gave a clear understanding of the gaps in knowledge about PLG. Equipped with the premise of PLG, the research questions, and a comprehensive understanding gleaned through the literature review,

we can now move forward to continue our research journey by finding the appropriate methodology for the present research.

## **Chapter Three**

### **The Research Approach**

*The colour of the object illuminated partakes of the colour of that which illuminates it."*

*~Leonardo da Vinci*

Every artist sees the world differently. For example, Monet's 'Impression Sunrise' shows the port of Le Havre in the morning. This same port has, since then or even before Monet, been painted numerous times by numerous painters. But each painting is different. Monet's painting certainly is! Monet viewed the La Havre port with the eyes of an impressionist. The approach of impressionism defined how Monet would look at the landscape and imbibe it into his self and then enkindle the same in the painting 'Impression Sunrise'.

One can gather that the approach with which a person undertakes a problem, defines the way he arrives at the solution. The approach dictates the form of the solution that one arrives at. In case of the present study, the research approach chosen would decide the results of the investigation. Hence it becomes significant that the adopted appropriate research method would decide the kind of answers the research would arrive at to the formulated

research questions. There are numerous research methods available for investigation. We will now look into the various methods, evaluate them for their appropriateness and then choose the optimal research method.

This chapter examines the process of choosing the right research methodology for the present study. The chapter gives an overview of qualitative research methods, and further reviewed five qualitative approaches for appropriateness to present study. The selection of the methods was done based on the epistemological and ontological stance of the present research. The chapter then discusses the selected methodology and its various nuances. Finally, the chapter lays down the formulated research design for the present investigation of PLG.

### **3.1. Qualitative Research Approaches**

There are several quantitative and qualitative research methodologies which could be employed for this study. Though both the methodologies aim for the most robust results, the main distinction between the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies lies in the kind of data generated and the role of the researcher within the research. According to the premise, the PLG is in the experiential realm. Investigation into experiential realm requires a qualitative disposition of the researcher rather than the quantitative and analytical. The experience of PLG and the research questions bid the researcher to take a more qualitative stance than a quantitative one. The prime reason is that the qualities about PLG cannot be gleaned effectively by consensual numbers. Instead, the researcher needs to delve deep into a limited but rich data of individual experiences to find answers to the research questions mentioned in chapter 1. Hence the present study was furthered by looking at the various qualitative research methodologies suitable for the research.

One crucial aspect of qualitative research methodology is the involvement of the researcher into the research. While employing the qualitative research methodology, the researcher forms a part of the research whether covertly or overtly. Lincoln and Guba (2005) state that all qualitative researchers are philosophers, guided by their abstract principles and life experiences. These principles and experiences combine with the ontological, epistemological and methodological questions posed in the research which directs the world view taken by the researcher while conducting the research. The researcher is “bound within a net of epistemological and ontological premises which regardless of ultimate truth or falsity-becomes partially self-validating (Bateson, 2000, p. 314). Lincoln and Guba express that all

research is interpretive and is guided by the researcher's beliefs about herself and the world she's about to study and how optimally it should be understood and from what perspectives and parameters (2005). Thus, it can be understood that the researcher forms an indivisible part of the research. The researcher is not just a passive observer of the events within the investigation, but is an active participant in various stages of the research. Hence for the present investigation into PLG, we would be looking at qualitative research methodology where the researcher is an involved participant in the study.

We first need to understand the context of the present research so that we could know which area of qualitative methodologies we would review for appropriateness to present study. We will then review those methodologies available in the realm of qualitative research approaches and develop a research design in the ambit of the chosen methodology.

### ***The context***

Epistemologically, PLG is an experiential phenomenon. The phenomenon is a subjective experience which is experienced by the creator when involved in the act of creation of artwork/design. Being a personal experience, this phenomenon is not an observable event and cannot be replicated in experimental settings. The researcher has to rely on methods which will take the researcher nearest to the experience of the phenomenon.

The topic of research, phenomenon of letting go transcends the borders of Arts and Design. The literature review indicates that study of the phenomenon is not restricted to Arts and Design domains but expands into other disciplines as well. Hence, while exploring the research methodologies, it would be imperative not to restrict oneself to methodologies existing in the domains of Arts and Design, but venture into other related domains and explore the research methodologies employed there as well.

## **3.2 Review of Qualitative Methodologies**

In the quest for appropriate methodology, an in-depth study of the existing methodologies was conducted and tested for their suitability to the present study. The present study requires the researcher to reach as close as possible to the experience of PLG, so the qualitative methodologies which employ second and first person approaches were examined. Qualitative approaches of Phenomenology, Heuristic Method, Cooperative Inquiry, Organic Inquiry and Hermeneutic Phenomenology were studied and reviewed for appropriateness. The following section elaborates each method and assesses its suitability for the present research.



### **3.2.1 Phenomenological Approach**

Phenomenological Approach deals exclusively with experiences that are registered in the consciousness of the individual. This approach looks into experiences which refer to the experienter's consciousness and self-awareness (Wagner, 1983). Husserl is the founder of the tradition of phenomenology. In his book, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, Husserl (1969) observes that "Experience is the performance in which, for me, the experience is there as what it is and the experienced being 'is there' with the whole content and mode of being that experience itself, by the performance going on in all the intentionality attributed to it". Here Husserl explains that when an individual in the mode of experiencing, he is looking at the experience as what the experience is as an object. He is also looking at experience as the subject which is in fact the experience itself both the content and form. Husserl talks about the act of experiencing as a performance which has an element of the individual's intentionality to it.

Since the Phenomenological approach deals with the experiences of individuals, it involves a careful description of things as they appear in the consciousness. (Moran, 2000) Husserl states that the researcher would need to suspend the scientific prejudices in order to gain insight into the nature of conscious processes while trying to grasp the experience. This forms the centre of his understanding of the practice of phenomenology. (Moran, 2000) The phenomenological approach looks at the phenomenon and its structure. By looking into the accounts of the participants' experience of the phenomenon, it elicits descriptive accounts which lead to an understanding into the phenomenon under study.

The analysis of Phenomenological Approach for the present study revealed that the methodology would give a very descriptive account of PLG as described by the participants. These descriptions rely heavily on the participant's person and his experience of PLG. The study intends to look at multiple participants and so there needs to be a method to gather all the descriptions of different participants and making an analysis so that one can get a singular view of the phenomenon under study. Since there is no room for interpretation, there is a risk that the results elicited might focus heavily on individuals, their persona and their varied articulations rather than focussing on the phenomena, and its varied dimensions. Hence it was decided that the present study needed a methodology with more room for collation and interpretation than is offered by the Phenomenological Approach.

### 3.2.2. Heuristic Method

The second qualitative method is the Heuristic Method propounded by Clark Moustakas (1990). Heuristic Inquiry paradigm is an adaptation of phenomenological inquiry but explicitly acknowledges the involvement of the *researcher* to the extent that the lived experience of the researcher becomes the main focus of the research (Hiles, 2001). The Heuristic Inquiry starts with the research question which is being investigated. In this case, the researcher would be deeply involved with the research question on a personal level. This challenging involvement would seek a reflection from the researcher's self and the world she inhabits. The heuristic process is autobiographic where the researcher involves into a self-search, self-dialogue and self-discovery. In heuristic research, the researcher must have had a personal, direct encounter with the phenomenon being investigated.

Moustakas recommends seven stages for Heuristic Inquiry:

- Initial Engagement
- Immersion
- Incubation
- Illumination
- Explication
- Creative Synthesis
- Validation of the Heuristic Research

The Heuristic Inquiry lays emphasis on the researcher's frame of reference, her scrutiny of herself from the point of view of the research question, her indwelling<sup>18</sup> and intuitions within the research. Moustakas says that "within the Heuristic research, I am creating a story that portrays the qualities, meanings and essences of universally unique experiences. The initial data is within me and challenge is to discover and explicate its nature. Self understanding and self growth occur simultaneously in heuristic discovery" (Moustakas, 1990) .

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<sup>18</sup> Moustakas (1990) explains the process of indwelling as "Indwelling refers to the heuristic process of turning inward to seek a deeper, more extended comprehension of the nature or meaning of a quality or theme of human experience [ . . . ] The indwelling process is conscious and deliberate, yet it is not lineal or logical. It follows clues wherever they appear; one dwells inside them and expands their meanings and associations until a fundamental insight is achieved"

The present research has started with the personal experience of the researcher about PLG. Though the study initiated with personal experience, there is an apprehension about making this study too self oriented (researcher oriented). There has been a thought that the other artists and designers might have had diverse experiences of the PLG which are presently not accessible to the researcher herself. By employing Heuristic Inquiry as the research methodology, the study might become too self oriented and the essence of the phenomenon might not be captured into the study. Too much researcher-orientation might limit the knowledge of the phenomenon to just the researcher's narrow experiences of PLG. In a separate study, this method was employed to study PLG in the creative process of designers (Sharma & Poovaiah, 2009). The results of the study primarily reflect the experiences of PLG of the researcher. Looking at those results and considering the requirements of the present research, it was realized that the knowledge of PLG needs to go beyond the experience the researcher alone. The method of Heuristic Inquiry would restrict the understanding of PLG to the experiences and personality of the researcher, and we need to keep PLG above any personal biases and limitations. Hence for the present research, a method needs to be adopted which would give eminence not just to one self but many selves and would intimately involve the researcher's self in the process as well.

### **3.2.3. Cooperative Inquiry**

Cooperative inquiry is a method proposed by John Heron (Heron, 1996) This method involves not only the researcher but also the participants as co-researchers. The participants play an active role in driving of the research and they are involved in all the issues related to the subject of study. There is a complete sharing of the experience of the phenomenon by the participants and they also contribute towards the process of research along with the researcher. Reason (1994) calls it a research with people and not research on people. The stages of Cooperative Inquiry, as recommended by Heron (1996) are

- Reflection
- Action
- Full immersion
- Reflection again

In the reflection stage the co-researchers choose a topic of research, define the problem statement and decide the methods of data collection. During the action phase, the co-researchers explore an experience through various perspectives and make recordings of the inquiry. Full immersion implicates a deep involvement and to gain insights by going out of the confines of the research format employed. Lastly, there is the repeat of reflection which consists of sharing of experiences, choosing the next action and reviewing the methods of data recordings (Holloway I. , 1997).

Cooperative Inquiry involves the participants of the study as co-researchers. This means that the co-researchers must commit to the topic of research as if it was their own research. They need be engaged in the research as the principle researcher with commitment in terms of time and energy. Employing Cooperative Inquiry to the context of present research of PLG would entail having a group of like-minded, committed co-researchers who have had an experience of PLG. Getting a group of committed participants would imply that the study would limit itself only to the participants who're ready to commit rather than selecting participants based on the richness of experiential quality of PLG.

#### **3.2.4. Organic Inquiry**

Organic inquiry is a methodology proposed by Clements, J. It acknowledges that every research has an inherent and expanding nature which could be studied through subjective and intuitive methods (Clements J. E., 1998). Organic Inquiry seeks to present the data and analysis in a way that the reader can not only interact with it but is transformed by it too. Organic Inquiry gives primacy only to the experience of the researcher and deals in methods to reflect, analyze and evaluate the concepts within those experiences. The approach of Organic Inquiry stands between the feminine<sup>19</sup> spirituality and transpersonal transformation for all the participants in the study.

The research cycle includes six steps of

- The sacred-preparing the soil
- The personal-planting the seed
- The Chthonic-the roots emerge
- The relational-growing the tree

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<sup>19</sup>

- The transformative-harvesting the fruit

The research which employs Organic Inquiry, starts by engagement with the topic of research where the researcher prepares himself for the deeper immersion into the study. As the research initiates, the researcher plants his self into the investigation and soon starts making connections and associations. As the study progresses, there is dynamic and ever-growing interaction of the researcher's self and his work. These growing connections and interactions transform both the work (insights) and the researcher (Spiritual transformation) and they both start moving to the point of maturation. And after a while the transformative intersection arrives where the researcher reaches a saturation point of interaction. At this time, he starts to see the emergence of insights which give a comprehensive and whole-some understanding of the phenomenon under study. Thus Organic Inquiry is a blend of research and a spiritual inquiry. The open ended nature of Organic Inquiry allows the researcher to customise the methodology to best suit the study.

Organic Inquiry looks towards the illumination of the research question as well as the spiritual transformation of the researcher. If employed for the present study of PLG, this research method will direct movement of the researcher from an initial experiencer of PLG to a spiritually transformed individual with a comprehensive understanding of PLG. The methodology of organic inquiry focuses on the researcher rather than the topic of study which is PLG. This approach would ensure a spiritual transformation in the researcher, but the understanding about PLG would be limited to the experience and transformed understanding of that researcher.

### **3.2.5. Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach**

Hermeneutic-Phenomenological Approach is propounded by Max Van Manen (1990), who stated that to investigate lived experiences, one needs to look into a reflexive research method which would elicit and give insights about the experience. This method reveals the depth and insight about the experience, sensitively and reflectively. In this approach, Van Manen states that the researcher initiates the study from her personal experience, obtains detailed descriptions from others through interviews or observation or any other methods of data collection. Once the data is collated, the researcher utilizes methods of analysis like thematic analysis to gain insights into the internal structures of the experience being investigated. The

Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach is a method which unravels the essence of the phenomenon being studied.

In context of the present research, Hermeneutic phenomenological approach provides a method to gain insight into the PLG by taking descriptions of other participants. This ensures that the data has a good mix of varieties of the experiences of PLG. The approach would unravel the structure of PLG, its varied dimensions and characteristics and provide a comprehensive understanding of PLG.

### 3.2.6. Comparison of methods for appropriateness for present study

A comparison of the discussed methodologies was done in the context of suitability to the present research. The Phenomenological Approach, Heuristic Inquiry, Cooperative Inquiry, Organic Approach and Hermeneutic Phenomenological approach were compared on five parameters of Ways of working, Participant involvement, Focus, Degree of interpretation and the type of results/outcomes.

Methodologies	Phenomenological Approach	Heuristic Inquiry	Cooperative Inquiry	Organic Approach	Hermeneutic-Phenomenological Approach
Way of working	Descriptions of the experience	Self-reflection about the experience	Sharing of self-reflections about the experience	Organic self-reflections about the experience	Descriptions of the experience and self-reflections on the experience
Participant involvement	Other participants involved	Participants may or may not be involved	Participants are co-researchers	Participants may or may not be involved	Other participants involved
Focus	Focuses on the participants. Self bracketed	Focuses only on self	Focus on co-participants. Self also involved.	Focus on self and its self-transformation	Focuses on the self and the participants
Degree of interpretation	Interpretation minimal due to bracketing	Interpretation 100% as the research is on self	Interpretation of participants + researcher	Interpretation 100% as the research is on self	Interpretation balanced-minimal (phenomenological) Optimal (hermeneutics)
Results/outcomes	Results are as descriptive data	Results are as autobiographical writing	Results are as Descriptive writing	Results are as comparative writings of initial and transformed self	Results are as experiential structures of the phenomenon investigated.

**Table 1: Comparative analysis of Research Methodologies**

The Table 1 explains the comparison of the five methodologies of phenomenological approach, heuristic Inquiry, Cooperative inquiry, Organic Approach and Hermeneutic Phenomenological. The comparison shows the various aspects in which they differ from each other in terms of the ways of working, the participant involvement, focus, degree of

interpretation and the results. The present research on the PLG could be carried out in any one of the five methodologies. But the choice of a singular appropriate methodology for the present investigation is dependent on the desired and intuited results of the study. It is equally dependent on the constraints imposed by external environment in which the research is conducted, the commitment of the all the participants of the study and the results which will be expected to be derived at the end of study.

Looking at the above mentioned parameters, Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach was considered to be the most appropriate. The Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach utilises the descriptions of the participants while keeping in touch with the researcher's self experiences. Within this methodology, there is an optimal balance in the degree of interpretation of the researcher. While the phenomenological aspect of the methodology ascribes to complete dissociation of the researcher, the hermeneutic aspect involves the researcher and her person into the interpretive realm and encourages her to give clarity to the understanding of the phenomenon through her interpretations. Lastly, the results derived through the Hermeneutic Phenomenological approach give a comprehensive understanding of the experiential structures of the phenomenon being investigated.

Thus the research methodology followed by the present research will be '*Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach*'

A detailed discussion on Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach is elaborated in the next sections. We will look into the historical background of the approach and examine the various nuances of the methodology.

### **3.3. Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA)**

Ontologically, the PLG lies in the subjective realm. PLG is a personal experience of the creator and the articulations of PLG are very subjective description about the experience. For the purpose of this research, a hermeneutic-phenomenological approach was considered most appropriate. This methodology gives primacy to the experience of the subjects (Holloway, 2005). The main aim of this methodology is to understand the personal experiences in its subjective reality to get a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon itself (McLeod, 2001).

### *Historical context*

The Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach owes its developmental foundations to the philosophical traditions of Husserl's and Heidegger's Phenomenology and the Hermeneutic traditions. Let us look at the approaches of Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Hermeneutic Phenomenology and understand their historical evolutions and philosophical foundations

#### **3.3.1. Phenomenology**

Phenomenology has been described by Cohen (2000) as the study of phenomena or the appearance of things. According to Van Manen (1990), anything that presents itself into the consciousness is of potential interest to phenomenology, whether the object is real or imagined, empirically measured or subjectively felt.

Husserl founded Phenomenology as a philosophical approach and provided a framework within which further theorists have expounded the approach of phenomenology. The further developments differ in terms of emphasis and interpretation, but still bear their roots in the works of Husserl (Atkinson, 1988). Husserl's works reflected the theoretical framework in which the phenomenon was seen as able to be reached in a pre reflective and pre predicative state; through the process of phenomenology, it was possible to separate the subjective experience (the noetic) from the objective phenomenon (the noematic) (Crotty, 1996). Husserl believed that one could gain access to others' experience of the phenomenon through conscious interpretation. He suggested a rigorous process of bracketing where the researcher could remove/exclude himself and his subjective biases out of the process. This resulted in getting an objective grasp of the phenomenon under study. On the other hand, Heidegger believed in the importance of subjectivity of the person. He believed that human consciousness is temporal and perspectival. This removes the potentiality of a singular objective understanding of a phenomenon and makes room for valid multiple interpretations of the same phenomenon in varied shades (Steeves, 1998).

Within phenomenology, the concept of intentionality plays an important part. When one observes one's experiences as a phenomenon, one intentionally attributes a meaning to it. This makes the phenomenon seem like having clear cut boundaries rather than a continuous flow of experiences. Heidegger came to view intentionality, not as an individualistic act but as a constitution of consciousness itself. He developed the concept of 'Dasein'. *Dasein is that entity which, as being-in-the-world is an issue for itself* (Heidegger, 1927/1962, p. 236).



According to this concept, when one is in a state of *Dasien* with the phenomenon, he could access the phenomenon while being in oneness with it or in a state of being-in-time with the phenomenon under study. When one makes an articulation of one's experience of the phenomenon, one is making an intentional reflection about the experience, thereby giving it a form and meaning and making that set of experiences a phenomenon. Being-in-time with the phenomenon would give depth to the understanding of the phenomenon. This is the basic philosophy of phenomenology. Let us examine Phenomenology as a research approach

Within the approach of phenomenology, the researcher is looking at articulations about the phenomenon which is further analysed to give a descriptive knowledge about the phenomenon. The method involves the collection of data from the participants, collation of data, extraction of themes and subthemes. This, finally, evolves a descriptive knowledgebase about the phenomenon under study. But when one looks at the experience of PLG, one should understand that this phenomenon is a very personal and a subjective phenomenon which is not directly observable. Each participant of the research has individually articulated the personal experience of the phenomenon in their own set of meaning constructions. Hence, one needs to look at a richer shade of methodology, which could deal with interpretation of multiple articulations to elicit a comprehensive knowledge about PLG.

### **3.3.2. Hermeneutics:**

The Hermeneutic traditions developed its roots in the readings and interpretation of biblical texts. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Hermeneutics became a philosophy as well as a method of understanding through interpretation. Since it dealt with the interpretation of biblical texts, a lot of emphasis was laid on the correctness of interpretation. In time, Hermeneutics furthered its boundaries and became concerned with illuminating the conditions for the possibility of understanding and modes of interpretation (Mueller-Vollmer, 1985). For philosophers like Schliermacher (Bowie, 2005), Hermeneutic became integrally rooted in language since it involved the interpretation of text. Hence Hermeneutics became prevalent as a research method, not only in literature but also in humanities.

Dilthey (1988) developed hermeneutics as a method to study human sciences. Dilthey believed that human behaviour was reflective of one's lived understanding. He believed that out of lived experiences came life-expressions. These life-expressions were a proof of the experiences which elicited the expressions. Ricoeur (1969) further expanded this

understanding by stating that all forms of life expressions could be investigated through Hermeneutics. The Hermeneutic interpretation would follow from the person of the researcher and his life experiences. Gadamer (Gadamer, 1976) believed that one's own prejudices were very valuable and essential to making an understanding about any event or experience.

*“The hermeneutical conversation begins when the interpreter genuinely opens himself to the text by listening to it and allowing it to assert its viewpoint . . . In confronting the otherness of the text . . . the readers own prejudices . . . are thrown into relief and thus come to critical self-consciousness.”* (Gadamer, 1976, pp. xiv-xxi)

The text forms a viewpoint for understanding the lived experience. It is open to multiple interpretations and could reflect multiple realities. This coincides with Heidegger's phenomenological philosophy that subjective experience of a phenomenon would lead to multiple realities of the same phenomenon. This is the point of intersection of the philosophies of Phenomenology and Hermeneutics. Interpretation is seen as critical to this process of understanding. Claiming that to be human was to interpret, Heidegger stressed that every encounter involves an interpretation influenced by an individual's background or history. An experience is understood by the Self according to the way the reality is perceived, interpreted and constructed by that individual and is shaped and tainted by his life experiences.

One can see the points of convergence of the philosophies of Phenomenology and Hermeneutics. Van Manen has utilised this conjuncture of philosophies as the base from which he conceptualised the Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA). Let us now examine closely and get an understanding into the varied nuances of HPA.

### **3.3.3. Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA)**

The Hermeneutic-Phenomenological tradition gives primacy to existence of multiple realities. Annells (1996) viewed this approach as an interpretive process that seeks to bring understanding and disclosure of phenomena through language. The phenomenological 'facts' of lived experience are always meaningfully (hermeneutically) experienced, even the 'facts' of lived experience need to be captured in language and this is inevitably an interpretive process (Van Manen M. , 1990, p. 181)

According to Hermeneutic-Phenomenology, all experiences are life texts and these texts could be looked at as *“a world, a holistic process, the structure of which cannot be derived from or reduced to the linguistic structure of the sentence”*. (Titleman, 1979, p. 189).

This would mean that the descriptive articulations of the participants about the phenomenon cannot be taken as just sentences. Since the sentences are not just a structure of words, but they also represent the world of the phenomena about which they are describing, According to HPA, there is more to the analysis of descriptive texts than just thematic classification. Rather than a classic phenomenological breaking of the sentences into reduced units such as themes and subthemes, HPA encourages the researcher to look at each sentence reflexively, in depth and as a whole. With HPA, a sentence is interpreted and assigned a meaning in context to the whole. The entire analysis follows a two pronged process in simultaneity. The interpretation and meaning making process follows a double helix where the understanding is sought in depth and a meaning giving process is done in context to whole. This conformance to hermeneutic arc ensures an understanding of the phenomenon in the context of the investigation.

This process involves the engagement of the researcher with all his/her presuppositions; it involves an intuitive interpretation-in-context. This gives insightful revelations about the phenomenon as well as tells us about the researcher's self. As Dilthey writes, "*Understanding is essentially a self-transposition or imaginative projection whereby the knower negates the temporal distance that separates him from his object and becomes contemporaneous with it*". (Gadamer, 1976, p. xiv)

To gain understanding into the phenomenon, the researcher will have to minimise the distance between the phenomenon and herself. This would be possible due to the empathetic interaction of the researcher with the participants of the study. It is interesting to note that within the HPA, the researcher would be doing a double hermeneutic, where the researcher is making an interpretation of the participant's interpretation of the experience. Both these interpretations are accessed through language by which the experiencer grasps and allots meaning to the participant's personal lived experiences. And the only way a researcher could gain access to these experiences/phenomena is by listening to the experiencer talk about it, both in words and in silence.

At every stage of study, HPA involves returning back to the one phenomenon which is being investigated. The hermeneutic circle moves from the part to the whole and back again. During this movement from part to whole, understanding is evolved and meanings are revealed and assigned. After the completion of the process, the phenomenon of study, the texts and the author all are open to further interpretation, thereby revealing multiple interpretive realities of the methodology and lead to multiple truths.

### 3.4. Research design

After selecting HPA (Hermeneutic-Phenomenological Approach) as the research methodology for the present research, the next step is to work out the Research Design for the study. The research design comprises of selection of specific techniques and methods at various stages of research which conform to the framework of HPA.

#### *Research Design*

The research design describes a flexible set of guidelines which connect the theoretical paradigms and defines the methods of data collection and analysis. The research design situates the researcher into the empirical world from where the data is elicited. It connects the researcher to the specific infra-structural elements of the data collection including the people, the institutions, the documents and archives and so on. The research design directs the researcher to address the issues of representation and legitimisation (Lincoln & Guba, 2005).

As per the HPA, the researcher is urged to adopt an attitude of an involved participant within the research. The researcher's person or self will be instrumental in the data collection stage (Phenomenological stage) and also at the analysis stage (Interpretive stage). Let us look at the Research Design for the present research:

Stage	Research Design
<i>Data Collection</i>	Data collection will be done with in-depth interviews following the semi-structured interview method. The interviews will be audio-video recorded. (Chapter 4 will elaborate the process of data collection.)
<i>Analysis</i>	Analysis will be done by the method of Thematic Analysis and Constant Comparative Analysis (Chapter 5 will elaborate the analysis conducted on the collated data.)
<i>Evaluation</i>	The entire research will be verified and evaluated on the basis of criteria of evaluation. (Chapter 7 will elaborate the evaluation of the research.)

Table 2: Research Design for present research

Table 2 describes methods employed for the research stages of data collection, analysis and evaluation. The research design prescribes that the data for the present research will be elicited through in-depth and semi-structured interview method. The research design assigns the methods of Constant Comparative Analysis and Thematic Analysis for the analysing the

collected data. Finally, the Research design ascribes mixed criteria for the appraisal of the entire research for the stage of evaluation.

### **3.5. Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have reviewed and evaluated five research methodologies of Phenomenology, Heuristic Method, Co-operative Inquiry, Organic Inquiry and Hermeneutic-phenomenological Approach. We analysed the above approaches on five parameters and finally selected HPA as the research methodology for the present investigation into PLG. Going back to the research questions and the answers expected from this study, it was decided that the methodology of the Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA) was most appropriate for the present study. We also examined the historical and philosophical backgrounds of HPA. This has enabled the researcher to imbibe the philosophical roots of HPA and be in conformity to further stages of research. All the stages of research will follow the Research design finalized in this chapter. The next stage of research is collection of data, which will be elaborated in the next chapter.

## Chapter: 4

### Expressions: Artists-Designers

*To be properly expressed, a thing must proceed from within, moved by its form: it must come, not in from without but out from within.*

*~ (Meister Johann Eckhart)*

Expression is a manifestation of the need to communicate. An artist's expressions bare the inner most dialogue between his self and his soul. A painting will say all the things that an artist could not say in words. It discloses an artist's deepest emotions. It also emotes those fleeting experiences which the artist is not yet conscious about. It evidences and bears the imprint of the artist's sublime experience during the act of creation.

An artist/designer has experienced these deep transformative creative experiences, but how does one get any understanding into them? Their creative expressions in the form of painting/design do give us an idea of the transformative capability of the experience, but the experience still remains hidden. Let us now move towards eliciting the details of the experience of PLG from artists and designers who have experienced PLG.

In the earlier chapter, we have surmised that research methodology of Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach will be employed for the study of PLG. In conformity to the framework of HPA, the present study aims to understand this deep, private and personal experience of PLG by eliciting articulations from artists/designers about their experiences.

#### **4.1. Method of data collection**

PLG is highly personal and transformative lived experience, which is not externally observable. Hence, the study of PLG cannot utilise methods which rely on the faculty of observation of events. The experience of PLG results in manifestation of the artwork/design or an idea. But the analysis and interpretation of the artwork/design will not result in a wholesome understanding of the experiences of the artist/designer.

The experience of PLG is the very core of the creative process. It is sometimes regarded as closed, personal and private and hence guarded by the community of artists and designers. This might be due to the fact that the theorists of creativity give more importance to the artwork/design rather than the artist himself. The theorists analyse the artwork and infer the personality and creative capability of the artist from the artwork. E.g. one of the artists remarked during the interview that the researcher was more interested in the psycho-analysis of each word that the artist spoke so as to decide and make judgements on the artist's self. The researcher had to convince the artist that the present research is aimed only on the experience they had, irrespective of their personality and the creative processes they followed.

This shows that the artist/design community is quite apprehensive about researchers delving into their experiential world and hence the method for eliciting information from them needed to be very flexible and sensitive to address these apprehensions. The method employed will largely decide the richness and credibility of data gathered. Atkinson and Silverman (1997) advise that if one wishes to "really know" the phenomena under study then somehow one must provide means to hear the participant/subject's genuine voice. The deep emotional enclaves of the self could best be explored by way of in-depth interviewing.

Looking at the qualitative and experiential nature of the phenomenon to be investigated, the interview method was considered to be most appropriate for eliciting data from the individuals who had experienced PLG during their creative process. The interview method chosen for the present research could not rely on the traditional styles of interviewing.

Traditionally, these methods employed a distant interaction between the participant and researcher where there was an exchange of responses to the researcher's pre-defined set of questions. This would mean that the researcher needs to know about the phenomenon he is investigating, and the interview would validate the researcher's knowledge. But in the present scenario, though the researcher has experienced PLG, her personal experience cannot be employed as authoritative knowledge base. In fact, this entire research is about gathering adequate data so that the research could form authoritative knowledge base about PLG. Hence, the traditional methods were not considered appropriate for our present study.

Our research needs a comprehensive data eliciting tool which could extract data that is beyond the questions asked by the researcher. Hence, the interview should utilise a form where the interview is an inter-view where knowledge is constructed in the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale S. e., 2007). The present interview context calls for an inter-subjective relationship with the respondent in addition to the interviewer assuming a neutral role in which the researcher would be taking an unbiased stand (Kvale, 1996). An interactive interviewing context requires an interviewer who listens empathetically, identifies with participants and shows respect for the participant's emotional and personal topics and opinions. This does not mean that the researcher is a passive participant in the interaction during the interview. The interview becomes a meaning-making process in which the researcher connects his own experiences to those of others and provides narratives which throw light on the lived experiences about a phenomenon (Ellis & Berger, 2003). Fontana and Prokos (2007) argue that the very essence of unstructured interviewing is the establishment of a relationship on a very primitive and human level with the respondent in which the priority is on understanding rather than finding an explanation.

To understand the experience of the creator, one needs to listen keenly to the creator's reflections upon her personal experiences in their unabandoned sharing of the information. Converse and Schuman (1974) observed that there is no single interview style that fits every occasion or all respondents. This means that the interviewer must be flexible to alter the run of the interview as per the need and comfort of the participants.

In the present study, the reflections of the artists/designers will be in form of articulations of their personal experiences. The artists/designers ascribe meaning to events within his experiences and express it through narratives. The researcher needs to be highly sensitive to each and every expression of the artist/designer. To be able to get this intensive data about private experiences, the researcher needs a very discerning interview technique.



Different types of interview techniques were reviewed. Pilot studies were undertaken to arrive at the appropriate format and procedure of conducting an interview.

## **4.2. The Pilot Studies**

As per the Research Design, Interview technique was considered as most appropriate for eliciting data from the participants. As is discussed in the earlier section, pilot studies were conducted to get an understanding into the kind of interview technique to employ for the final data collection. The experience of PLG is a very personal experience which the artists are not comfortable sharing. Hence, the initial stages of data collection were fraught with doubts about whether the participant would be comfortable enough to share his/her experiences and whether the researcher could elicit honest confessions about the experience of PLG from the participants. To remove these doubts, it was imperative that the right interview participants be selected and the interview be conducted in an appropriate manner so that the researcher receives maximum relevant data about the experience of PLG.

Before venturing into taking the final interviews, a pilot of 30 interviews was done. This helped the researcher to achieve the perfect balance of bracketing<sup>20</sup> as prescribed by Husserl and the self involvement (*Dasien*)<sup>21</sup> as given by Heidegger (1927/1962). Many interviews which formed the pilot gave a sort of training to the researcher to give the exact response, the exact expression, pick the exact word (each interview respondent spoke a different language of words to articulate his/her experiences). They aided the researcher to get an understanding into where to give an exact pause during the conversation, when to distract the participant so that he could feel comfortable and confident to reach deep within himself and share his/her experiences openly. A staunch positivist would be suspicious of these actions of the researcher and consider them as being manipulative to elicit what the researcher wants. But researcher would appeal to reconsider and view this as an effort to establish a rapport and trust with the participants so that they could share their deepest experiences without reservations.

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<sup>20</sup> Husserl recommends bracketing as a method to keep the prejudices of the self from impacting the observation of the phenomenon (Husserl, 1969). According to Husserl, bracketing would bring the required objectivity to the qualitative assessment of the phenomenon.

<sup>21</sup> Heidegger introduced the concept of *Dasien* which means that the self is living in the moment. It is experiencing the living of the experience with the prejudices and subjective inclinations of the self. (Heidegger, 1927/1962)

A total of 30 Pilot interviews (details of participants are enumerated in Appendix 1C, Pg. no. 253-254) were conducted. Initially, artists/designers who had an experience of PLG were identified and approached. The participants were informed of the topic of research in the initial correspondences but the researcher did not divulge any details about PLG. Subsequently, this strategy was changed and the participants were informed about the topic with a brief explanation about experience under study during creative experiences. This was done to give an understanding to the participant about what kind of experience is the researcher investigating. This removed any misunderstandings which could have happened due the alternate connotations of the term 'letting go'.

After receiving an assent from the participant, the interviews were conducted at a time and place most comfortable to the participant. The course of the interview followed the questionnaire guide line which was formulated by the researcher. The interviews were audio-video recorded. The researcher took notes wherever possible. The interviews lasted for an average duration of one and half hours to two hours.

During the span of 30 pilot interviews, the researcher experienced varied types of interactions, some good, some not so good. After reviewing all the 30 pilot interviews, the researcher was able to understand and put together a feedback which enlisted both the positive and negative aspects. The feedback helped in drawing out some constructive points of learning from them for further final interviews.

#### *Negative nuances in the pilot study:*

The pilot study identified a few aspects where the interviews did not go well and we will now look at them in detail. Initially, the interviews went on for a longer duration than the stipulated time. This was due to the fact that the participant was unable to recognise the creative experience denoted by PLG. A lot of time was spent on his assumption of what he understood by PLG. Subsequently, the participant did talk about the experience of PLG, but a substantial time was lost in this confusion.

Many interviews were abruptly ended since the allotted time had elapsed. In such cases, the data elicited was not significant even though the interview process was exactly the same as when significant data was elicited. During some interviews, there was negligible connect or no connect with the participant and in such instances, the data elicited was very formal. The interview contained the right words but it lacked the conviction that the words spoken actually correspond to the real events. In some instances, it was realised that even

though the interview was flowing well, there had been interruptions due to incorrect responses from the researcher and the participant had lost the thread of his thoughts.

These are some of the problems which the researcher faced during the pilot studies. But with each passing pilot interview, the researcher improved the negative issues encountered in the earlier interview. The interviews conducted reflected not just the problems but there were positive nuances within the interviews as well.

#### *Positive nuances of the pilot study:*

The researcher had earlier encountered the problem of long/extended duration of the interview. This problem was resolved by providing a brief explanation of PLG. This brought the researcher and the participant on the same page and the data elicited was of rich quality.

There were instances when the researcher had established a personal connect with the participant during the interview. Such interviews resulted in an in-depth sharing of experiences and the data elicited was very rich. This might be due to the apt timing of researcher's responses and the cues presented by her at various instances during the interview.

In subsequent interviews, there were significant cases where the participant had forgotten the presence of the researcher during the interview. In such cases, the participant relived the experiences of PLG that he had been reflectively sharing with the researcher. Once the researcher had been able to achieve the above mentioned reliving of experience consistently within the interviews, it was considered appropriate to start with final interview of the study. Before proceeding to the final interviews, the learning gained in the pilot study was revisited.

#### *Learning from the pilot study:*

The pilot study gave insights into:

- *The initial information:* It is important to give a very brief explanation of PLG so that participant has a general idea of premise of the interview. This helped in understanding the willingness of the participant to share with the same with the researcher.
- *Interview questions:* The interview questions can supply a backbone for the structure of the interview but they need to be changed and adapted as per the participant.

Sometimes new questions need to be addressed within the space of the interview. The interview should be semi-structured or open-ended.

- *The researcher-participant interaction:* The pilot study revealed a lot about how the researcher needs to dress, the way she conducts herself and the role she plays within the interview interaction. The pilot study gave insights into the manner in which the researcher could establish a rapport and trust with the participants during the interview. The pilot also revealed how the entire interview should proceed to get optimal data.

The pilot made the researcher aware of the movement of politics<sup>22</sup> within the interaction with the participants. The earlier pilots did gather enormous data about the creative process and experiences within it, but there was not much information about PLG. This led to the realization that it would be important to ask the right questions to the right people. The pilot helped revise and prepare the researcher on how and when to ask the right questions. Gordon (1992) stated that, “Interviewing skills involves high-order combination of observation, empathetic sensitivity, and intellectual judgement”.

- *The interview environment:* It was realised that the interview environment needs to establish a balance between control and complete freedom<sup>23</sup>. The researcher needs to grasp the moments when she needs to take control; she needs to let go at the right instant and give full freedom to the participant to explore their thoughts and memories so that the participants would be able to relive the creative experiences of PLG.
- *The interview participants:* The pilot explored varied type of artists and designers to get an understanding of which type of artist and designer would give the maximum information about PLG. It was realised that the participants who knew the researcher or had similar background and education or interest areas were more comfortable with their sharing but it was not necessary that they could give significant information about PLG.

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<sup>22</sup> The researcher’s interaction with the participants started from that of a stranger, which developed to that of a friend, a confidant. By the end of the interview the researcher were back to being strangers, who shared something special. During the interview, the researcher and participant go through a political interaction where sometimes one is dominating over the other, or having an upper hand and driving the interview, and sometimes one remains passive and lets the other take an upper hand.

<sup>23</sup> The interview environment had to be made flexible. At times, the researcher had complete control of the areas on which the participant would share their thoughts and experiences. Within this, the environment was made completely free so that the participant could feel comfortable enough to share their personal experiences and take the interview to deeper levels.

There were some smaller learnings which were very crucial to the interview.

- a. The researcher should always take a seat directly opposite to the participant.  
This establishes a relationship where the researcher has complete attention of the participant with the exclusion of all else. The participant also gets a full view of the researcher's attentive face and her change of expressions.
- b. There should be no third person in the interaction. The presence of a third person breaks the thread of compatible give and take between the researcher and the participant.
- c. The researcher should have a paper and pencil in hand but not break the eye contact for taking notes. The paper and pencil in researcher hands emphasises the researcher's seriousness and attention to the participant's sharing. The researcher should maintain a constant eye contact and should not break it for taking notes or anything else to ensure continuity of interaction.
- d. The camera must be placed in such an angle that the participant could easily forget its presence. The camera makes the participant conscious of the fact that the interaction is being recorded. Awareness of the presence of the camera reminds them of formality of the interview and they revert to the interview language which they use with journalists/art critics. This hinders the depth of sharing of experiences. Hence, the camera is placed in a way that they forget about the camera completely.
- e. The researcher must not speak many words. Non verbal indications like a smile, a questioning frown, surprising smile and so on work better. In case the researcher wishes to inquire more about a particular thread of thought, it is considered better to give a confused look rather than ask a question in words. The words spoken by the researcher, sometimes makes the participant borrow the same word to explain his thoughts. For example, if the researcher had asked the participant, what he meant by a creative moment, then there is every chance that the participant might use the word 'creative moment' for his experience rather than giving a better word to the experiences of deeper intensities.
- f. Even if the participant takes breaks to attend calls, the researcher's phone should never ring. It is very disturbing for the participant if the researcher's phone rings. This disturbs the flow of interaction and at times might affect the degree of trust and confidence established within the interaction.

- g. The researcher should repeat the words already used by the participant rather than using different words. This does not detract the participant from his original thoughts and there is no possibility that the researcher might plant new ideas into the participant's mind about the experience.
- h. The researcher must make sure that the participant is completely relaxed. In contrast, the researcher should be in constant attentive state.
- i. The researcher should make himself invisible to the participant at the right time. To be able to share completely, the participant needs to be alone within himself to relive the experience of PLG. And this will happen when the researcher recedes into the background for the participant.

Thus, the pilot study gave a complete understanding to the researcher on the nuances of how to conduct the interview and portray herself in the interaction with the participant for maximum sharing. The pilot study equipped the researcher to move forward to taking the final interviews.

### **4.3. Final Interviews**

Taking lessons from the pilot study, the research moved on to the stage of final interviews. The final interviews entailed some important tasks for the researcher. Firstly, the criteria of selection of the participants for the final interview had to be enlisted. Secondly, appropriate approach correspondence (email requests for interviews) had to be drafted. Thirdly, the interview questions were revised as per the feedback from the pilot study.

In this section, we take a look at the manner in which the final participants of the study were selected. Then we find out the final selected contemporary artist and designers who agreed to be the participants of the study. We formulate the procedure in which the interviews were to be conducted. After understanding the events that happened during the interview, we also look at the experiential character of the interviews. The experiential character demonstrates the actual give and take that occurred between researcher and the participant during the interview. This experiential give-and-take is the main element which elicited rich experiential data about PLG.

#### **4.3.1. Sampling of participants**

As has been mentioned earlier, nearly all artists/designers experience PLG, but there are only few who have experienced the deep and rich shades of PLG. Hence, it becomes very crucial that we are able to select the right kind of participants for the study. It is equally important that the researcher is able to elicit a personal sharing of experiences without influencing the articulations of artists/designers.

Based on the richness of the data received through the interviews, the pilot study gave criteria for selecting the appropriate participants. Hence, the technique of Purposive Sampling was considered most appropriate for the present research on PLG. For our context, Purposive sampling targets a particular group of people who have had the requisite experience of PLG. The Purposive sampling was restricted to the fields of Arts and Design.

The main criteria for selection were:

- The participant has had the experience of PLG many times. This will ensure that the selected participant would be able to give rich descriptions about PLG
- The participant has agreed to share his/her experiences of PLG. This will ensure least struggle in the interaction for eliciting private and personal experiences. This permission was sought by email correspondence at the time when the final artists and designer were approached for an interview. (Refer to Appendix II A, pg:255)
- The participant has been successful and renowned in his/her professional field. He has gained an eminence among his peers and is recognized for his works. He has worked in the professional field for more than 7-10 years. This ensured that the participants may have had experience of PLG and their word bears an authenticity in their field.
- The participants have worked with varied media so that smallest of nuances of the phenomena are captured within the diverse sample both in terms of age, gender and work.
- The participants having experience in varied media would have varied shades of experience of PLG. This ensured that all the variations happening to PLG due to medium specifications are captured in the interview.

- The participants belonged to different states and cultural backgrounds. But all of them lived in urbanised geographies which had a cosmopolitan population. This made them conform to the urban culture which is universal and sophisticated. All the artists belonged to the Contemporary Art community and the designers harmonised with the contemporary Indian Design culture. Thus all the participants were a part of a similar professional culture. In fact, they were the ones defining the present culture in their field. Within this uniform professional environment, the participants brought their personal uniqueness, which was a part of the inherent cultural heritage to which they grew up in.

#### **4.3.2. The Participants**

According to the above mentioned criteria, artists and designers were approached for interviews through approach mails and correspondences. At the end, ten renowned contemporary artists and ten designers from varied domains of design consented for interviews.

The interview participants belonged to varied Indian colleges and universities. The artists came from institutes like J.J. School of Arts of Mumbai, Maharaja Sayaji University (MSU) of Baroda and Shantiniketan. The designers belonged to Industrial Design Centre (IDC) of IIT-Bombay, IDDC (IIT-Delhi), and National Institute of Design. The participants were from different states of India and spoke different languages. They belonged to different religions and came from varied urban, sub-urban or rural roots. Yet all the participants belonged to a collective contemporary Indian culture and spoke a similar language of art and design.

#### *The Artists and Designers*

#### ***The Artists:*** Ten Contemporary Indian Artists

Anju Dodiya

Atul Dodiya

Bose Krishnamachari

Chintan Upadhyay

Jitish Kallat

Riyaz Komu

Sudarshan Shetty

Shilpa Gupta



Please refer to (Appendix I A, pg: 249-250) for detailed information about the renowned artists who were the participants of current study.

***The Designers:*** Ten Contemporary Indian Designers

Dilip Chabbria	Prassanna Kulkarni
Jacob Matthew	Shridhar Marri
Kurnal Rawat	Sumit Patel
Makrand Dharpale	Varshesh Joshi
Preeti Vyas	Vinay Rao

Please refer (Appendix I B, pg: 251-252) for detailed information about the renowned designers who were participants of the present study.

#### **4.3.3. The Interview**

The selected participants were approached for the final interview, through an approach letter which also contained brief information about PLG. The details of the approach letter are attached in the Appendix II C, pg: 258. This enabled the researcher to know beforehand whether the participant had experienced PLG and helped achieve a higher degree of focus on PLG during the interview. Each participant was intimated about the duration of the interview which was estimated to last for 1.5 -2 hours and that the interviews would be audio-video recorded. Out of twenty participants, two participants voiced their discomfort about the video recording and the researcher has taken only audio recording for those two interviews.

The interview appointment was fixed as per the convenience of the participant making sure that the participant is completely free of commitments at the time of interview. The researcher made sure that the interview was held in the participant's studio or workplace where he is in his element. The researcher had requested for a one-on-one interview which required that there is no third person present during the length of the interview. The researcher herself did not take any assistants for audio-video recording or note-making. Any third person interference was prevented and the interview space was limited only to the researcher and the participant.

The interview relationship building started from the moment the participant opened the door of his studio to welcome the researcher. The researcher gave enough time to the participant to fill out personal information and permission forms. And while the participant filled these forms, the researcher set the audio-video equipment to be ready to start the interview. This time acted as a transitional phase and helped the participant dissipate all other thoughts to focus on the interview. The interview stage was thus set and the interview started with first formal eye contact as interviewer and interviewee. It was then time to start the interview conversation.

The interview conversation followed probable interview questionnaire which was prepared as guideline for the flow of the interview. The final interview questionnaire details could be found in Appendix IIA, pg: 255. Questions for the interview were divided into three parts; the first section contained very general questions which would put the participant at ease, the second section inquired about the topic of PLG and finally the last section asked about the very deep nuances of PLG. The third section did not contain many questions as the researcher would improvise at the time of interview.

During the actual interview, the questions did not follow a streamlined flow. The researcher decided the initial questions, whether they needed to be asked, or they could be skipped to directly start with topic of research straight away. The researcher attentively guided the interview such that the participants had complete freedom to move in varied directions while articulating about their experiences.

This is not to say that all the interviews went smoothly and that all the interview participants were cooperative of their sharing of experiences. In many instances, the participant did experience special instances during the creative process. The participants agreed that these instances matched the brief description of PLG, but they were in disagreement of whether one could term it as 'letting go'. Many participants ridiculed the researcher for wanting to research and analyse the real magic in the act of creation. They were sceptical that the researcher would be scientifically analysing something as ephemeral as the self-transformative experience of PLG.

On the other hand, there were participants who were very encouraging about being asked questions about the act of creation. The artists/designer participants shared that they were used to interviewers asking questions which revolved on what or how they painted/designed. Other interviewers always put the artwork or design at the centre and they

confessed that they found it refreshing that the researcher intended to put the creator's self as focus of the interview.

The initial attitude of the participants varied from being very open to totally closed. Sometimes the participants displayed an antagonistic attitude as well. At the start of the interview, the researcher asked questions which tried to gauge and address the participant's different frames of mind. The researcher then took to different routes of asking questions to the participants. For example, if the participant was in an open frame of mind, the researcher would jump right into the core questions of the phenomenon. But if the participant was antagonistic, then the researcher would resort to using words that would pacify the participant and develop trust so that the frame of mind would turn more favourable towards the researcher and then slowly lead the conversation towards the core topic.

As the interview progressed, the researcher led the interview, and followed the participant through their thoughts and experiences. Since the goal of an interview is to elicit understanding, it is paramount that a rapport is formed with one's participant: a type of rapport in which the participant is comfortable to share and open up new focus points. There were instances during the interview when the researcher let the participant take lead and explore their world of experiences. Within the given context, the interview was allowed to flow with an openness and freedom so that the participant could explore various limits of his experiences and also go deep into the conclaves of his mind to give rich descriptive reflections on PLG.

Since the research is focused on experience of PLG, the interview was allowed to be in depth and open ended, but within the constraints/limits of the focus/context of the topic of research. This channelized the interview giving descriptions about PLG. Through these instances, the participant relived the experience of PLG during the interview and the researcher was able to witness and capture it. This reliving of the experiences happened for all twenty participants.

At the end of each interview, the researcher formally ended the interview. Interestingly, there was a lot of sharing after the interview was declared over. The researcher noted these interesting bits of information in her notes. Each interview lasted for an hour to one and half hour and the interaction was audio-video recorded after taking permissions for using the data for research purposes only.

#### 4.3.4. The interview experience

Now that we have seen the events that happened during the interview, let us turn our attention to the experiential nature of the interviews. Though an interview is a data eliciting tool, the interaction during the interview was a learning experience for both the researcher and the participant. As one of the participants said,

*” ...thanks for making me think about these experiences, I have learned more about myself and what happened to me. I think these experiences will now always be a part of me. They have transformed me and I have to thank you for it”<sup>24</sup>*

The twenty interviews were transforming for the researcher herself. The researcher was blessed with an opportunity to witness the participant’s experiences as they relived it within the interview. The experience of the relived glory of the highly positive experiences of the participants as witnessed during the interview will stay as a cherished memory with the researcher.

It was amazing for the researcher to watch the participant move from being a stranger, to a friend, to an ally and into a confidant, as s/he poured out his/her experiences. The researcher saw the participants in his/her most plunging vulnerable moments which further lifted the artist/designer to heights of positivity. The participant in the process of narrating his/her experiences was taken inside her own experiential world where s/he stood on precipice, ready to let him/herself fall. In that moment, the researcher could empathise with the trust that the participant felt towards the unknown. During such moments of reliving, the participant was within his own world where the researcher didn’t exist for him. He was on his own, in his world of experiences far away from the interview setting. The interview became whole and complete with reliving of PLG in the creative experiences. It then tapered down to the participant becoming aware of researcher’s presence and the reality of the interview. This interaction of reliving and sharing brought forth an intimacy of camaraderie and friendship between the researcher and participant. In the end both researcher and participant departed as strangers with a bond of deep sharing.

The interviews gave a glimpse into moment of frustrations and sorrows of the participants as they narrated their experiences. There were moments of silence in the interview as the participants searched for words to articulate their experiences. Even these silent instances of in-articulation couldn’t stop the empathetic transference of feelings from the participant to the researcher. It brought forth the awareness of all that the participant might

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<sup>24</sup> Excerpt from Interview no. A8

have felt then, and was again feeling within the moment in the interview. The palpable silence emoted the re-felt loss, and loneliness. As the participant relived the PLG experience, one could realise that the narration contained words stumbling over each other as he tried to keep pace with the thoughts and experiences that he was experiencing all over again. Such moments in the narrative bespoke about a world so far away from the reality of the interview and yet so much a part of it, so much a result of the interview, so much a part of mutual understanding between the researcher and participant.

This section elaborates the experience of the researcher who was a part of the interview while the participant relived their experiences. One should not look at the descriptions and ascribe the researcher to a romantic frame of mind, easily carried away by the experiential quality of the interview experience. These descriptions form a small window for the reader to get a glimpse of interplay of the researcher-participant interaction within the interview. Descriptions of such deeply positive experiences formed small part of the whole interview which was open ended, and yet highly contextual and focussed.

#### **4.4. Expressions**

Till now, we have the interview process right from the pilot interview stage, to the selection of final participants and the final interviews. The final interviews yielded rich descriptive articulation of ten artists and designers about their experiences of PLG.

The twenty participants of the study belonged to varied backgrounds, varied ages groups and varied experience in their profession. But they all belonged to the similar domain of work. There was a multi-dimensional quality to their creative experiences. This multi-dimensionality is reflected in their articulations as well. At a glance, it would not be surprising to find diversity in the articulations which might seem just too vast in its polarities and may seem non-analyzable. When one delves deeper into the descriptions, one realizes its richness in terms of the honesty and vulnerability confessed by participant about his experience of PLG.

In the next section, some of the articulations of the artists and designers about their experience of PLG are elaborated. Both the artists and designers seem to have spoken a very diverse language which is probably due to the vocabulary used in their domains of work. We will examine the articulations of artists and designers separately. Within this section, only

small excerpts of each interview are elaborated to present the comprehensiveness of expressions captured during the interview.

#### 4.4.1. Artists

In this section we closely examine the interview of each artist in detail. Each Artist excerpt (taken directly from the interview transcript) gives an insight about PLG as experienced by him/her.

*Artist 1: (As excerpted from interview dated 17 August 2010)*

Artist 1 elaborates the **flowing nature** of PLG and how it mingles into the creative process. PLG makes its presence felt at the right moment.

*“...this moment when it happens...it just happens easily....you flow into it....and its very difficult to define...when it actually.... you know it just clicks...it just sits/sets into place...there’s a great release and sometimes...‘joy’. But also I think at that point...you’re not aware...you’re totally one with it...so it’s only in retrospect that you...you go back and you say... you know... you feel that sense of elation or.....you’re totally one with it...So one is trying to make connections... you don’t quite leave it...it’s still somewhere inside.”*

Artist 1 gives a descriptive account of PLG and how it is akin to a **synchronised dance** with an internal music.

*“...it’s like the pace you know when you found it then you try to...it’s like you know dance as if ... you know you respond... you know like there is music which you’re hearing inside (gestures ears) to keep listening to it and not let go...otherwise you know you’re not in synchronization... you know I think it’s about synchronization within something or...ummm... you find something which you are hearing and you kind of keep responding to it..But if that link breaks then again it’s a fresh beginning...it comes back but it comes back as the same rhythm-no its more fun if it’s different...I feel immense joy, soon i seek it again and again...I seek that experience again.”*

The participant describes experience of **progression** of PLG.

*“..It happens one after the other...intensely one image suggests and leads to another image and you just move on and it works well...everything works well and then there is another vision and you work towards the formal deadline...it comes and suddenly you know...it’s like oh...its falling together now...at the right moment it clicks...once it starts...it keeps clicking together...like a machine...one leads to another...till the thought is kind of used up...worked in that whole pattern...as a pattern it was”*

*Artist 2: (As excerpted from interview dated 8 June 2010)*

Artist 2 describes how an artist **allows** himself to feel and have the experiential events happen to him

*“...you're going in a certain direction and suddenly you found something which is totally unknown area...unknown element...and which you go...ohhh...this is something very special ...you cling to that and allow that to happen.”*

He talks about the aspect of ***losing oneself*** during the experience of PLG

*“...within the process...often this moment comes...which you know which you're so involved...that one has often forgotten himself...and I think that is one of the greatest...if you forget yourself... you lose the whole identity...the painting the material...and this body...within that something happens...that there is something which is like unknown force....or unknown guidance...which I feel...which takes over.*

*...after a certain point...I'm just a tool.....to convey certain things...maybe I was chosen....to show,...things like that... you know....by God...by unknown force or the great divine design....which I'm a part of it ....and so I have to follow...I can't be angry or I can't be unhappy or I can't be extremely happy...I have to just do things... you know...I was guided..*

*...the decisions which are taken they come like a fraction of a second.....within that everything just get dissolved...I was sorting out...fighting.....struggling...nothing happens and then within a fraction of a second....gave me that energy or power or that kind of specific....thing...which resolves the whole thing in a beautiful way...it is a very very mysterious way....it is a very difficult thing to sort of explain...or share.”*

**Artist 3:** *(As excerpted from interview dated 5 June 2010)*

Artist 3 explains the ***opening of new spaces*** as a result of the experience of the PLG.

*“...and then it also kind of triggers newer ideas at times...it's like a port...it opens up spaces. When u get an idea...you don't know where it has come from...it can be a flash...but there is always precedence...it is connected to your experiences...that I need to do this and how fast can I get to do this....when I can start feeling positive and light...that I get excited...feel alive so to say...but you'll enjoy the moment or the process of making it...and u might feel very good.”*

He mentions an interesting aspect that he waits for the experience of PLG to ***subside*** so that he could start working.

*“...and sometimes I'm so excited that I need to do something to subside...it's so unbearable sometimes...you know we need to temper it down.....I think it lasts as long as it needs to last....no...You don't have a control.....when I feel very low...and powerless...I remember being very restless...”*

**Artist 4:** *(As excerpted from interview dated 9 June 2010)*

Artist 4 elaborates the process in which the various strands of thought and experience ***come together*** to form PLG and manifested idea or artwork.

*“Experience of an idea or the stimuli that transforms at some point...when it transforms in your mind or when you're least aware...I mean one has trained oneself to be...as untrained...to anyway work in a spirit of openness...there is some moment at which everything that one has been building towards..find a form...I perhaps think of it as union or coming together...of strands of experiences that one has accumulated or collected over time...and there is a point at which all of these strands begin to cross fertilize into a third entity...”*

He very poetically describes his experience of PLG and how it **manifests into an idea** towards the solution.

*“...one is not a full witness to everything...you're very very focused about thinking about it...with nothing moving...there are those frustrating days sometimes when things don't move and then it moves....now to me that moment is pretty indefinable...that then creates a certain jump...which then that sculptural form which was completely dormant and not conversing makes its first utterance.*

*A moment of oneness with the idea that one is grappling with and I would still attach that with a unison between the self and the other meditative space is that we often think of is something else altogether....it is about that form being extremely inarticulate with you and not talking to you...and then it begins to speak and then you work..one is when you are engaging with material....it's in a way an act of letting go...letting go into territories one does not know...all that accumulated stray strands of knowledge...collapse and crystallize to a form...across a period of time.*

*...the unpredictability of it never changes...there is always this...this great desire to wake up and begin....it just becomes more fore-grounded and clear when you're sitting in the studio in front of the object than the other you know when its diffused in this larger you know living...simply life...”*

**Artist 5:** (As excerpted from interview dated 17 August 2010)

Artist 5 talks about how one has to take a **risk into the unknown** to be able to find what one is struggling to achieve.

*“I think sometimes I live on the space itself and the moment you make communication with space or the place, then the space itself starts telling you what you should do. Many times things happen and I have to change it and it happens with a totally different ... with no reasons many times...and that is a risk one has to take somewhere. I was trying many things for at least one and a half years and it was not happening ... like ... I had one particular idea but I didn't have any form of it...And so whatever I was doing, it was just like a play.”*

He describes his experience of PLG which **transformed** the work he was struggling with.

*“I saw four-five empty canvases and I had started just working on it ... and I started working with charcoal...And I started working with water ... and the whole effect which came ... that's the reason what I have been looking for. And then the whole day I went ... I was working and I made five paintings in a day. Because that process needed that much time and energy and I was so happy with it, you know...I mean, I said, let me just do it. I will see it later what happens...And it came exactly the way I wanted.*



*And when the show finished, everything happened and then I tried again, it didn't happen, you know? I mean I was trying very hard to find it. Didn't happen...So I mean, maybe it was the involvement to the work and maybe that excitement that I found it again ... maybe it was me ... but I found it again...I think it got every good results."*

He elaborates that when he ***lets himself go*** then things start to take form

*"...there is a sort of synchronization after a certain point, because the mind wants something very specific. And the feelings mostly deliver it in a very specific manner. There should be a sort of communication with the work. Okay? I have felt that. Maybe it looks philosophical or abstract to people, but I think it is very important.... I think there is a constant communication because it is not the only thing that is alive ... everything has its own life.*

*I let myself totally free. And then, my heart, my body, you know ... it happens."*

**Artist 6:** *(As excerpted from interview dated 4 June 2010)*

Artist 6 articulates the various ***reasons why*** he experiences PLG.

*"It is the right time you are going to the right place. I always feel that there is a strange intuitive element which surrounds you...you call it blessing, you call it inclination that you have, and you call it...I think it is beyond something that is involvement*

*It just clicks ... and it is possible because you are in the stream...And you have an immediate space where you can juxtapose things...that your involvement is the key."*

Artist 6 also talks about ***trust and belief*** being very important ingredients to the achievement of PLG.

*"So you are in the right time, right temperament you are in the studio...So there is an immediate relationship which happens...the artistic involvement is trust in it ...something called belief, something called knowledge, something called your ... you know ... I think your time ... where you are ... the time you live in, the space, the co ordinations, what you see, what you saw yesterday, you know? How you relate, how do you learn art ... I think all these things contribute a lot in a work which the artist is doing...he develops a certain degree of understanding with his world ... he understands the nature better. He understands the time better. He is a better thinker. You know? He gives a lot of time to himself. He is lonely. He loves that idleness."*

**Artist 7:** *(As excerpted from interview dated 5 June 2010)*

Artist 7 reiterates Artist 6's thoughts about ***belief and trust***:

*"I love accidents. It is like ... it is like fate ... it is like destiny...The destiny of the space where I am working...it's like trust ... you believe in yourself, so I accept that. If you have to make something new, you will have to forget about ... you know ... what you already have."*

He also mentions that the experience of PLG is similar to that of lovemaking.

*“If you don’t involve with your painting, it won’t happen. It is like love-making. You have to flirt, you have to ... it is not just the moment, It is like understanding the space, understanding the body, and then you work....it has to be like a kind of hypnotic moment.”*

He also elaborates how he **forgets everything** except what he’s feeling and experiencing:

*“It is almost, they create a situation, they let go and then make it ... hypnotize, or whatever ...It is a private space when you are working. So that ... that you enjoy...It is almost like happiness...So it is forgetfulness is also nice...It is that kind of pleasure ... I get out of it...That is not vanished in my space.”*

**Artist 8:** (As excerpted from interview dated 9 June 2010)

Artist 8 expounds on the **dialogic quality** of the interaction between the work and himself:

*“And as that happens, there is a dialogue between you and the work. Then you become the dialogue...then you step back and you look, and sometimes it is almost very frustrating...see the medium will not allow you to ... the medium challenges you in a way. As it is developing, you are letting go a lot of the times...You are letting go...Now from the two-dimensional space, one is going to the three-dimensional, one is letting go all the time.”*

He also elaborates how there is **letting go of oneself to reach ‘beyond’**:

*“In a way one is a prisoner in one’s ... I don’t want to say mind because it is beyond the mind. It is the ... it is the ... soul – like the possessor. It is pushing the body and also ... in a way...And the body sometimes is limited in going to that ‘beyond’. It is that what you want to go into that beyond. Your action, your physicality...It is ... you see ... the body, without the impulse is inert. So I will not give it so much authority. One has to let go from the other dimension – which one exists.”*

The Artist also talks about his **‘Eureka’ moment**:

*“When there is a eureka moment, there is euphoria. Suddenly something opens up. And it is a very beautiful space to be...is very special...It is not happening for a long time and you are hoping it will happen.”*

**Artist 9:** (As excerpted from interview dated 9 June 2010)

Artist 9 articulates her experiences of the moment which gives her a **sense of completion and peace**:

*"It is actually stems from a very vulnerable...then you know it is completely undefined...in that brief moment, where things are collapsing into each other...like one is so fascinated! In that one fraction comes something that you want to do and you feel like yes....there seems to be a definite moment of truth or maybe condensation of emotion...as if the mind is working parallel to itself...parallel like you are in one living state where you are aware and there is another state where it is working...something within the mind says that it is really true and it is very deep and it is...It is a collapse of ... of ... of a ... set of thinking patterns...But there is a similarity of codes of different ... visual codes being exchanged.*

*It is a sense of completion...The sense of coming together...I feel at peace."*

**Artist 10:** *(As excerpted from interview dated 5 June 2010)*

Artist talks of the inner moment as an accident where **spontaneity** leads to the **emergence** of hidden images:

*"It is the very fact that creative activity is such that a lot of accidents happen. There is conscious knowledge about why this is happening. Lot of images might emerge out of nowhere. And it happens within two seconds or three seconds, or whatever...they are not at all aware of what is going to happen ... they are not aware of what is the final result...you will have to keep on working until and unless you are able to satisfy ... the image.*

*So every time there is a ... there is a movement, you make a decision...Things can happen out of nowhere...if you are aware of it, then it is not really spontaneous it is...that is how we actually call it responding inside...it can happen in a flash."*

#### **4.4.2. Designers**

The Designers' transcripts reflect varied backgrounds of their work areas. The participants were very forthcoming about their deep creative experiences. Let us take a peek into the articulations of designers about their experiences of PLG.

**Designer1:** *(As excerpted from interview dated 8 June 2010)*

Designer 1 describes the experience of PLG as being **orgasmic**. He points that he **allows** for that to happen to him:

*"It is spontaneous...I think if one is deeply in his or her work, and if one is enjoying his work...When you are doing that, there is a huge pleasure...There is ... this is akin to being on drugs, this is akin to orgasm, or whatever. Because you are creating something which is in your mind, then seeing it in physical form and that is*

*a terrible high...So ... I allow for that...I think I am levitated into that state all the time. If you have nothing to lose, you tend to be more creative."*

**Designer 2:** *(As excerpted from interview dated 1 June 2010)*

Designer 2 expresses the duration when the phase lasts and also states the **tiredness** that he feels after the experience is over:

*"I think it is ... it is a fairly excited stage. I get more and more immersed in it. A few minutes to a few hours ... very rarely it lasts the whole day ... but sometimes it lasts over days also. You feel... tired...You feel spent...emotionally you feel very happy, physically you feel tired."*

**Designer 3:** *(As excerpted from interview dated 20 August 2010)*

Designer 3 talks about the experience as being **divine knowledge** and he describes the experience very vividly:

*"Changing the view point ... and it was like you know ... they say – "Divya Gyan" (Divine Knowledge) kind of a thing ... and suddenly after doing a couple of them, I suddenly ... I don't know what. I suddenly got a knack of it.*

*There was a different kind of ... you know the grasp of the whole thing or the confidence I got...after that ... that oh, yeah! It is like ... Eureka types, you know? Okay –I have cracked this code or something, you know? That kind of an experience was there...I think ... I think it is ... it is for ... like a flash, and then you know ... then you sort of catch on to it or latch on to it.*

*Yeah ... at least at that particular moment, yes ... I would say. Because I mean, then it was a different kind of energy, was a different kind of ... I would say, happiness or ... you know ... satisfaction or ... you know the joy of finding something new and you know, you start working on it like vigorously."*

**Designer 4:** *(As excerpted from interview dated 1 July 2010)*

Designer 4 very beautifully explicates his experience, where there is some third-person, '**outside-you**' as he calls it which lets you do things and lets things be done to you:

*"The time lag, probably gives the subconscious a space to absorb the phenomenon. There is a phenomenon beyond you....but that phenomenon is what probably is working with the sub-conscious layers of your mind...and then, you know letting you things ... letting you do things....sometimes that sub-conscious needs a space for itself...pressured by several other factors which is not letting it go to...this state of bliss....A state of complete receptivity.*

*You know ... to ... to sort of explain it you have to be out-sided...You have to be an observer...But here, you are it...So you are not really observing how you are feeling about it."*

He also talks about **state of joy and equilibrium** where things **emerge**:

*“If you ask I think it is a pure state of joy. It is a state of joy. It is a pure state of joy...it is just emerging right in front of you....it is the perfect equilibrium...I think that would be ... probably “Nirvana”...Similar in the sense of joy, similar in the sense of ... you know ... sense of seeing things ...emerge.”*

**Designer 5:** (As excerpted from interview dated 4 June 2010)

Designer 5 explains that he **wants** the experience to **prolong**:

*“So you don’t really want to let that go ... so you don’t really want to stop the ... disturb the moment, and even the momentum, you know ... carry it on. But you know when your hand is actually taking it to a different level it is actually rush ... actually I would say it is quite fast. So it happens very rapidly...So if it happens within two seconds or five minutes, I think it is not the question of me prolong it, but if I am satisfied ke (that) I think it is there.”*

He also says that his hand **takes over** where the mind cannot reach and hence the emergence of the concept through the hand onto the paper.

*“it is just that it happens because hand is doing justice or doing ... or enhancing it, or more than doing justice, it is taking that thought or the concept of the idea to an extent or to a different level which my mind cannot do. It depends whether it is complete freedom or it is calculated ... it is like a calculated thing...So that freedom is not entirely completely, you know, shooting in the dark, it is definitely for some goal or something ... so it ... it is that way.”*

**Designer 6:** (As excerpted from interview dated 22 August 2010)

Designer 6 points out that there has to be **freedom** to work on the challenge in which you put the whole of yourself into your work, you achieve a **sense of flow** with the **submission of oneself** to the work:

*“The other thing is ... the freedom is the part that actually triggers that. So it is more like a challenge ... you have put up a challenge that comes up...if you see, there is a high level of dialogue happening at every level...you are in that flow and that flow went on for that whole period.*

*It triggers that ... it ... the whole thing you have to put it. The whole and soul...When your stake is very high I think it is like adrenalin...when I do that, then I submit. It is taking shape ... then you feel really happy. That is something which ... I cannot put in words. Basically it is something you ... you ... your ... your ... your happiness is at the highest level.”*

**Designer 7** (As excerpted from interview dated 7 June 2010)

Designer 7 urges that he drives himself to a **passion** where the manifestation rises from within himself:

*“Where you start enjoying it...and to enter into that level of passion...the satisfaction, you know, about this thing. The thing has to come from within ... you. So that’s the way to...*

*Let the creative mind have its own space to think and blossom...so that is why you are more open while you are thinking. And try and push as much unique way you go about thinking.”*

**Designer 8:** (As excerpted from interview dated 22 August 2010)

Designer 8 describes the **loss of time** within the experience of PLG. He also talks about the aspect of **play** its role in the experience of PLG:

*“Then I felt like sometimes when I am like deep into it, it has happened...I am doing it, I am doing it...and then suddenly, there is no sense of time...I am just illustrating without knowing what is happening all around me and then some ... after three, four hours I realize that so much of time has passed by.*

*It just happened, when it happened...I am like really into it ... being there with the thing the way it is ... a highly intense moment ... the way it is ... transit. No, no ... flashes are there, yes ... you know ... and these flashes are like ... you take forward and then ... Keep playing with the same drawing ...”*

**Designer 9:** (As excerpted from interview dated 2 June 2010)

Designer 9 explains about the **connections** one needs to make after which one could experience the phenomenon. He also points out that though it is possible to reach towards the experience, it is equally **difficult to sustain it**:

*“And I think that was ... very involving ... So you start making the connection you need to...you need a little discipline to bring things together. I am aware that I am there ...where do you get into the soul just like that ...but it is really hard to sustain energies...It feels fulfilling while you are in there.”*

**Designer 10:** (As excerpted from interview dated 8 June 2010)

Designer 10 talks about the experience of PLG as **the union** with the higher self where he **loses the sense of self** and it **transformed** into a yogic moment:

*“But I realized that when I start to work, when I arrived at a certain moment...then I become the one with ...self....At that point in time I find that everything recedes. In that moment, which is actually a Yogic moment...because there is a connection...There is a moment of joy....And spiritual side...the ratification or variation, apart from being a very blissful, peaceful moment*

*It is oneness in something...I mean whether it is me feeling or somebody feeling..., I am not aware of that... I am aware of just the union...I am aware of the divinity.... I have complete memory of it..... I am aware*

*of that emotion..... I am not aware, what actually transacts in that moment. And that is perhaps the kind of connection with your higher self. I mean the higher self takes over...I have come out of it and it is finished”.*

The expressions of the artists and designers give a glimpse into the variations and multiple aspects of experiences of PLG. There are numerous instances where the articulations within the interviews are analytical descriptions of the events and feelings during PLG. And at other times, the articulations turn highly poetic and passionate as the participants relive the experiences of PLG during the interviews. Since the present study employed Hermeneutic-Phenomenological approach as the research methodology, the hermeneutic arc was followed in the interviews. The researcher followed the arc by moving from a holistic stance where the interview-interaction dealt with the larger context of creative experiences, and further proceeding towards the smaller in-depth areas and aspects about PLG (where the participants moved inwards and relived their experiences) This continuous holistic-inward movement established the hermeneutic arc at the interview stage of the research.

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

As per the Research Design formulated according to the framework of HPA (Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach), the data collection was done with Interview technique. Learning from thirty pilot interviews, the twenty final interviews were conducted with selected artist/designer participants. The interviews lasted for 1.5 to 2 hours and these were transcribed for further analysis.

As one can glean from the transcripts, the artists and designers exhibit a diverse range of experiences and emotions during the PLG experience. The interview excerpts elaborate about experience of PLG and the manner the participants experienced it as well. Further analysis of the transcript will separate the aspect about PLG from the participants' individual feelings and experiences of PLG. When one glances at all the transcripts, one realises that the core of the experience seems to be remaining consistent in all the expressions. Nearly all the participants seem to articulate that there is an event during their creative experience, there is a loss of sense of space-time and their self and this event leads to transformative manifestations to their artworks/designs. This is in congruence with the premise of PLG experience as described in Chapter 1.

When one looks at all the transcripts, one finds the data to be quite exhaustive, diverse and chaotic. And to make semblance of the data and to elicit a comprehensive understanding of all

the aspects of PLG, one will need to proceed further with the methods of analysis as prescribed in the research design which will be elaborated in the next chapter 5.





## Chapter Five

### Analysis

*There are no facts, only interpretations.*

*~ Friedrich Nietzsche*

*Blessed are they who see beautiful things in humble places where other people see nothing.*

*~Camille Pissarro*

An artist is constantly perceiving his life events and imbibing them into his self. These life events find their way, whether consciously or unconsciously into his paintings. Artist has full knowledge of some events which are engraved in his memory which he intentionally applies into his painting. At times, some events or parts of events creep into his paintings without him being aware of it. The artist/designer is in a constant state of analysis of his perceptions, so that he can prioritize, eliminate, store and apply them to get new insights about the events/thoughts he has been ruminating about. There is a constant meaning making process happening in the artist/designer's mind in which he attributes meanings and formulates concepts to reach that 'one' thought/idea/solution.

The process of meaning making is aptly described by Kessel, Cole and Johnson as

There is an interesting simultaneity of multiple meanings in the artist's one moment of experience. This can be viewed in terms of figure and ground. The meanings are nested in one another with the focus in the centre and layers of context lying around visible at the penumbra each conditioning the figure upon it and each ultimately adding to the particular meaning in focus. A stimulus, any experience, is what it is by virtue of the context it has. An analysis of any experience would then be an articulation of these contexts and how they contribute to the experience, in its full experienced meaning. (Kessel, Cole, & Johnson, 1992)

Taking cues from the above mentioned process, we will proceed to the phase of analysis of the artist/designer's transcripts. The stage of analysis employed the Hermeneutic arc by extracting the meanings hidden in the layers of articulations and at the same time contextualized the meaning units to the experience being investigated. Let us now move forward to examine the analysis done for our research.

As mentioned in the earlier chapter, twenty final interviews in the form of audio-video recordings were transcribed. The transcriptions included the verbal articulations and the gestural cues of the artists/ designers. The transcriptions also indicated the pauses and silences during the interview. The data elicited for the research purpose was now ready for analysis.

Before we start the process of analysis, let us look back at the research questions stipulated in Chapter 1 of this thesis. The formulated research questions are:

- What is the phenomenon of letting go and what are its characteristics?
- What are the various dimensions/aspects of PLG: For example, in artists and designers, what are the stages, the varied types and so on?
- What is the variance in the dimensions/aspects of PLG in arts and design?

The present analysis has to address these three questions to arrive at a comprehensive understanding about PLG. The analysis will focus on the above mentioned questions and the process followed would seek answers to aspects related to the characteristics of the experience of PLG. In this chapter of Analysis, we will take a look at the method of analysis employed in the present research. Then, we will examine the process of analysis, and finally infer the results which evolved from the analysis.

Let us now, move forward to look at the details of the methods used and process of analysis followed within this study.

## **5.1. Method and Process of Analysis**

The present study utilises the framework of Hermeneutic-Phenomenological Approach (HPA). According to HPA, the most crucial aspect of the analysis is the derivation of meaning of the phenomenon being studied. The meaning making engagement was followed in the interviews and the same is being taken forward in the analysis. All the interviews were taken in English, but there was ample flexibility for the colloquialism where the participants could use words they found comfortable and easy to articulate their experiences. If one looked at the entire data of interview transcripts, one would find that it is interspersed with different words ascribed to similar events/experiences. It is upon the sensitivity of the researcher to instinctively corroborate and analytically and rationally differentiate between the words in the data, to give a wholesome meaning to the events/experiences they denote. The researcher's personal experiential knowledge about the phenomena resonates with articulations of the participants during the interaction in the interview. The task of sense-making about the interpretative articulations of the participant's experiences required the abject objectivity of the researcher and a method of analysis which would give comprehensive results.

### **5.1.1. Methods of Analysis**

Let us now turn our attention towards the deliberations done to arrive at the final methods of analysis for the study of PLG. We will start by looking at how meanings are assigned to experiential phenomenon. Van Manen states that to grasp the essential meaning of a phenomenon, one needs to practice phenomenological reflection. The insight into the essence of a phenomenon involves a process of reflectively appropriating, of clarifying and of making explicit the structure of meaning of the lived experience (Van Manen, 1990). Van Manen also explicates that to contemplate phenomenologically on an experience, one needs to reflectively analyse the structural and thematic aspects of that experience. During the interviews, the participants reflectively articulated their experiences. In the same manner, this needs to be carried forward by the researcher during the analysis phase of the study.

After deliberation on different methods of analysis, the Research design prescribed the following methods for the present study

- Thematic Analysis
- Constant Comparative Analysis

In the present research, a dual method of thematic and constant comparative analysis has been employed. A rigorous process of thematic analysis was applied to derive the themes for various aspects of PLG as experienced by creators in the domain of visual arts and design. This was followed by a comparison of results to understand the variances of PLG between artists and designers. These dual methods ensure the inclusion of all aspects of the experiences of PLG of artists/designers.

Since the data involved expressions of 20 different participants, one needs to make space for all the data to be represented within the themes. As all the participants used different phrases and meaning expressions about similar events, the task of representing in themes became exceptionally difficult. Hence apart from thematic analysis, it became imperative to employ researcher's interpretive interventions along with a comparative study between all participants to give more depth and value to the themes evolved.

In the following sections we will look at Thematic and Constant Comparative Analysis and get an understanding into their nuances. Let us examine the first formulated method of analysis, Thematic Analysis.

- **Thematic Analysis**

The method of thematic analysis is avidly used in varied qualitative research and studies. Thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analyzing and eliciting patterns/themes from the data. Thematic analysis takes the analysis a step beyond to interpret the various aspects of the phenomena (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This means that the thematic analysis reveals more than what is stated in the interview transcripts. It exceeds the usual analysis by allowing interpretations of the researcher.

Thematic analysis is a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon (Daly, Kellehear, & Gliksman, 1997). The process involves the identification of themes through "careful reading and re-reading of the data" (Rice & Ezzy, 1999, p. 258). It is a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis (Fereday & Muir- Cochran, 2006). The process of thematic analysis involves a repeated and in-depth study of data which results in the emergence of themes and moves further to evolve categories that appropriately describe the phenomenon under study.

Thematic analysis can be done in two ways:

- i. Inductive approach (data-driven)

ii. A- priori method (research driven) of Boyatzis (1998)

Let us look at these methods and understand their working. We will then examine how they could be utilised in our present research.

i. *The Inductive Approach*

An inductive approach of thematic analysis involves researching the transcript data and utilising the researcher's interpretive faculty to evolve themes out of the data. These themes would be the basic themes. The basic theme is the most basic or lowest order theme that is derived from the transcript data. This process requires the researcher to be in a susceptible frame of mind so that she can evolve basic themes from the transcript data. Once all the basic themes are evolved, they are categorised again as per affinities. The affinities lead to the emergence of organizing themes which include all middle order themes that organize the basic themes into clusters. When the researching further identifies affinities into the organising themes, there is an emergence of global themes. (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

To be able to identify and evolve the three types of themes, the researcher needs to be an involved participation. The researcher starts the process by signifying transcript data with codes and the themes with interpretations. Hence, it is important to know the researcher's person and the researcher's mindset to be able to understand and appreciate the thematic analysis employed in the present study.

*The researcher characteristics:*

- i. The researcher is an artist and designer who has had a personal experience of PLG.
- ii. The researcher has been an empathetic witness to the articulations of the PLG of participants during the interview sessions.
- iii. The researcher is in an involved and susceptible frame of mind. Apart from being deeply involved into the transcript data, she has removed herself from the content of the transcriptions so that the codes and the themes are allowed to reveal themselves.
- iv. The researcher has adopted a logical and analytical approach to the thematic analysis.

- v. Since the researcher was present during the interview, the researcher is aware of the gestural implications. This has helped her interpret the text and assign meanings to pauses and silences in the transcripts thereby leading to evolution of hidden themes and categorisations.

It is urged that the reader should look into the present analysis from the above mentioned frame of the researcher to understand the significance attributed to the themes and the interpretations assigned to the text and its codes and themes.

Thus, the inductive approach involves the evolution of themes from the original transcript text and then regrouping them into Basic, Organising and Global themes.

#### *ii. The A-priori Approach*

The second method of thematic analysis is the A-priori approach which involves the analysis of the data from a preset list of codes and themes. This method involves evolving themes from the information about the phenomenon available in the literature and the existing knowledgebase. Each theme is then assigned textual data from the transcripts. This adds substantiation to the already existing themes by addition of data from each transcript. This method also verifies the existing themes. This could perhaps be very useful in the case where the phenomenon under study is known and the existing literature has sufficient information about it. One needs to look at how this method of analysis could be used in the investigation of PLG where there is relatively less information available in the literature.

Thus we have seen the two methods of thematic analysis and understood their variations. Now, let us look at the implication of both the methods on the present research on PLG. The experience of PLG is not elaborately mentioned in existing literature (as mentioned in chapter 2). Hence the themes need to be derived from the interview transcript data. The method of analysis involves the task of evolving Basic themes and then working towards deriving Global themes. This is done as per the Inductive approach of Thematic analysis. The use of Inductive approach of evolution of themes from the transcript texts would elicit richer and comprehensive themes. This would generate an in-depth understanding about PLG. Hence, Inductive analysis approach was preferred over the A-priori approach. In A-priori method, the elicited data is restricted to the Global themes derived from the research questions and the existing literature about the phenomenon. Since the existing literature about

the exact phenomenon is minimal, there was a constraint in terms of the themes derivation from the minimal literature. Hence, the study and analysis employed the data driven Inductive method to elicit lower level, Basic themes and then move up to arrive at the Global themes. The global themes are the highest level themes which include the major areas of the phenomenon under study in the present research.

Once the Global themes and Basic themes are evolved by the Inductive approach from one transcript, the remaining transcripts followed a slight mix of A-priori and Inductive approach. This process allows for themes to emerge directly from the data by using inductive coding. While analysing the transcript, both the methods are used interchangeably, where the themes are evolved both by the inductive method and at the same time utilizes the themes evolved through the research questions. Thus, for the present study of PLG, a combination of Inductive and A-priori approaches are employed to discern a comprehensive understanding about PLG.

- **Constant Comparative Analysis**

Constant Comparative Analysis (Glasser, 1965) is a method of analysis which compares the derived themes across the data of all participants. This method involves searching for commonalities within the compared themes and discovering the points of convergence and the variance between them.

Once the thematic analysis was completed, Constant Comparative Analysis was applied to the evolved themes across participants. This gave a consolidated set of themes about PLG in artists and designers. It also helped arrive at the variance between the experiences of PLG between artists and designers.

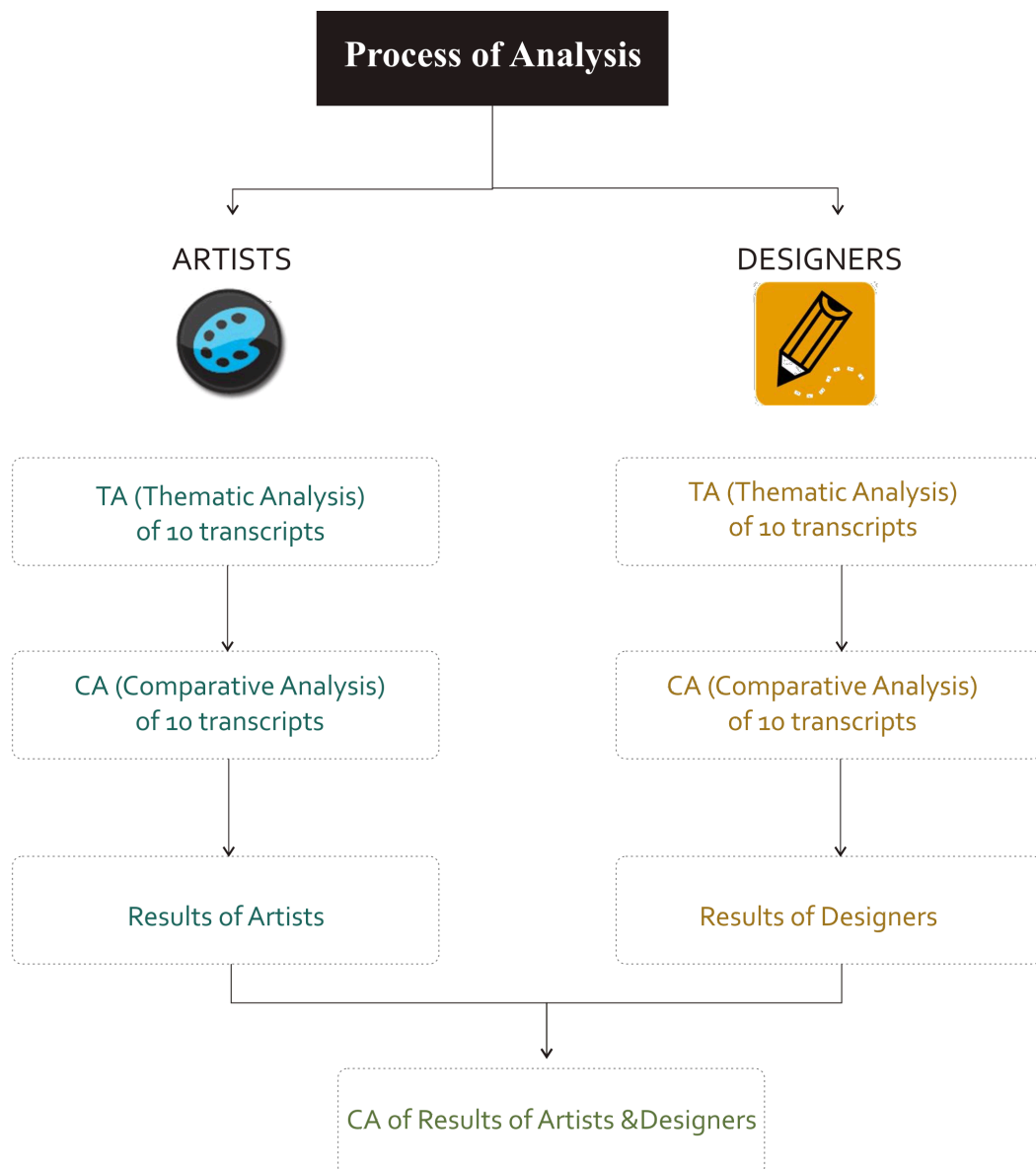
Now that we have understood the methods of thematic analysis and constant comparative analysis and how they are to be applied to the interview transcripts of the present research, let us now take a closer look at the process that was followed while doing the analysis.

### **5.1.2. Process of Analysis**

Once Thematic and Constant Comparative analysis were selected as methods for the present research, the next step was to chalk out the process of analysis. The actual work of analysis followed a structured process which is elaborated in this section. The process takes into consideration three aspects: the interview transcripts, their number and the research questions formulated at the start of the research.



At the beginning of Analysis, the descriptive transcripts were put through a process of deconstruction which yielded themes corresponding to the aspects mentioned in the transcript. Since the research undertook the analysis of experience of PLG in both Artists and Designers, we had to chalk out a process that could be followed to arrive at the final results. The process of analysis involved a step-by-step breakdown of descriptions of both artists and designers. The Analysis followed the process of:



**Figure 5.1: Process of Analysis**

*Step1: Analysis of Artists' transcripts*

- Thematic analysis and constant comparative analysis of transcripts of artists
- Thematic structure for PLG in artists

*Step2: Analysis of Designers' transcripts*

- Thematic and constant comparative analysis of transcripts of designer
- Thematic structure for PLG in designers

*Step3: Comparison of PLG in artists and designers*

- Consolidation of thematic structures
- Segregation of thematic structures

The overall process has been mentioned above, but the actual hands-on procedure of analysis followed a linear pattern where we started with an Inductive thematic analysis of one transcript followed by a mixed (inductive + a-priori) thematic analysis for remaining transcripts. The themes of ten transcripts evolved through the thematic analysis were further subjected to the process of constant comparative analysis to arrive at each of the final thematic structure for artists and designers.

The present research follows the hermeneutic-phenomenological approach (HPA), the hermeneutic arc was constantly maintained while working with the inductive thematic approach of evolution of themes. Subsequently, the themes were evolved by searching into the transcript data. There was a constant contextualization and re-contextualization of the search for themes to the whole picture of the phenomenon and the research questions under study. Since the research is conducted with HPA, one should always envisage a high percentage of researcher interpretation in all stages of research. As mentioned in the context of HPA in chapter 3, the process of analysis involved a high degree of researcher reflexivity and interpretation to arrive at thematic structures.

Keeping both the research methodology and the researcher reflexivity in mind, we will now understand the actual procedure of Thematic Analysis in context of the present research.

### ***Process of Thematic analysis***

Let us now examine the procedure devised and utilised in the actual process of analysis. We started with Thematic analysis of transcripts. Out of the twenty transcripts, we chose the one which had rich articulations about the PLG experience and subjected it to inductive thematic analysis. An inductive type of thematic analysis helped us arrive at the themes in context to articulations of that particular transcript. This allowed for recognition of voices and perspectives embedded in artist's expressions and hidden away in their articulations.

The Inductive type of Thematic analysis followed a threefold process:

- The reduction of the text in the transcript
- The exploration of the broken down text
- An integration of the exploration

(Attride-Stirling, 2001)

Each stage of the process involves the researcher's reflexivity and the interpretations drawn give way to higher levels of abstraction and organisation. This process is iterative and agile and hence it is difficult to articulate distinctions of each stage. Let us turn our attention to the steps of Inductive thematic analysis in which the transcript was reviewed multiple times to arrive at the final thematic structure.

The six steps employed for inductive thematic analysis are:

Step 1: Coding of transcript

Step 2: identification of themes

Step 3: Grouping of themes

Step 4: Regrouping of themes

Step 5: Themes and subthemes

Step 6: Final themes

#### ***Step 1: Coding of transcript***

The inductive thematic analysis of the chosen transcript started with coding of the transcript text. The process involved recognizing an important moment and tagging it with a

code. Boyatzis recommends that the text will present the analyst with a meaningful entity which she perceives as something significant prior to a process of interpretation. A “good code” is one that captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon (Boyatzis, 1998).

The entire transcript was read and re-read. Each relevant sentence or paragraph was tagged and coded. The text which was recognized as being significant to the study of the PLG was selected and coded. These codes were similar to keywords which were evolved from the text itself. Hence the language of the codes followed the language of the transcript. An example of coding of the transcript could be referred to in Appendix III A, Pg: 261.

### *Step 2: Identification of themes*

Once the coding was completed, the code and its corresponding text were retained and the remaining text was discarded for the purpose of clarity. Once the related codes were collated, it was realized that similar codes were dispersed multiple times throughout the transcript. The coding was done in a linear fashion right from the start to the end of transcript. It was realised that there was a necessity to view the coding more openly and broadly so that we could grasp meanings and thoughts occurring in that transcript.

The second stage of the analysis was the identification of themes. For this, it was important to make connections and identify patterns within the codes. A theme is considered as a separate entity from the codes. While codes are tags in the transcript, Boyatzis defined a theme as “a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1998).

Hence, we identified similar codes and aligned them together. The logic behind identifying the similarity in the codes was the contextual meaning of the text usage of the word in transcript. All the codes were then categorised into themes. These themes identified in the transcript were not treated as strictly final. Flexibility in the nomenclature of themes was retained. The analysis revealed themes with similar meanings which were treated separately. This was due to the fact that though the codes represented similar meaning in the textual data, there was a hint of variance in that similarity. This variance was significant in the patterning, and hence themes represent these as separate meaning entities. Please refer to Appendix III A Pg: 261 for identification of themes.

### *Step 3: Grouping of themes*

Once the themes were evolved, they were collated and subjected to categorization and groupings so that we could evolve a higher level organising themes. The grouping was done based on the identification of affinities existing between themes. The affinities were identified based on the following parameters:

- Qualities
- Similarities
- Proximities
- Focus
- Depth
- Exact meaning
- Frequency
- Intensity
- Gestural cues
- Context

The themes were grouped together based on the above mentioned affinities and parameters. The themes were still large in number and did not give a precise information about PLG experience.

### *Step 4: Regrouping of themes*

Thematic analysis involves reading and re-reading of the data to derive additional meaning units. The grouping done in Step 3 was relooked at to find new meanings. The groupings which presented glimpses of new meanings were clustered all over again. The thematic clusters were organised to form a hierarchy which had Organising themes as well as the Basic themes enlisted under them. Please refer to Appendix III A, Pg: 262 for understanding the clustering of themes.

### *Step 5: Themes and Subthemes*

In this step, the derived Organising themes were collated and analysed contextually. They were further clustered which led to the formulation of higher order Global themes. Thus, the clustering of Basic themes gave rise to Organisational themes which in turn were clustered

into Global themes. It was realised that the basic themes presented multiple meaning units contextually and hence they could be clustered jointly in two or more organisational themes. Thus, we now had a hierarchical diagram of the Global themes, Organisational themes and Basic themes. Please refer to Appendix III A, Pg: 263 to view the themes and sub-themes of the chosen transcript.

#### *Step 6: Final themes*

The hierarchy obtained in the earlier step was revisited and the clustering was relooked at. It was realised that the Global themes could be clustered together on the basis of meaning units and their hierarchical categorisations.

Thus the final themes of the Global, Organisational and Basic themes were evolved and this analysis data was ready for the next stage. In the next stage, the same procedure was followed for the thematic analysis of the remaining transcripts.

#### ***Process of Constant Comparative Analysis***

The process of Inductive thematic analysis mentioned above was followed on the one selected transcript. The thematic analysis of the selected transcript formed a guideline for the analysis of remaining transcript. In the first transcript, the thematic analysis followed an Inductive approach. Post this, the analysis of remaining transcripts was not purely inductive. This was due to the fact that, the global themes derived from the analysis of first transcript were already known to the researcher. Hence there was a-priori aspect to the Inductive thematic analysis of the remaining transcripts. The analysis followed an inductive method since the language used by each participant was different the expressions yielded varied shades of the themes for PLG.

The remaining transcripts followed a-priori thematic analysis. Finally, we had two sets of ten thematic structures; one belonging to the artists and the other belonging to the designers. Once the thematic analysis of each of the ten transcripts was completed, the data was ready for a constant comparison analysis. The comparative analysis was conducted in three phase: the comparative analysis of ten artist transcripts, the comparative analysis of ten designer transcripts, and the comparative analysis of thematic structures of artists and designers.

The process of constant comparative analysis followed the process which included:

- *Collation of Thematic structures of ten transcripts:* The thematic structures of ten transcripts, which contained the Global, Organisational and Basic themes were collated together so that they are ready for comparison.
- *Comparison of Thematic structure of ten transcripts:* The collated data was compared and similar themes were enlisted. The similarity was established on the basis of contextual meaning and affinities.
- *Compilation of themes:* The constant comparative analysis yielded not only the similar themes but revealed the differences as well. It would appropriate we called these differences as unique themes experienced by those artists. The unique themes were also added to the list of charted in the earlier phase.
- *Final themes:* The evolved consolidated list of themes was once again revisited and regrouped evolving new categorizations. Finally, the themes in this list were refined and the list went through the process of nomenclature. As there were many Organisational and Basic themes which were semantically similar and some themes seemed similar though they displayed varying shades of the same meaning, it became more understandable when they were renamed with a word that brought out their true meaning in context. The similar themes were combined and given a new name for the convenience of understanding.

The process of constant comparative analysis could be referred to in Appendix III B, Pg: 265-267.

The above mentioned procedure of comparison was followed for both the artists and designers. This gave the final thematic structure of PLG in artists and designers which was a resultant of Inductive and Comparative analysis of twenty transcripts.

## **5.2 Thematic Structure of PLG in artists**

The above mentioned process of analysis revealed the thematic structure for PLG in artist and designers. We will now concentrate on the Thematic structure of PLG in artists. The analysis process mentioned above was followed to arrive at the consolidated thematic structure of PLG in artists. The thematic structure includes Global themes, Organisational

themes and Basic themes. We will elaborate the details of each set of Global, Organisational and Basic themes so that the thematic structure of PLG in artists is revealed.

The thematic structure of PLG in artists is elaborated overleaf in Figure 5.2





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Let us now look at the details of the thematic structure of PLG for artists by examining Global themes, Organisational themes and Basic themes.

### **5.2.1 Global themes for PLG in artists**

The thematic analysis of transcripts of artists resulted in the revelation of six global themes. They are

- Types
- Stages
- Facets
- Feelings
- Repeatability
- Comparison with aesthetic experiences

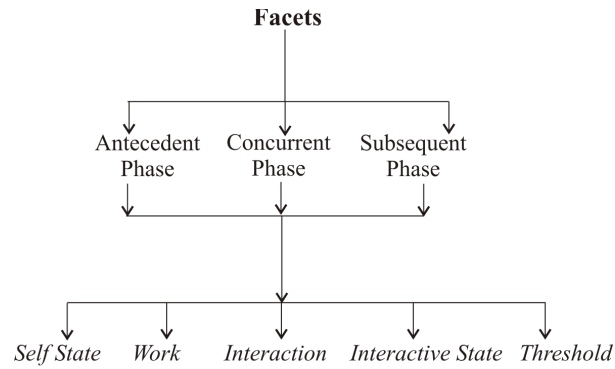
Each global theme was further classified into organisational themes under which the basic themes were grouped.

### **5.2.2 Organizational themes for PLG in artists**

Let us take a look at Organisational themes which are categorised under each of the under six global themes. Out of the six global themes, Types and Stages did not exhibit organisational themes. They directly displayed basic themes.

- ***Facets***

The global theme of Facet has been classified into two tier Organisational themes. As the first Organisational themes, Facets were classified into three temporal stages, Antecedent/prior, Concurrent, and Subsequent phases. The themes under these temporal phases were regrouped into five kinds of states of mind, the self state, work, interaction, interactive self and threshold. These five mental states are briefly elaborated below in Figure 5.3.



**Figure 5.3: Organisational themes under the Global theme of Facets**

*Self State:* The organisational theme of ‘Self State’ includes the themes which signify mental state of the participant when he’s involved in the creative act. This category includes themes describing mental states in general. These themes signify the states of mind which endure throughout the creative act. The themes persist even after the interaction with the work is completed.

*Work:* The organisational theme of ‘work’ describes the articulations of the participant about his ‘work’. The descriptions within this category describe only the participant’s thoughts about the work he’s involved in.

*Interaction:* This organisational theme, ‘Interaction’ includes the state of interaction of the participant with his work. These descriptions include the qualitative nuances of the interaction between the participant and his work.

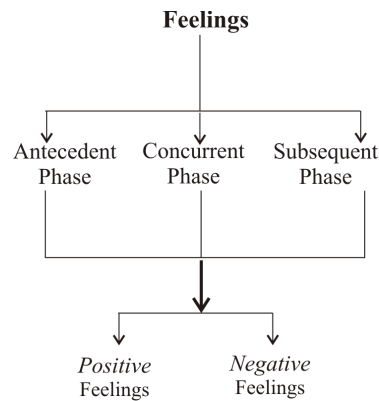
*Interactive self:* The organisational theme of ‘Interactive Self’ includes those themes which describe the state of mind of the participant when in interaction with his work. This includes all themes which relate to the mental state of the participant, and which describe the qualities of the mental state. This is separate from the themes of Self State in the sense that the themes of interactive self signify the mental states within interaction, and the themes in Self state include the themes about mental states which are already a part of the participant. The Self state themes will persist before and after the interaction. The themes of interactive self are more focused to the event of interaction.

*The threshold/precipice:* This organisational theme signifies the descriptions about the point from where the experience of PLG begins. These themes include the descriptions of mental states of the participant at the precipice of PLG during creative experience.

The clarifications about the selection of above organisational themes have been elaborated in detail in chapter 6. This section just explains how the themes were grouped and re-grouped during the analysis.

#### ○ *Feelings*

The global theme of Feelings also follows the two-tier categorisation. Firstly, it is classified temporally into Antecedent, Concurrent and Subsequent phases. Secondly each temporal phase presents two categorisations of Organisational themes of Positive and Negative feelings as presented in Figure 5.4.



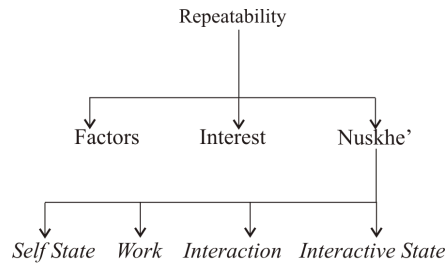
**Figure 5.4: Organisational themes under the Global theme of Feelings**

*Positive feelings:* The organisational theme of positive feelings includes themes which signify positive frame of mind of the participant, e.g. immense joy, delight etc.

*Negative feelings:* The category of negative feelings includes the themes attributing negative frame of mind to the participant, e.g. frustration, anxiety, disturbance etc.

#### ○ *Repeatability*

The global category of Repeatability was categorised into three organisational themes; Factors and Interest for Repeatability and *Nuskhe'* (traditional/folk methods) as given in Figure 5.5



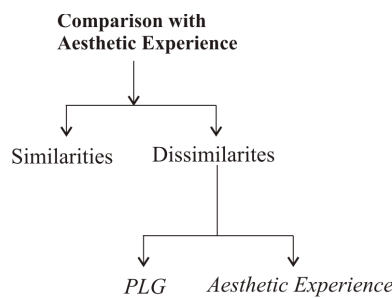
**Figure 5.5: Organisational themes under the Global theme of Repeatability**

The organisational themes of Factors and Interest for repeatability included basic themes which presented reasons of repetition of PLG experience and at the reasons for seeking of repeat of experience.

The second organisational theme of Nuskhe included a second-level classification as per states of mind during repeatability, Self State, Work, Interaction, Interactive state.

#### ○ *Comparison with aesthetic experience*

This global theme was categorised into two organisational themes of Similarities and Differences between PLG and aesthetic experiences which is elaborated in Figure 5.6



**Figure 5.6: Organisational themes under the Global theme of Comparison with Aesthetic experiences**

### **5.2.3 Basic Themes for PLG in artists**

The basic themes were clustered together under the organisational themes. The basic theme formed a separate entity which explicated a unique aspect about PLG. Each basic theme represents the uniqueness of types, facets, feelings and so on about the PLG. Thus, the facets are domain specific which makes the experience of PLG special in the domain of Arts.

Thus the process of analysis followed the above mentioned stages to arrive at the Thematic Structure to explicate varied aspects of PLG in artists. This structure is shown in the chart attached overleaf, Figure 5.7.

### **5.3 Thematic structure of PLG in Designers**

The thematic structure of PLG in designers revealed themes which looked very similar to that of the artists. Since there is a slight variation in the PLG in designers, there is a change in the global themes. There are only four global themes within the thematic structure, types, stages, facets and feelings. Similar to the case of artists, the four global themes were classified into Organisational themes for each. As in case of artist, the global themes of Types and Stages in designers displayed only basic themes. The global theme of Facets was classified into two-tiered organisational themes of temporal themes (antecedent, concurrent and subsequent) and themes of the States of Mind (Self State, Work, Interaction, Interactive self and Threshold). The various basic them were further organised under afore mentioned organisational themes. Finally the global theme of Feelings was clustered under two-tier organisational themes, firstly the temporal themes and then into two organisational themes of positive and negative feelings. The basic themes were clustered under each organisational theme which gave insights into the experience of PLG.

The detailed chart of the thematic structure of PLG in designers is given overleaf in Figure 5.8.

### **5.4 Comparison of PLG in artists and designers**

The thematic analysis of artists and designer transcripts resulted in the evolution of Thematic Structures of PLG in each domain. The Thematic Structure revealed six global themes for artists and four global themes for designers. A comparative analysis of both the Thematic Structures was done to understand the consolidated structure of PLG experiences. In both the structures, the global themes of Types, Stages, Facets and Feelings were common and hence could be compared to get understanding into the variance of PLG between artists and designers.

#### **5.4.1 Consolidated Thematic Structure of PLG**

To arrive at a consolidated thematic structure for PLG, Thematic Structures of PLG of artists and designers were compared. The comparison of thematic structures of artists and designers followed a process of constant comparative analysis which is elaborated below:

*Collation of data of artists and designers:* Thematic structures of both artist and designers were collated as per global themes (e.g. the thematic structure of global theme of Types of artists was compared with the Types in case of designers). Non-matching global themes of Repeatability and Comparison with aesthetic experiences were included as it is.

*Consolidation of themes:* A comparison was drawn between the basic themes clustered under the global themes of Types, Stages, Facets and Feelings. The themes under the comparable global themes and the two global themes of Repeatability and Comparison with aesthetic experiences were consolidated. All the themes were gathered together to arrive a consolidated thematic structure for PLG. The consolidated structure contained six global themes in which the four global themes contained unified structure of both artists and designers and two global themes contained the basic themes for artists.

A detailed consolidated thematic structure for PLG has been elaborated overleaf in Figure 5.9 for a finer understanding of the themes and their organisation.

#### **5.4.2 Segregated thematic structure of PLG of Artists and Designer**

The thematic structures of artists and designers were re- analyzed and this time to understand the variance of PLG between artists and designers. To attain this, the thematic structures of artists and designers were analyzed for the points of similarities and differences. The process that was followed to achieve this was:

*Collation of data of artists and designers:* In this case of segregation, the thematic structures were compared only on the comparable themes. This means that, only four global themes of Types, Stages, Facets and Feelings were compared. Since the other two global themes of repeatability and comparison with aesthetic experiences were not present in the thematic structure of designers, they were kept away from this analysis.



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*Segregation of themes:* A comparison was drawn between the basic themes of four global themes and segregation, in terms of commonalities and differences was established. The common themes were isolated thereby revealing both similar and dissimilar themes.

*Similarities:* The stage of segregation revealed the basic themes which were common to the thematic structures of both artists and designers. The common themes revealed a structure which elaborated the points of convergence of PLG in the domains of arts and design.

*Differences:* The segregation analysis revealed uncommon themes which were exclusive to the artists and designers. This list was put together to get an understanding of the unique themes of PLG of artist and designers.

The thematic structure elaborating the segregation of themes is presented overleaf in Figure 5.10

## **5.5. Conclusions**

This chapter elaborates the method of analysis and process of analysis. This chapter elaborates the process of arriving at the thematic categorisations. It explicates the intricacies of the journey from raw data to elaborate thematic clustering to reveal the explicit thematic structures. The section also elaborates the conduit of process of analysis in congruence with the hermeneutic arc. The process was elaborate, exhaustive and intricate. The researcher involvement and bracketing is imperative in the process. In-depth involvement and analytic dissociation of the researcher brought forth revelations about PLG experiences which were earlier shrouded in dense descriptions of the transcripts.

The data analysis reveals the basic themes and how they were categorised and classified under organisational and global themes. The analysis process interchanged from being completely inductive to sometimes being a mix of a-priori and inductive approaches. The analysis also employed constant comparative analysis to arrive at a unified structure of themes for PLG. The comparison of thematic structures of artists and designers was done in two ways. The first method included the consolidation of themes which resulted in the thematic structure about PLG and the second method used segregation of themes which revealed the variance in the thematic structures

The analysis revealed the thematic structures for both artists and designers. These structures are mere indication of the thematic structure of PLG experience for artist/designers.

We still need to find the structure of PLG experience irrespective of its occurrence in artists or designers. We need to take this analysis a step further to draw inferences to answer the research questions stated at the start of the research. Let us now move forward to convert these thematic structures into comprehensive knowledge about PLG experience that throws light on the formulated research questions.





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## Chapter Six

### The Inferences

*There are painters who transform the sun into a yellow spot, but there are others who, thanks to their art and intelligence, transform a yellow spot into the sun.*

*~Pablo Picasso*

A painting/artwork always bears a series of marks which correspond to the varied experiences of an artist/designer. Sometimes, artworks/designs include those marks that are produced during the experience of PLG. In time, some of these marks lose their identity or are naturally lost through the evolution of the painting. The artist picks out which marks should be retained and which of them should be erased. The selection of marks and signification of marks being essential to the painting is an intuitive and analytical inner process of the artist's creative endeavour. This process of selection of marks is highly contextual to the artist's plan for the painting. In our present study too, the artists confessed that after the completion of each successful painting, they could find some selected marks which connected them to newer paintings. In such paintings, there were some discarded marks which the artists considered highly novel and precious. They store these marks for use in a later painting.

Our research is very similar to the process described above. The analysis of transcripts of artist/designers revealed exhaustive information about PLG. To make a comprehensible sense out of this analysis results, the researcher will assume a role similar to that of the artist who picks and chooses the marks which significantly express his thoughts in the painting. In the case of the present study on PLG, we will now work to gather that information which distinctly expresses the character of PLG.

The analysis stage has extracted information which is contextualised to the domains of Arts and Design. But we need to move further and selectively extract data which substantially conveys the character of the PLG experience irrespective of the domains it happens in. Finding characteristics of PLG experience is the central focus of the present research. Let us look at the research questions formulated in the Chapter One once again:

1. What is phenomenon of letting go (PLG)?
2. What are the characteristics of PLG?
3. What is the variance in experience of PLG in artists and designers?

In this chapter, we will find answers to the research questions through the results derived in the analysis stage. The results from data analysis have been collated and aligned into three parts. These three parts conform to the three research questions mentioned above. The Chapter Six of Inferences has been divided into three sections, each section dealing with one research question.

**Part A: Phenomenon of letting go.** (*Research Question: What are the characteristics of PLG?*)

Part A of this chapter will look into characteristics of PLG which have been extracted from the joint data of artists and designers. This part will elaborate those characteristics which describe PLG as a phenomenon.

**Part B: Definition of the phenomenon of letting go.** (*Research Question: What is PLG?*)

Part B will examine at the characteristics drawn in Part A and evolve the core aspects of the phenomenon. Based on these core aspects extracted from all types of PLG, we will further define PLG and characterize its experience.

**Part C: Variance between PLG in artists and designers.** (*Research Question:* What is the variance in experience of PLG in artists and designers?)

Part C will examine the difference in the characteristics between the PLG in artists and designers. It will describe the points of uniqueness of PLG in artists and designers.

We will finally discuss the inferences drawn and examine whether they have justifiably answered the formulated research questions. Let us now start with the Part A and examine the characteristics of PLG.

## Part Six A

### Phenomenon of letting go

In the analysis phase of the research in Chapter Five, we attained results for PLG in artists and designers separately. We will now infer the constitution of the ‘phenomenon of letting go’ in general by combining the results of PLG for both artists and designers. One needs to keep in mind that while drafting the inferences of the generalized PLG, the inferences will be taking its source from the domains of Arts and Design and will hence be representative of PLG in these domains. The character of the generalized PLG would have those themes which could represent the phenomenon in the most apt manner.

We will now move forward towards carving the character of the PLG. The analysis showed that PLG in Arts revealed four dimensions and two aspects of PLG.

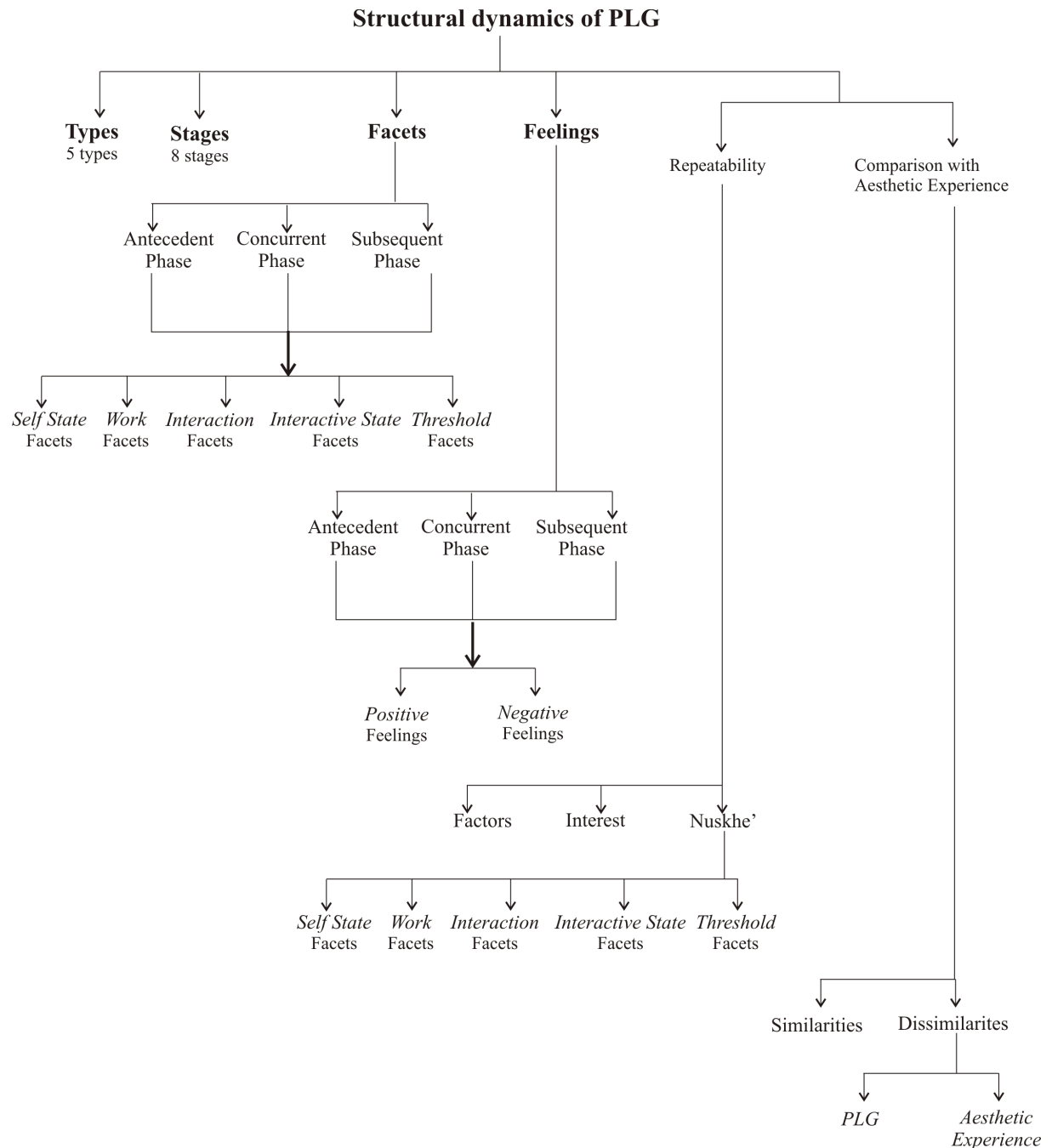
The experience of PLG has ***four dimensions***

- Types of PLG
- Stages to achieve PLG
- Facets of PLG
- Feelings during PLG

And ***two aspects***

- Repeatability of PLG
- Comparison with aesthetic (viewing) experience

The Fig. 6.1 below shows the Structural dynamics of PLG, which includes four dimensions of Types, Stages, Facets, Feelings, and two aspects of Repeatability and Comparison with aesthetic experience.



**Figure 6.1: Structural Dynamics of PLG**

The figure 6.1 elaborates the structural classification of each global theme into organisational and basic themes. We will move forward and examine the first dimension of Types of PLG.

## 6.1. Types of PLG

The interview data and analysis revealed five types of PLG. These five types completely describe the varied experience of PLG as experienced by the artists and designers which were interviewed for this study. It is interesting too that the study could segregate five distinct types of PLG as per the experiential qualities of each type. As per the characteristics, PLG experiences are classified into five types of PLG. The Fig. 6.2 elaborates the five types of PLG

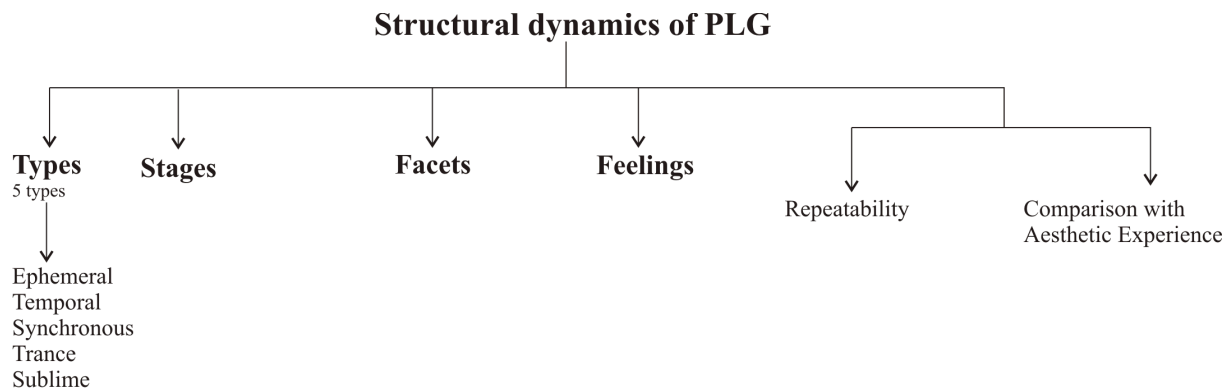


Figure 6.2: Types of PLG

The types of phenomenon of letting go are:

- Ephemeral letting go
- Temporal letting go
- Synchronous letting go
- Trance letting go
- Sublime letting go

- ***Ephemeral letting go***

Ephemeral letting go experiences are fleeting in nature; they are momentary in terms of temporality. Ephemeral letting go represents those experiences which are of very short-duration and are transient in nature. The artists and designers have shared that they experience a flash of thought, idea, and solution and so on as a result of this experience. They term this an ‘A-ha’ moment. The artist/designer might be working on an artwork/design problem and then suddenly there comes a moment when there is flash of image which presents the clarity in work. Within this miniscule moment of flash, the artist/designer experiences a sense of loss

of self and spatio-temporality, which is characteristic of PLG. The Ephemeral PLG could be understood in detail by the description of the participants about their experience of this type. (Appendix IVA, Pg: 269)

- ***Temporal letting go***

The second type of PLG is Temporal letting go. In this type of PLG, the experience of the phenomenon is progressive in time. Temporal letting go lasts for a longer duration of time.

Temporal letting go is of two types:

- i. *Continuous Temporal Phenomenon of letting go:* The Continuous Temporal letting go is when the experience of PLG stretches as a single continuous experience over a longer duration of time. The duration is markedly more than the Ephemeral letting go.
- ii. *Sequential Temporal phenomenon of letting go:* Sequential Temporal letting go is when the phenomenon occurs episodically. This means that the experience includes successive episodes of PLG. The artist experiences 'full stops' between two episodes or time gaps like 'commas' in between the entire sequence of the experience. It is not necessary that all the experiences of PLG within the episodes have to be similar in terms of quality. Sometimes there is a variation in the intensity and gravity of the phenomenon as the sequence progresses.

The type Temporal letting go has been elaborated by the experiences of artists and designers in Appendix IVA, Pg: 270.

- ***Synchronous/rhythmic letting go***

Synchronous letting go is the phenomena in which the artist/designer establishes a synchronous interaction with the artwork/design. There is an instant awareness of establishment of a harmonious rhythm or synchronization. Abhinavgupta termed this interaction as being in a state of 'lysis' (Gnoli, 1985). The artist/designer experiences a synchronization or attunement with himself, his environment and his work. A rhythm<sup>25</sup> is established and the creator is in sync with the rhythm throughout the phenomenon of letting go. The phenomenon ends with a break in this synchronization. But interestingly, the artist/designer is able to find the rhythm again even after the break and the phenomenon continues. Descriptions about Synchronous letting go could be referred in Appendix IVA, pg.270.

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<sup>25</sup> Excerpted from the interview of Artist1 dated 28<sup>th</sup> May 2010



- ***Trance letting go***

Trance letting go is the type of PLG which is accompanied by rapture. This type of PLG could be described as a hypnotic state in which the person is unaware of his surroundings. He loses the voluntary control of movement and sensitivity to any kind of stimuli. The person is in a dazed or stunned state. Trance letting go experience lasts for longer spells of time where the artist/designer is not aware of his self and his surroundings, or is minimally aware and has minimum control of the phenomenon that s/he is experiencing. Trance letting go are often described as orgasmic and ecstatic. Appendix IVA, Pg: 271 elaborate the descriptions of the Trance letting go.

- ***Sublime letting go***

Sublime letting go is the most intense of the five types of PLG. Sublime letting go is instinctive and intuitive in which the artist/designer reaches a state of complete immersion within himself and his work. The artist/designer experiences a union of their self with the artwork/design. The creator experiences an out-of-body experience where he becomes the witness/observer of the act of creation. The artist/designer describes an experience of the Sublime Other within the Sublime letting go. The Sublime letting go is a profound experience which is accompanied by the experience of the Divine<sup>26</sup>, and His Guidance. This phenomenon is associated with the feelings of immense joy and ecstasy. The descriptions of participants in Appendix IVA, Pg: 271 illustrate the Sublime letting go.

We have discussed are five types of PLG. These types of PLG could be experienced by a creator many times within the creative process. Also many-a-times there is an overlap of types of PLG in a single experience. For example, the temporal letting go is accompanied by trance letting go, or the synchronous letting go is an integral part of the profound letting go and so on. But as types of PLG, they are treated separately so that each type is differentiated and described for better understanding.

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<sup>26</sup> Excerpted from the interview of artist2 dated 23<sup>th</sup> May 2010

## 6.2. Stages for achieving PLG

The second dimension of PLG is that of Stages that the artist/designer goes through while moving towards achieving the experience of PLG. The dimension of Stages looks at progressive experiential development towards the experience of PLG. The analysis revealed eight evolving stages which are shown in Figure 6.3

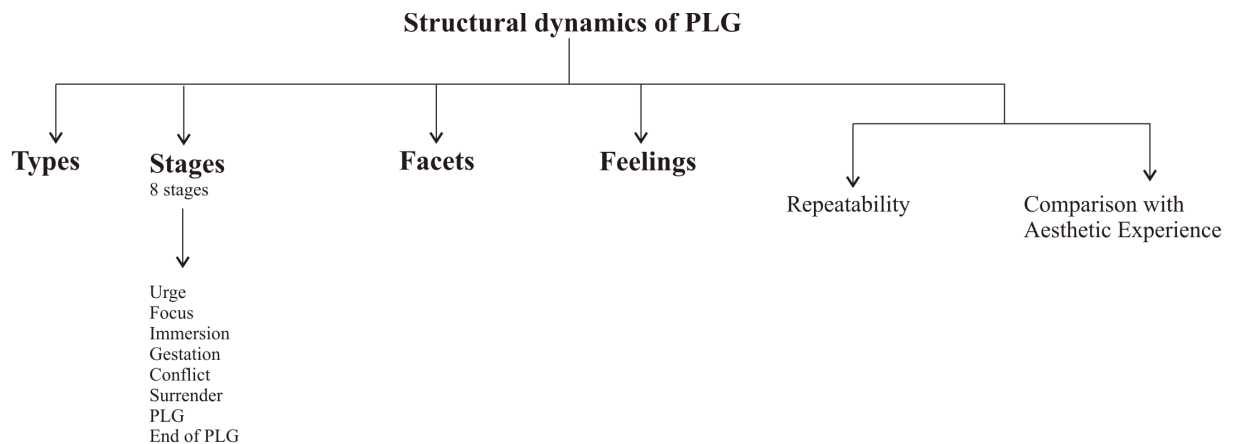


Figure 6.3: Stages of PLG

The eight stages for achieving PLG are:

- Urge
- Focus
- Immersion
- Gestation
- Conflict
- Surrender
- Phenomenon of letting go
- End/Completion of Phenomenon of letting go

The eight Stages represent the experiential progression of the artist/designer through which he reaches the experience of PLG. While describing the Stages of PLG, we will be referring to the experiential space within the process of creation. We will now consider the details of each stage, how it evolves into the next stage and eventually culminates into the occurrence of phenomenon of letting go and its end. We will start with the first stage of Urge.

### ***Stage1: Urge***

The experiential process of the artist/designer starts with the first stage of *Urge* or need to venture into the creative process. Urge is a deep and compelling need to create (in case of artists/designers). This need is felt deep into the being of the artist/designer; it is cognised by the artist/designer and then acted upon. There is intentionality in the action taken by the artist/designer and this action could be in the form of thinking or execution. The descriptions about the Stage of Urge of the artists/designers are illustrated in Appendix IV B Pg: 273.

Artist Emile Nolde speaks of his act of creation, “The artist knows the right moment, and also the relentless, tireless, depth- probing urge.” (Nolde, 1965) The artist or designer is compelled by a strong Urge to delve into the act of creation.

### ***Stage2: Focus***

Once the artist/designer heeds the strong urge to act, he starts the task of painting/designing by focussing on his work. The analysis points to the next stage of *Focus*. The artist/designer focuses his attention on the object of his need/urge. S/he makes a mental and physical space for the task, and then concentrates and directs his complete attention towards it. S/he removes all forms of distractions and converges all attention inside if herself and towards the object of work. (Appendix IV B Pg: 273)

### ***Stage 3: Immersion***

We can glean from the analysis that the next Stage towards PLG is *Immersion*. Once the artist/designer achieves complete focus, he gets completely absorbed into his work. He is fully immersed into his thinking/work that he’s doing. This immersion phase could be of varied degrees and intensities depending upon the extent of concentration of the artist/designer in the earlier stage of Focus. In the stage of Immersion, the experiential space of the artist/designer involves his personal knowledge, experience and feelings, concentrated analytical perspective towards his work, and an open in-depth dialogue with self. All these elements need to work in combination to take the artist/designer to the next level. (Appendix IV B Pg: 274)

### ***Stage 4: Gestation***

The next stage for PLG is *Gestation*. This is the stage when all the elements mentioned in the stage of Immersion are combined together. The artist/designer allows all the components to

incubate. They are kept in resting phase where the ideas or thoughts gestate. During the period of Incubation, the artist/designer would ease the concentration or focus on the task. They could continue with the same task or take a break and work on another task. But at the back of their mind the thoughts gestate, mutate and grow without their awareness. Like one of the artist said, *“One is tied to ones work all the time; it’s like an umbilical cord. One may turn anywhere but the connection to the thought is consistently there<sup>27</sup>.”*

Though the artist/designer seem to have moved away from the object of immersion, their mind is still ruminating about it and the artist/designer is unaware of it. When the rumination has happened long enough, the mind just opens up and presents the connections that it has made during the period of gestation. But till then, the artists/designers might go through other life-experiences till the point of presentation of solution/connections. (Appendix IV B Pg: 275)

### ***Stage5: Conflict***

The artist/designers pass through the initial phases of complete absorption with the problem/ thought/ idea, and the stage of gestation or incubation where they allow the thoughts to just be. Once the creator resumes his work after the period of gestation, the artist/designer might go through any of the myriad array of experiential events. One of the events is that he will resume his work and very calmly take it to its end. Second could be that he will start calmly and continue to resume his work. In this process, many-a-times, he might face a block. He might face a conflict or a creative block or constraint that comes from within himself. At this stage he has to struggle against himself. The artist/designer would at this stage be encountering a resistance from his work and also from within himself which does not allow him to move ahead in terms of his work. This is a very painful state for the artist/designer which is filled with difficult feelings of negativity and frustration accompanied with anxiety. This is the stage of *conflict*.

When faced with such a conflict, the artists/designers have to decide the next step. Many-a times, after consistent struggle to resolve the block, the artist/designer gives up and retires. He could take up the task again some other time. Or at times, the artist/designer could give up the thought altogether and look for easier ideas for his work. This stage of conflict is marked with an experience of struggle and could have negative consequences in terms of the artist/ designer giving up on his current thought altogether.

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<sup>27</sup> Excerpted from interview of Artist1 dated 28<sup>th</sup> May 2010

There is another instance which could happen in the face of conflict. The artist/designer could continue his struggle with a lot of grit and take it to the next stage of Surrender. (Appendix IV B Pg: 275)

### ***Stage 6: Surrender***

When faced with the stage of conflict, many a times, the artists/designers face compulsive need to persist. They overcome the urge to give up and leave in the stage of conflict. They continue with renewed involvement. In this phase of persistence, the artists/designers commit not just their thinking, but their entire Self to the resolution of conflict. This is the stage of *Surrender*. The artists/designers entrust themselves to the unknown and faithfully continue with their task. In this stage the artists/designers surrender themselves completely to the present thought in their work. They are in a vulnerable and receptive position where they are allowing the work and the current moment to take its own course. (Appendix IV B Pg: 276)

### ***Stage 7: Letting go***

Once the artists/designers have surrendered themselves to the thought or object of work in the stage of surrender, they enter into a phase where they let go of their Self. This is the stage of *Letting go*. In this stage, the artists/designers let go of their Self and they lose the sense of Self completely. They lose awareness of time and space. They ascend to a plane of higher consciousness and reach a state of hyperactive alertness in terms of the thought or the object of work. The state of letting go allows the artist/designer to reach such heights that they transcend their Self and in turn find their Self. Some of these experiences are so profound that the artists claim to have found the divine in those moments. The state of letting go also leads to presentation of the solution to the problem or intuitive marks on a painting. This brings about a transformative enhancement in the artwork/design and also to the Self of the artist/designer.

Emotionally, the artists/designers could be very calm and at peace, or they could be in a state of hyperactive frenzy and excitement while they execute the work. This leads to many physical manifestations like shortness of breath, higher heart rate, perspiration, and many a times in a state akin to a person doing high physical exercise.

The duration of the state of letting go varies from time to time and person to person. This variation leads to the variance in the intensity and quality of letting go. It is this variation that leads to the experience of any of the five types of letting go. Depending upon the type of

letting go, PLG will exhibit a variation in the facets and feelings of the experience. The sections of Facets and Feelings will enumerate the consolidated facets and feelings associated with PLG.

The state of letting go is very lucid and there is a possibility that the artist/designer snaps out of it at the smallest of distractions. Many a times, even after a distraction, the artist/designer very easily resumes back into the state of letting go. The resumption into the state of letting go needs a practice. In fact, a lot of discipline needs to be maintained for the achievement of PLG. The section of Repeatability would enumerate the personal methods devised by artists so that they could experience PLG in their creative experiences.

The state of letting go is elaborated by various participants of the present study and could be referred from Appendix IV B Pg: 277.

### ***Stage 8: End of letting go***

The artist/designer has a clear and distinct realization that the experience of PLG has ended. This realisation is accompanied by feelings of relief, happiness and many a times, physical exhaustion. Since the artist is in the creative process, there is also a manifestation at the end of PLG. This manifestation could be a thought, idea or an artwork. The artist/designer experiences a sense of satisfaction at what has been actualised in their artwork/design during the experience of PLG. Post the experience of PLG, there is an inner experience of high confidence regarding the creative quality of the output as being at enhanced levels than their usual levels of creative capabilities. This does not mean that the manifestation of PLG is always good for the painting /design. The artists/designers explain that whether the manifestation is good or bad is a judgemental decision that the creator has to take in the context of the work they are doing. This means that a manifestation which is of enhanced quality in terms of the creator's creative capability could be discarded as it may not be considered optimal for the painting/design at that point of time. They may take up the same discarded manifestation again at a later date to form a new thought or artwork.

The end of letting go marks the completion of an intense experience that brings about a transformation not only to the painting/artwork but in the artist/designer as well. (Appendix IV B Pg: 277)

To summarise, this section elaborates the eight stages of PLG which represent various experiential levels that the artist/designer undergoes. The stages enumerated follow a sequence which is conforming to the actual sequence of experiential events that artists/designers reported to have experienced. In many instances, the artists/designers have described that even as they follow the sequence of stages, they might not experience the stage of conflict at all. They move from the stage of Gestation straight into Surrender which leads to the experience of PLG. The stage of Conflict represents instances when the artists/designers faced a creative block and they struggled against it. Their persistent struggle led to surrender and experience of PLG. There is no strict correlation between the stage of conflict and the intensity of PLG or the enhancement level of the output/work.

We have identified eight stages of PLG from the data collected from the twenty artists/designer participant's interviews. Hence, the results are a reflection of the experiences of PLG of twenty artists/designers. There is a possibility that there might be more stages than the eight stages mentioned earlier. A relook into the pilot studies confirmed that the eight stages discussed are the major junctures or milestones in the progression of PLG. In case there is any possibility of new stages to be added to the existing stages, then the additional stages could be classified under the aforementioned eight stages.

Thus, now that we have adduced the experiential stages of PLG, we can move to identifying the facets which make up the experience of PLG.

### **6.3. Facets of Phenomenon of letting go**

The third dimension of PLG is Facets. Since PLG is an experiential phenomenon, the facets of PLG will be those unique states of mind which make the experience of PLG stand out from other regular creative experiences. The artist/designer undergoes varied states of mind while in the creative process, but there are some anomalous states of mind, characteristics or facets which build together temporally to evolve an experience of PLG.

Before we start on the dimension of Facets, let us look more closely at PLG as a phenomenon. When one examines the dimension of Stages, one can understand that the dimension comprise of phases that an artist/designer undergoes even before the experience of PLG starts. This is due to the fact that in the instances when the creative experience results in a PLG experience, the artists/designers report a uniqueness that pervades all the mentioned stages. This uniqueness is in the state of mind of the artist/designer and it starts prior to

seventh stage of the actual experience of PLG. One could analogise this to the act of blowing of a soap bubble. The act of blowing the soap bubble starts way before the actual blowing starts. The child has to put himself into the right frame of mind, and gather his body into that singular act of blowing. He needs to adjudge the exact force to be given to the action of blowing so that the bubble is formed. As the bubble starts taking shape, the child slowly releases the pressure on the blowing till that exact point when the bubble gets detached and starts to float in the air. The child's mental state continues even after the bubble is blown and separated. Thus, these states of mind of the child move temporally from prior to the blowing, during blowing and after blowing phases of the act of making a bubble.

Similarly, in the case of PLG, the artist/designers undergo dynamic changes in their states of mind as they progress from the start of the creative experience to the actual experience of PLG and to the end of PLG. Since the states of mind of the artists/designers are represented by Facets, one finds a temporality to the progression of facets unique to PLG experience through various self states. Figure 6.4 presents the structural dynamics of dimension of Facets of PLG.

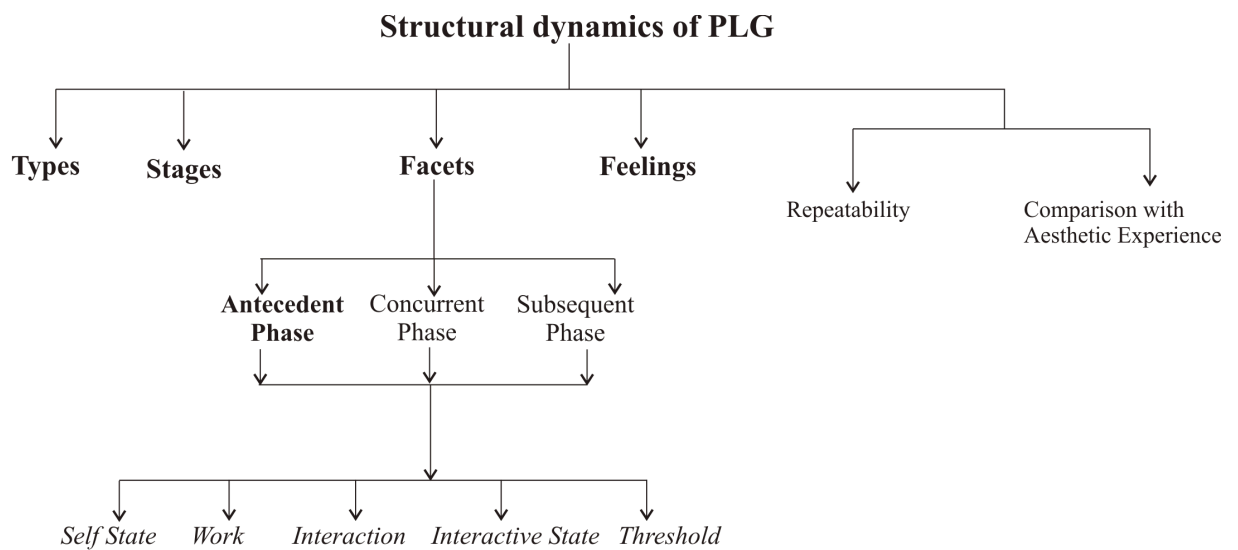


Figure 6.4: Facets of PLG

The Facets are classified temporally into three phases: Antecedent phase (before), Concurrent phase (during) and Subsequent phase (after). The Facets present varied array of states of mind of the artist/designer and the Facets are varying as per the mental space in which the artist/designer is working in. Accordingly, apart from the temporal categorisation, the Facets are classified into five states of mind as per the mental space they reside in. Before



venturing into the details of the 5 classifications of mental states, let us examine what is a State of mind.

### *States of mind*

The state of mind is a psychological state, not a specific feeling. A state of mind has its own developmental history and its own set of experiences, which determines what is perceived and subsequently how it is processed. Schwaber (1998) states that each self-state has an impact on another person with whom we interact, and their self-states on us. In case of PLG, the self state of the artist/designer impacts the work and in turn, the interaction with the work impacts the self state of the artist/designer.

Davies (1996) says that, “Each self state has a representational system that includes a self representation and object-representation, a predominant affective tone, a particular somatic bodily self experience, and a cognitive organization paralleling the internalized self-other dyad.” As per Davies the self state of the artist/designer experiencing PLG would be a dynamic system which amalgamates his personal self and his self impacted by his work. This is accompanied by strong emotions/feelings. The self state of the artist/designer combines with it a somatic bodily experience which makes him aware of the parallel organisation of the self and his work.

Our evolving understanding of the workings of mind involves multiple levels of both unconscious and conscious processes, which organize and link different levels of meaning, understanding and experiencing (Davies, 1996). This existence and experience of multiple self-states becomes seamlessly woven into different levels of experience of attention and alertness, experience and representation of somatic, bodily self-experience, and different levels of psychological self-experience and self states. This suggests that the artist/designer’s mind perceives reality through both conscious and unconscious processes. It cognizes the experiential events and assigns them meaning thereby establishing a reflexive understanding about the experiences. This ensures continuous flow of experiential events that are interwoven and simultaneously co-created by the interaction of the Self state with the varied mental spaces that the Self moves in.

Accordingly, artist/designer’s Self encounters the following five states of mind while in the process of experiencing PLG:

- *Self States*: Davies describes Self state as the state of mind which could be identified as a separate mental state that has its own set of experiences, modes

of perception and factors of impact. (Davies, 1996) During the experience of PLG, Self states are the states of mind which represent those mental states which are identifiable and are not affected by the interaction of the Self with other mental states. Self-states continue unaffected throughout the experience of PLG.

- *Work:* When an artist/designer is working, his state of mind will be impacted by the self state and also by the object of work. The medium of work and its constraints would impact the state of mind of the artist/designer. These self states impacted by work constraints are states that are unique to work in particular domain. Like Self-states, states of Work also continue un-impacted throughout the experience of PLG.
- *Interaction:* The experience of PLG is an event which happens due to the interaction of the artist/designers with their artwork/design. The states of mind of the artist/designer would be affected by the type of interaction of the creator with his work. The progression of interaction would impact the mental states which would be created and evolved with every interaction event. Hence, the Interaction states are impacted by interaction and they get modified with the changes in interaction.
- *Interactive Self states:* We have seen that interaction with the artwork/design results in a change of the mental state of the artist/designer. As Schwaber suggests that the self state has a bearing on the other person /object so does the self state of the other person/object impact the self-state (Schwaber, 1998). This means that state of mind of interaction reaches the point where it becomes a self-state. This Interactive self state is ready to interact with the artwork all over again. So a progressive change continues and the Interactive self state keeps on modifying itself and getting changed by the interaction in the experiential realm of PLG. The interactive self states are unique to the experience of PLG and they are in a continuous state of flux.
- *Threshold:* There is something very exclusive about the state of mind of the artist/designer when he is at that exact point from where PLG starts. At this point the state of mind marks the final point from where there is a leap into the

experience of PLG. The mental states at this point of threshold give the crucial information about the quality of the phenomenon of letting go.

### ***Facets of PLG***

The States of mind vary as per the mental spaces that the self proceeds in. The states of mind are represented by Facets. The analysis revealed facets in both artist's and designer's data. The facets represented the states of mind as they dynamically moved into the five mental spaces across temporality. The facets of both the domains were combined together to arrive at the Facets for PLG. Table 3 below presents the Facets of PLG which occur in the five states of mind across three temporal phases.

Mental States	Antecedent phase	Concurrent phase	Subsequent phase
Self State	allow trust, belief acceptance openness, receptivity vulnerability internalization levitate non self conscious cohesion	Anoesis/No awareness no time/ Timeless no space/new space no self non intentionality/witness involuntary, momentum Aliveness/vigor/high alertness Blank/ vacuum	newness/uniqueness achievement confidence immense joy surprise/eureka contentment relief
work	challenge, constraint, resistance, risk	emergence, insight, revelation	Discovery, integration/completion enhancement
Interaction	connectedness play discipline/ repetitiveness skill perplexity inertia passion chance analytical addiction observation/diffusion/ analytical	synchronous rhythmic/ tuned connections/ transactions/ interaction/dialogue/ cross- fertilization Fragility energetic	Resolution/clarity conclusion revelation adrenalin rush immeasurability
Interactive self	spontaneity alertness/ sensitivity/ responsiveness intuitive, instinctive involuntary/ no control /automatic unpredictability, intentionality	pre-destined Union Meditative/yogic orgasmic Spiritual/Divine/Sublime Other Trance/dream/magical/ hypnotic beyond self/beyond capacity perfection intensity balance	Inarticulateness Profoundness transformative flux

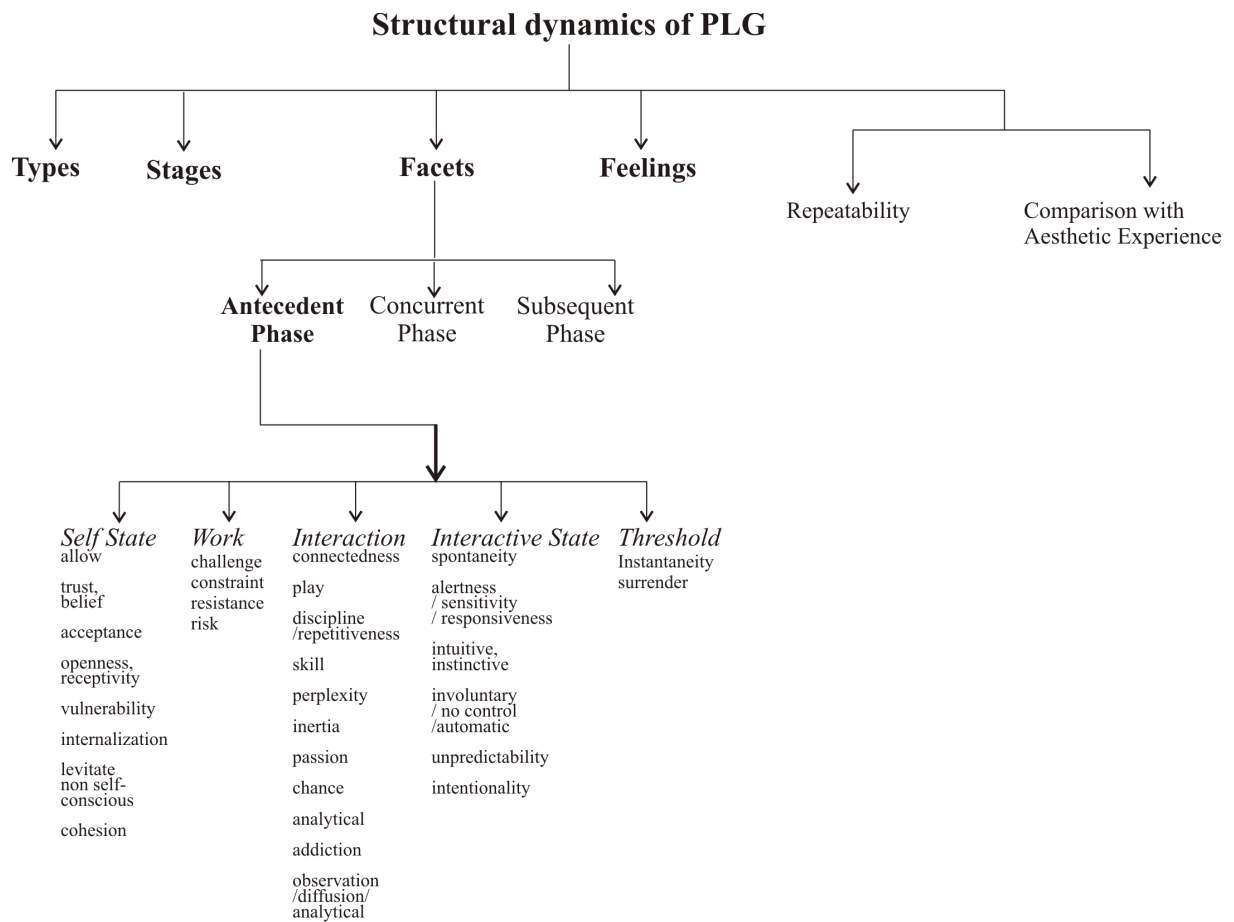
Threshold	Instantaneity surrender	End/stop submission
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**Table 3: Facets of phenomenon of letting go**

We will start with a close examination of each Facet starting with the Antecedent phase across the five states of minds.

### 6.3.1. Antecedent phase

The Facets within the antecedent phase reflect the states of mind of the artist and designers just before the occurrence of PLG. These Facets are spread across the five states of mind, Self state, work, interaction, interactive self and threshold. We will now look at the various Facets of Self State in the antecedent phase as described in Figure 6.5



**Figure 6.5: Facets in Antecedent phase of PLG**

- ***Self State***

In the Antecedent phase, the Self state reflects a preparatory phase where the Self puts itself into a state which would be conducive for the experience of PLG. The facets within this state are representing the necessary attributes which the Self must possess to be able to receive the PLG.

*Trust/Belief:* The analysis revealed that the artists/designers place immense trust in the fact that PLG will occur within the creative process. This does not mean that they are working towards the achievement of PLG. They embark on process of creation of artwork, but they trust that the solution would be presented to them in the right form and at the right time. They believe that this would happen and they seem to wait for it to be presented to them. Trust and belief help the artist/designer to be in a state of mind which is favorable for the occurrence of PLG. They trust, so they can 'let go'. The facet of Trust/Belief is not referring only to the belief in God as is the case of spiritual experiences. In this case the trust/belief is alluding to the trust in Self and a belief in one's experience. It implies a strong belief in one's work and an innate knowledge that they can let go. They can trust since they believe. The descriptions of the artists/designers will give a better understanding about trust and belief which has been stressed as an integral Facet of the experience of PLG. These descriptions can be accessed at Appendix IV C, Pg: 279

*Allow:* In the antecedent phase, another important facet of PLG is Allow. It is a self state where the artist/designer is in a mode to let things happen. With the belief that the solution/form will present itself, the artist/designer allows for connections/associations to evolve. They allow for their hands to work its magic. By allowing, the artist/designer is opening up the mental door for ensuing of experiences in the mental space. The descriptions from transcripts of artists/designers show their admissions in which they say that 'you have to allow', 'I allow for things to happen'. This shows compliance from the artist/designer's Self to stand back and allow things to happen. (Appendix IV C, Pg:280)

*Acceptance:* The facet of Acceptance represents a self-state where the artist/designer is ready to accept himself, his shortcomings, his prejudices and his environment. He is very comfortable with himself and hence is able to look forward to a leap or new stride in his experiences. The facet of acceptance also points to the mental state where the artist/designer has given up resistance to self doubts. This helps him to remove a mental obstacle from the path. (Appendix IV C, Pg:280)

*Openness/Receptivity:* The artists/designers exhibit a self state of openness in which they become receptive towards the happening of PLG. It is similar to opening all the doors and windows to the house to allow all the outside beauty to enter inside. This facet differs from the facet of Allow in terms of intentionality of the creator. In case of Allow, there is an intentionality of the self of artists/designers who grant/allow. The same intentionality is lacking in case of the facet of Openness/Receptivity in the sense that the self of the artist is slightly passive in terms of events happening to him. It is this openness or receptivity brings flexibility to the artist/designer's thinking processes so that newer connections are brought to the artwork/design. (Appendix IV C, Pg:281)

*Vulnerability:* The analysis revealed a self state of Vulnerability in the antecedent phase of PLG. When one is in a mental state of receptivity and is allowing for anything to happen, it puts one in a vulnerable position. Though the artist/designer has ample trust/belief, there is still an element of risk which makes the self vulnerable. Being in a vulnerable state makes the artist/designer susceptible to things happening around him and makes him open to surprises that could be flung at him and to new forms/solutions to unfold before him. (Appendix IV C, Pg:281)

*Internalization:* The facet of internalization makes the artist/designer look inside himself. He internalizes his thoughts, ideas and churns them around to get deeper understanding into the object of work. In this self state, the artist/designer turns inwards and is looking at his inner mental space while being in it. He is aware of the internalization that he is intentionally engaging with. (Appendix IVC, Pg:282)

*Levitate:* The facet of levitate implies the movement of the artist/designer to a higher mental plane. The self state of levitate propels the artist/designer's mental space into a slightly elevated and floating state which is tied or focused on the task of act of creation. In this state the artist/designer experiences a feeling of viewing his act of creation from and levitated perspective. (Appendix IV C, Pg:282)

*Non-self-consciousness:* The facet of non-self-consciousness refers that the artist/designer is in a self state in which he is free from the constraints of self-consciousness. He does not fear embarrassment/shame due to any action during the act of creation. Being unself-conscious makes the artist/designer free from all prejudices and he able to act confidently and courageously take risks towards adventurous new paths. (Appendix IV C, Pg:282)

*Cohesion:* The facet of Cohesion is the state of mind in which the artist/designer is focused towards immersing himself into the object of work. There is a cohesive relationship with the artwork/design which makes it possible for the self to be in a state of unison with the artwork/design in the event of arrival of PLG. The facet of cohesion makes the initiation of unity of the artist with his artwork. (Appendix IV C, Pg:282)

- ***Work***

During the antecedent phase of PLG, the work in which the artist/designer is involved, will induce a state of mind which could be called work-state. Let us look at the facets which are induced by the work of artist/designer.

*Challenge:* The work that the artist/designer is involved in invokes the state of mind of challenge. The artist/designers are challenged and hence are in a mental plane where they make themselves equipped or mentally ready to face challenges. The artist/designer is in a state of mind where the dare presented by the work produces a positive energy within them to confront the challenge. (Appendix IV C, Pg:282)

*Constraint:* Sometimes the work poses various inherent constraints for the artist/designer to achieve a state of mind of openness, receptivity and trust. The Facet of Constraint represents that state of mind in which the creator is constrained and rigid. This facet also represents all the obstacles/logical considerations which the creator needs to overcome to reach a state of cohesion. (Appendix IV C, Pg:283)

*Resistance:* The facet of Resistance refers to a state of mind where the creator faces a contention which their work imposes on them. The resistance might be environmental, social or personal. Due to the hindrance, the creator achieves a resistant state of mind in which he finds it very difficult to take initiatives into newer areas. The facet of Resistance represents a state of mind in which the creator is forced to fight a battle with the odds presented by his work. As a facet of PLG, Resistance embodies the impediments to the smooth flow of creative experiences into PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg:283)

*Risk:* The facet of Risk represents the state of mind of speculation and chance-taking for the creator. The work of the creator reaches a stage where it presents challenges which induce uncertain and uncomfortable state of mind for the creator. This challenge also represents a chance or an opportunity for the creator. When Risk represents a chance then the creator is in a state of play which is a highly positive state. Due to this facet, the creator is ready to take the chance. (Appendix IV C, Pg:283)

The state of mind of Work includes Facets which present many difficulties and at the same time ample opportunities for the achievement of PLG. We will now turn our attention to the state of mind of Interaction.

- ***Interaction***

As the creative experiences continue, there is a dynamic and progressive interaction between the creator and his work. The creator's mind perceives dynamism of interaction which induces varied states of mind for him. These varied states of mind evolve with the progression of the interaction which in turn leads to the experience of PLG. Let us look into the Facets induced by interaction of the creator with his work.

*Connectedness:* The facet of Connectedness is a state where the mind is completely aligned to the work. The mind is in a state of making connections with the work so that there is a rooted relationship between the work and the creator. The facet of connectedness prepares the creator for further associations and correlations which are established during the PLG experience. The facet of connectedness also ensures that the creator is totally engrossed with his work. (Appendix IV C, Pg:283)

*Playfulness:* The facet of play refers to the interaction with chance presented by the creator's work to him. The facet of play represents a state of harmony with the creator's work. The state of play makes the mind ready for a rhythmic give and take between the creator and his work. It also makes the creator take risks and venture into newer mental spaces to find hidden forms, associations or solutions. Most importantly, it puts the creator in a receptive state of mind so that he can take the next step of going into the experience of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg:284)

*Discipline/repetitiveness:* The facet discipline represents the state of mind of controlled regimen. In this facet, the interaction of the creator with his work assumes a repetitive, continuous and recurrent quality. This leads to a meditative state which is induced due to disciplined practice. (Appendix IV C, Pg:284)

*Skillfulness:* The facet of Skillfulness refers to deftness with which the interaction with the work is handled. Skillfulness represents the state of finesse and flair with which the interaction progresses. The proficiency and mastery of creator induces flexibility, openness and a readiness in the artist/designers (Appendix IV C, Pg:285)



*Perplexity:* The facet of Perplexity refers to a state of confusion during the interaction. The facet reflects an enigmatic state where situation of puzzlement is presented to the creator. The creator is ready for surprises and wonders which the experience of PLG will present to him.

*Inertia:* The facet of Inertia represents a state of apathy and lethargy which creates immobility in the interaction. This facet could have both positive and negative impact on the mental states of the creator. The facet of inertia could instigate a fighting streak in the artist's mind when he could utilize the inertia as a stepping stone for more energetic mental states to channelize towards the occurrence of PLG. On the other hand, the facet of inertia refers to a serene and tranquil state of mind which could induce mental states which unfold the phenomenon of letting go. (Appendix IV C, Pg:285)

*Passion:* The facet of Passion indicates the intense and involved interaction of the creator with his work. This could be accompanied by either positive or negative affective states like anger, agony, happiness, ecstasy and so on. The facet of Passion induces a mental state highly favorable for the phenomenon of letting go. (Appendix IV C, Pg:286)

*Chance:* Chance refers to the mental state where the creator is standing on a cross-road where he is facing a situation of unforeseeable consequences. The facet of Chance presents an opportunity to the creator. It is like a gamble which about he has to take a decision. This facet brings with it a thrill and an excitement of the unknown. (Appendix IV C, Pg:285)

*Analytical:* The facet of analytical refers to a logical and rational state of mind. Within this facet the creator is in a critical engagement with his work. This facet strongly grounds the mind of the creator to the object of his work which makes it difficult for him to move towards the irrational/creative. For the achievement of PLG, one needs to relinquish the analytical mental state and make way for impulsiveness. (Appendix IV C, Pg:287)

*Addiction:* The facet of Addition represents the compulsiveness which arises out of the repetitiveness of the interaction with the work. This Addictiveness makes the body responses to the mental interactions quite automated. The creator reaches a state of obsessiveness where he cannot let go of what he is presently doing and then leads to a meditative state. (Appendix IV C, Pg:288)

*Exploration/observation/diffusion:* The Facet of exploration indicates a state where the creator is in a state of mind where he is open to scrutinize and inspect varied aspects of his work. This facet refers to an exploratory and elemental state which leads to inductive

investigation and is inclined towards moving to the unknown. This facet also involves an element of diffusion of all thoughts and there is a complete inward involvement during the interaction. (Appendix IV C, Pg:287)

We have now examined facets representing the interaction of the creator with his work. The interaction itself induces certain self-states which are crucial for the experience of PLG. Let us turn our attention to the facets referring to the interactive self.

- ***Interactive Self***

The state of mind which is impacted by interaction with the work would be represented by the Interactive Self. In the antecedent phase, the interactive self exhibits facets which equip the creator's mind to an upcoming PLG. The facets reflect the states of mind just before the phenomenon of letting go unfolds.

*Spontaneity*: The facet of Spontaneity reflects the mental state of ease and freedom which is tinged with impulsiveness. The facet of spontaneity would also establish unusual mental connections with dynamism and vitality. The facet of spontaneity forms an important facet of PLG since spontaneity is crucial element for occurrence of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg:288)

*Alertness/responsiveness/sensitivity*: The facet of sensitivity represents the state of high alertness. Due to the interaction, the creator is in a highly responsive state towards his work. There is complete alertness and high sensitivity to the smaller nuances of the changes happening in his work. This makes the mental space a very fertile ground for the occurrence of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 289)

*Intuitive/instinctive*: Due to the addictiveness and compulsiveness in the interaction, the creator reaches a state of mind that is intuitive and instinctive. The creator achieves an innate mental state, which is conducive to the occurrence of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 290)

*Involuntary/automatic/no control*: In the antecedent phase of PLG, the facet of involuntary state of mind would refer to a minimal control over the events that are starting to unfold. In this state of mind, the self/intentionality of the creator starts to take a back-seat. The interaction with the work becomes so intense that it is almost automatic. The creator seems to have no authority over the events happening during the interaction. (Appendix IV C, Pg:289, 291)

*Unpredictability:* The facet of unpredictability implies a mental state which is in flux and changing constantly. The state of mind is unpredictable; there is no guarantee of what is to be expected next. The unpredictable state of mind is favorable to the occurrence of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg:289)

*Intentionality:* In the antecedent phase of PLG, the facet of Intentionality indicates the role of self in its interaction with the work in the present space-time and immediate future. The facet of Intentionality gives agency to the self of the creator. One can see the existence of intentionality in all events just before the onset of PLG. The facet of intentionality in the antecedent phase of PLG is highly significant as there is complete loss of intentionality and agency in the concurrent phase of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 291)

The facets of Interactive self indicate those states of mind which are present in the creator just before the onset of PLG. The facets of Interactive self influence the kind of PLG that will occur in the concurrent phase. A creator who is equipped with all the above mentioned facets in the four states of mind reaches a point of take off and initiates from where the Phenomenon of letting go starts. Being on threshold of start of PLG, induces some states of mind which become crucial to the PLG which starts immediately after this stage.

- ***Threshold***

Threshold marks the exact moment just before the phenomenon of letting go begins. We will now look at the facets of threshold.

*Instantaneity/Right moment/clicks:* In the antecedent phase, the facet of instantaneity indicates the state of mind of being in that moment. This facet is marked by favorable factors, all aligned in the most perfect manner within that instant. Hence, the mental state is of perfect harmony and unity with that moment. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 291)

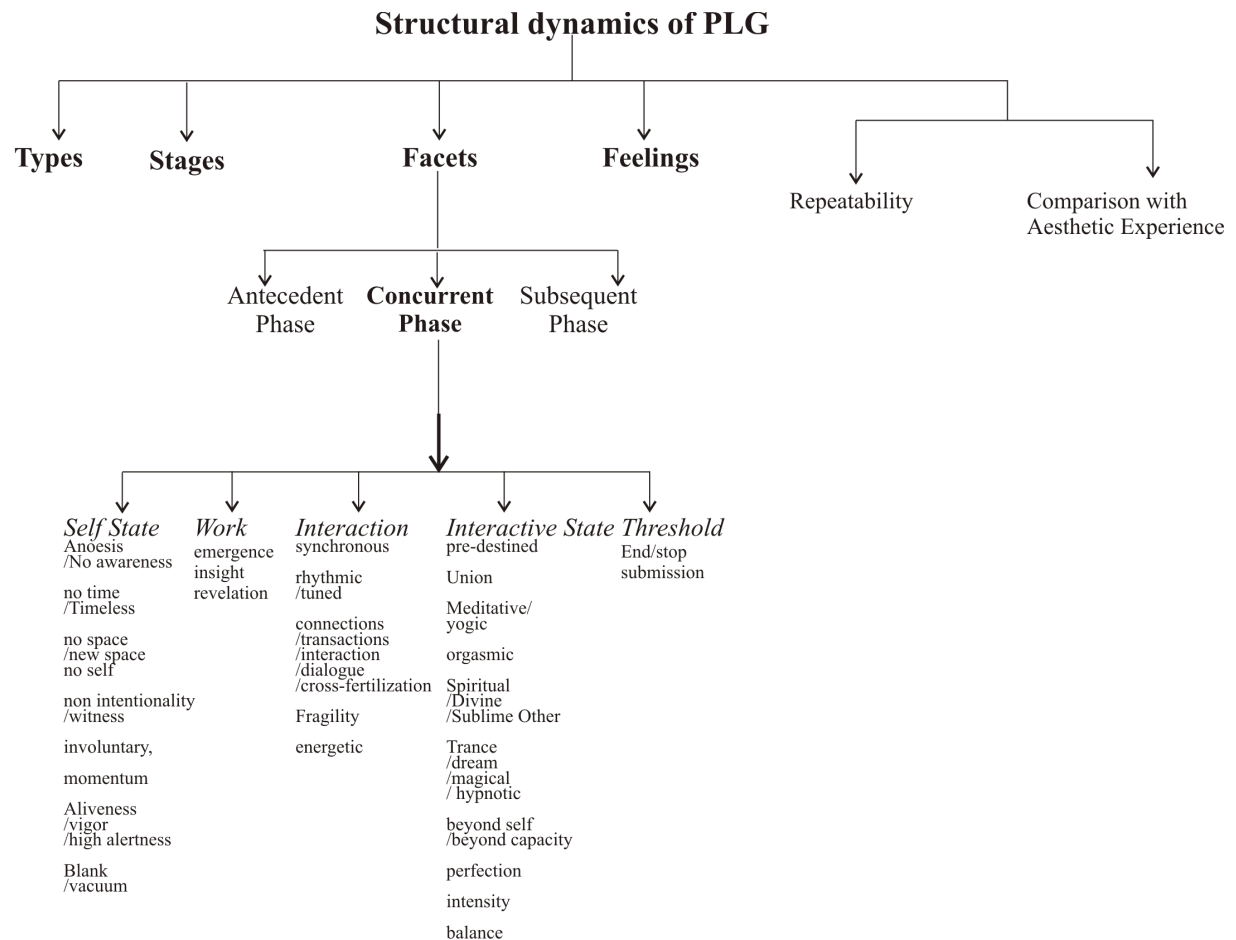
*Surrender:* The facet of surrender is the mental state of acquiescence. It is a state of mind in the antecedent phase in which the creator is in a mental state of submission. When the creator achieves the facet of surrender the phenomenon of letting go is ready to unfold. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 291)

We have looked into the details of the facets which are occurring in the antecedent phase which is before the onset of PLG. Let us now examine the facets which exist in the concurrent phase, in which the PLG actually unfolds.

### 6.3.2. Concurrent phase

The concurrent phase implies the phase in which the phenomenon of letting go unfolds.

Figure 6.6 elaborates the facets in the concurrent phase of PLG.



**Figure 6.6: Facets in Concurrent Phase of PLG**

This is the second phase in the temporal progression of PLG. The facets within this temporal phase indicate the states of mind, PLG while it is happening. As with the antecedent stage, we will look at facets within the five states of mind

- ***Self State***

The facets of the Self state in the concurrent phase mark the state of mind at the onset of PLG. Self state in the concurrent phase will be the primary mental states of the Self which the creator will possess as he moves into the concurrent phase (during PLG). The Self states of

concurrent phase will also carry some residual states from the antecedent phase which will transform as the PLG progresses. These facets will be the initial facets which will get transformed. Self's interaction with the work will cast their colours on them. Let us look into the facets in the self state during concurrent phase.

*Anoesis/No awareness:* Once PLG begins, the creator loses all awareness. The facet of anoesis implies a complete loss of awareness of the outer physical as well as the inner mental planes. The loss of awareness is a significant facet as this is that unique facet which marks the experience to be PLG and differentiates it from other creative experiences. It is interesting to note here that in the antecedent phase, the facet of high awareness of the interactive self is immediately followed by the facet of non-awareness of the self state in the concurrent phase. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 293)

*No time/Timeless:* The next significant facet of PLG is that of No time/timelessness. This facet implies that the creator loses the sense of time. This in no way means that the time has stopped, but the sense of temporality is suspended. This is one of the significant characteristics of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 293)

*No space/new space:* The facet of No space/space-less refers to a distorted sense of space, which is one of the essential aspects of PLG. During the experience of PLG, the creator loses the sense of time and also the sense of self. At times, the consciousness of space becomes so distorted that the creator feels that he has transcended into a new space, or a new space has just opened up before him. This space defies the rules of dimensionality and is many a times seen as boundless or extending towards infinitude. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 293)

*No self:* The facet of No-self refers to the loss of sense of self. The creator achieves a state of mind where he cannot grasp his self as being present in the experience. This leads to the creator feeling that his self has been lost and someone else is controlling him and the interaction during PLG. No Self is a significant aspect of PLG. The creator then turns into a passive observer or witness of the events that unfold during the experience of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 294)

*Non-Intentionality/Witness:* The facet of Non-Intentionality refers to the loss of sense of intentionality during PLG. In the antecedent phase, we had seen the facet of intentionality, which starts to diminish. In the concurrent phase, the diminished intentionality is further reduced to non-intentionality. Due to non-intentionality, there is a loss of sense of space-time and self and a loss of sense of agency as well. Due to this loss of agency, the intentionality of

the self towards the action is lost. There is a distorted sense of no-self; sometimes the creators claim that their work bade them to do the action which shows a complete non-intentionality of action. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 295)

*Involuntary:* The facet of Involuntary refers to the instinctive unfolding of events during PLG. The creator has no control on the events. The facet of involuntariness occurs in the antecedent phase in the Interactive Self. The same is now carried forward as self state in the concurrent phase of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 295)

*Momentum:* The facet of momentum refers to the impetus of continuous unfolding of events in PLG. The creator seems to be in a state of momentum in which all the events unfold. The creator seems to be in a state of constant movement. There is a momentum in this state and it is marked with loss of space-time and self. This puts the creator's mind in a sort-of limbo where the only constant element is movement. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 295)

*Aliveness/High alertness/Vigor:* The facet of Aliveness refers to the self state of high alertness. During the occurrence of PLG, the creator becomes a witness to his own experiences due to the loss of sense of space-time and self. Even in this state, the creator exhibits high attentiveness. He is able to comprehend the minute details of the unfolding events which he is witnessing as an outsider. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 296)

*Vacuum/blank:* The facet of vacuum represents the self state of being in vacuum. Due to the loss of sense of space-time and self, there is an extrapolation of the self into a higher plane. The creator experiences this space as vacuum, which has no self, and space-time coordinates. Sometimes, the creator experiences blankness and the solution presents itself to him. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 296)

- **Work**

During the concurrent phase, the work presents facets to PLG. The phenomenon of letting go is accompanied by the bodily action in the outer physical reality. Hence, the action/progress in the work influences the states of mind of the creators.

*Emergence/insight/revelation:* The facet of Emergence represents a state where the creator is open to the presentation of the solution of his work to him. This perception of emergence induces a state of revelation in his mind. PLG induces drastic progress in the creator's work which is beyond the capacity of the creator. This is perceived as emergence,

insight or revelation and a complimentary state of mind is affected in the facet of emergence. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 296)

- ***Interaction***

During PLG, the creator and his work interact in the most extraordinary manner. The facets of interaction during the concurrent phase of PLG are enumerated below.

*Synchronous:* The facet of Synchronous refers to the occurrence of the bodily actions during the interaction with the work. This is synchronous with the extraordinary character of the experience of PLG. This synchronicity is a facet of PLG where multiple planes of interaction are simultaneously operational. There is synchronous interaction between the creator's work and his body and his self. At the same time, there is an interaction between the creator's self and his body, and his self and the moment's space-time coordinates. Simultaneously, there is an interaction of his non-self and the mental connections. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 297)

*Rhythmic/tuned:* The facet of Rhythmic refers to the tuned interaction between the creator and his artwork during PLG. This facet refers to a cadenced interaction, where the creator is completely synchronised with the inner experiences and also with the work. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 297)

*Dialogue/cross fertilization/connections/reciprocation:* The facet Dialogue implies to the interaction akin to conversation with the work. The creator is in a dialogic reciprocation with his work which brings about connections and cross fertilization of ideas and thoughts. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 298)

*Fragility:* The connection within the interaction is very delicate and the facet of fragility describes the ethereal connection of the creator with his work. This facet implies impermanence of the interaction that has to be maintained. The creator takes immense pains to continue the connections and thereby establishes a continuity of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 298)

*Energetic:* The facet Energetic points to a dynamic interaction of the self with the work. This facet of PLG implies a kinetic, vivacious and lively interaction of the creator with his work. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 298)

- ***Interactive Self***

The interactive self in the concurrent phase of PLG includes the facets which emerge into the mental plane due to the interaction of the creator with his work. The facets in the interactive self have an extra-ordinary quality about them since the experience of PLG extrapolates the mental space of the creator into the extraordinary.

The facets of Interactive self in the concurrent phase are:

*Pre-destined:* The facet of Destiny refers to the impression that the events during PLG seem to be pre-ordained. Since the intentionality of the self of the creator is reduced to a minimal, there seems to be an unfolding of non-authoritative and un-controlled events unfolding themselves. There is an innate feel of everything being in the right place at the right time. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 299)

*Union:* The facet of Union refers to the merger of the creator with his work during PLG. This facet indicates a perfect joining and synthesis of all the elements of the inner experiential states of mind as well as of the outer physical reality of the creator's work. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 299)

*Meditative/yogic:* The facet of meditative/yogic is the contemplative state of mind during PLG which arises out of the interaction of the creator with his work. The facet of meditative reflects the quality of being assiduous, engrossed in contemplation in the interaction during PLG. This meditative state also refers to similar states which are achieved during the practice of Yoga. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 300)

*Orgasmic:* The facet of orgasmic implies the ascent of the movements within interaction to a peak akin to rising to a crescendo. The facet also exhibits features like rapture, passion, zeal and spirit. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 300)

*Spiritual/Divine/Sublime Other:* The facet of the Sublime Other refers to the perception of the presence of the Other in the interaction. Since PLG involves a loss of sense of self and space-time, the unfolding of experiential events is accompanied by a sense of the presence of someone other than the self. Since the experience of PLG heightens the senses of the creator, the presence of the 'other' during the experience is very instinctively linked to the Sublime, Divine, and the Cosmic. The creator feels blessed to having been granted a presence of the divine. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 300)

*Trance/dream/magical/hypnotic:* The facet of trance indicates a dreamy and magical mental state of the creator during interaction with his work. The facet also refers to a hypnotic



state where the individual is unaware of what is happening to him and is in a state of complete surrender. In this state, the creator is doing actions as though someone else has taken over or is residing in his body. The creator is in a surreal state where he seems to be enacting a dream-like sequence, in a delirious manner. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 301)

*Beyond self/beyond capacity:* The facet of Beyond Self refers to the transcendence of Self as a result of PLG. PLG consummates a transcendence of self and space-time in the continuum of interaction of the creator with his work. Hence the phenomenon exhibits a facet of Beyond Self where the continuity of work is happening beyond self. During the experience of PLG, newer mental connections are made, cross-fertilization of thoughts happen and these thoughts are reflected in the creator's work. The quality of reflections or the creator's work is usually higher than the creator's usual creative standards or benchmarks that he might have set for himself. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 302)

*Perfection:* During the experience of PLG, the interaction of the creator with his work reaches a state of synchronization. This results in a state of mind of perfection where wholeness is accomplished. The creator reaches a state of consummation and exquisiteness in the interaction. This is a state of purity where perfection reigns supreme. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 302)

*Intensity:* In the concurrent phase of PLG, there is an intense interaction between the creator and his work. The creator reaches a state of intensity where he experiences anxiety, concentration, and fervor during the dialogic interaction with his work. This forms a major reason for the addition of unforeseen elements to his work. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 303)

*Balance:* The facet of balance refers to a balanced state of mind where the creator reaches a state of stasis during the interaction. A perfect balance is stricken during the occurrence of PLG, which is intense, synchronized and pure. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 303)

- ***Threshold***

In the concurrent phase, the facets during threshold marks the end of PLG.

The facets within threshold are

*End/stop:* The facet of End marks the stopping of flow of PLG. The dynamic processes cease and there is a conclusive stop to the process of unfolding of PLG. This stop marks the

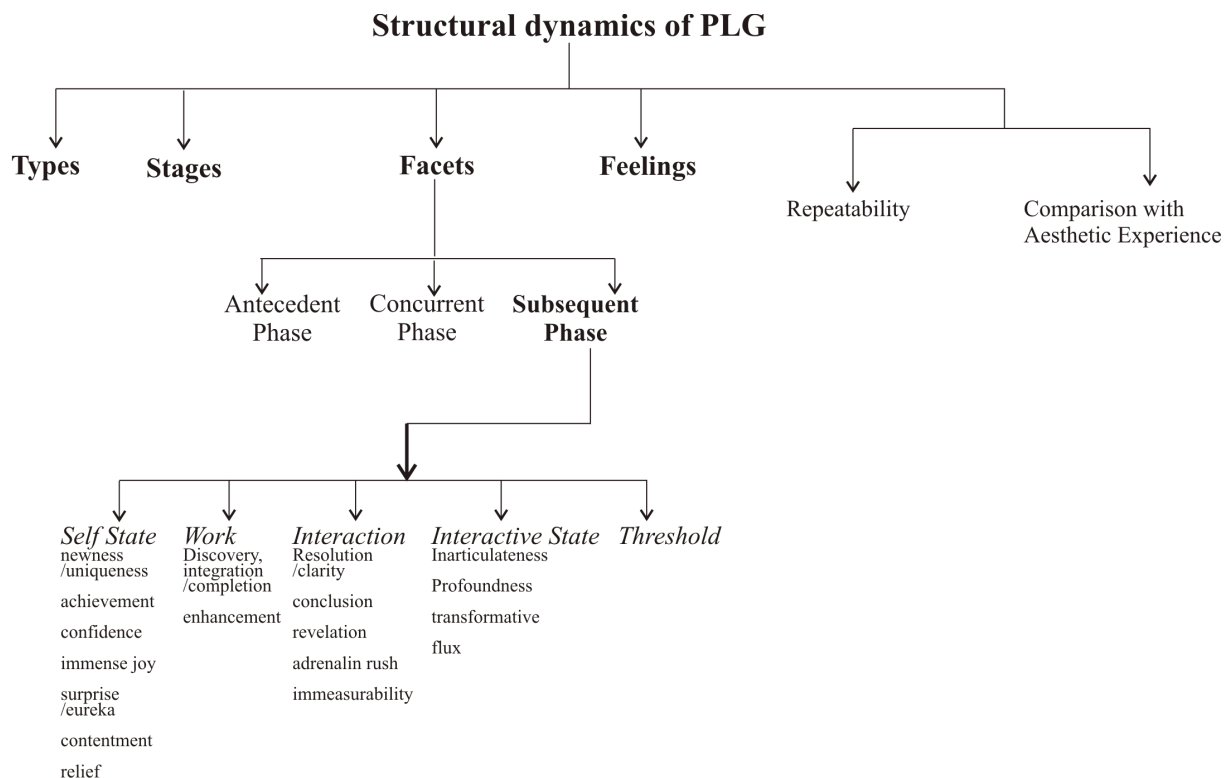
process of restoration of sense of self and space-time and resumption into the usual flow of creative experiences. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 303)

*Submission:* The facet submission implies the state of mind of compliance and conformity, where the mind submits to the events happening. It yields or surrenders itself to the flow of events happening to the creator. The facet Submission in the antecedent phase reflects the surrender of the self to the start of PLG, whereas the facet Submission in the concurrent phase refers to the surrender of self to the stop of events of PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 303)

Thus, during the concurrent phase, the creator experiences a living through of deep and intense facets of PLG. He lives through these facets which are sometimes ethereal and at other times highly intense and profound. In this phase he is pulled into a new mental plane of intense events and at the end is brought back into the usual rhythm of creative experiences. Let us now look at the subsequent phase of PLG to understand what the creator goes through once the experience of PLG has ended.

### **6.3.3. Subsequent phase of PLG**

The temporal phase just after PLG is termed as the subsequent phase. In this phase, the lost awareness is regained and the mind starts perceiving all the experiential events happening from the perspective of Self. In fact the mind regains Self. In the subsequent phase, the facets imply to the states of mind in which the self tries to make sense or find meanings to the events during PLG. Figure 6.7 explains the facets present in the Subsequent phase of PLG.



**Figure 6.7: Facets in the Subsequent phase of PLG**

- ***Self State***

The self states reflect the facets of PLG which reveals the realization of the events that occurred during PLG. The facets of self states are:

*Newness/uniqueeness*: The facet of Newness refers to recentness or a novelty which PLG experience brings with it. Every instance of occurrence of PLG is accompanied by a quality of uniqueness and freshness. Surprisingly, each experience of PLG is perceived as different and special due to the unique combination of its facets. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 305)

*Achievement*: The facet of Achievement refers to the self-realization during PLG. PLG takes the mind of the creator to a crescendo. It takes immense effort to achieve this mental height and even more effort is needed to maintain that height. Hence, the end of PLG induces a huge sense of achievement in the creator. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 305)

*Confidence*: Post the experience of PLG, the facet of Confidence refers to the state of self-knowledge and sureness of the creator about himself and his work. Similar to the facet of Trust in the antecedent phase, the facet of Confidence refers to the faith and certainty or conviction of the experience of PLG. This certainty is also reflected in the confidence that the creator has about the quality of his work. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 305)

*Immense joy:* The facet of Immense Joy refers to the state of joy of cosmic proportions. Usually immense joy would be considered an emotional response, but here it assumes a status of facet, as the pleasure and happiness felt by the creator induces a mental state of Immense Joy. The state of immense joy pervades into PLG obliterating all the other events. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 305)

*Surprise/eureka:* The facet of Surprise refers to the state of shock or amazement. As PLG occurs involuntarily and unpredictably, it produces the facet of surprise after its completion. The same is expressed by *Abhinavagupta* who expresses that the experience of *Rasa* is accompanied by the feeling of '*Chamatkara*<sup>28</sup>' (Gnoli R. , 1985) (Appendix IV C, Pg: 306)

*Contentment:* The end of PLG brings with it a state of deep contentment. During the occurrence of PLG, the creator many-a-times experiences the sublime and immediately after the end of this experience, he feels gratified that such an intense event happened to him. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 306)

*Relief:* The facet of Relief refers to a release which is accompanied by the ending of PLG experience. The intensity of the phenomenon is so high, that the end brings with it deliverance and relief of achieving an important mental feat. The facet of relief is escorted with immense joy, contentment and high positivity. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 306)

- **Work**

In the subsequent phase of PLG, the end of the experience finds its impact on the work of the creator. This induces in him varied mental states associated with his work. The work-induced facets of PLG are:

*Discovery:* When the experience of PLG is ongoing, it creates its marks on the work of the creator as well. As the experience of PLG ends, the creator gets back his self. All other coordinates of PLG resume their usual positions and the creator turns his attention towards his work. The creator realizes the marks which have unawares appeared on his work during PLG. This puts him in a state of Discovery, where he starts searching or and detecting varied marks inside his own work. Sometimes, the creator discovers marks in his work which are far beyond his usual creative capacity. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 306)

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<sup>28</sup> Chamatkara means the feeling of wonder, surprise about something which is surprisingly presented to the creator.

*Integration/Completion/deviation:* Post the occurrence of PLG, the creator has finished putting inputs into his work. The facet of Integration refers to the state of inclusion of cross-fertilized thought processes and connections into the work. This stage represents the closure of a struggle with the problem which the creator was struggling with. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 307)

*Enhancement:* The experience of PLG urges the creator to go beyond himself in the concurrent phase. By going beyond himself, the creator is able to transcend his usual standards of work as well. This results in the up-gradation/enhancement of the work that the creator is involved in during the experience of PLG. In the subsequent phase of PLG, the discovery of elevated standard of work induces a state of enhancement in the creator as well. This facet implies the growth or progression in the usual mental makeup of the creator. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 307)

- ***Interaction***

In the subsequent phase of PLG, the interaction with work shows facets representing the closure or the end of the experience. The facets are:

*Resolution/clarity:* At the end of PLG, there is a resolution to the problem which the creator is working on. The facet of Resolution points to a mental state of clarity where the interaction takes the creator towards the resolved form/solution. The facet implies a state of dedication and purposiveness in the creator which is moving towards the clarification in his work. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 307)

*Conclusion:* The facet of Conclusion refers to the state of accomplishment where the creator finds a culmination of the ongoing flow of mental interactions. This induces a state of inferential closure. The discovery of the form results in the resolution of the working problem in his work. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 307)

*Revelation:* In the subsequent phase, the facet of Revelation implies the unfolding of the form/solution during the interaction. The facet of revelation implies the emergence of a unique and new resolution in the work, which is presented to the creator during PLG and which he discovers in the aftermath of the experience. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 307)

*Adrenalin rush:* The facet of Adrenalin rush refers to the somatic element which is triggered during the experience of PLG. There is an instinctual and primeval somatic reaction

whose arousal is realized at the end of PLG. This somatic reaction is due to the experience of PLG as well as to the realization of accomplishment of beyond-ness in the work. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 308)

*Immeasurability:* The facet of Immeasurability refers to an interactive state of infinitude at the end of PLG. The interaction brings with it a limitlessness which the creator comprehends as being an immense continuity. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 308)

- ***Interactive-self***

In the subsequent phase of PLG, the interaction of the creator with his work leads to the formation of interactive self-states which remain with the creator for a long time after the PLG is over. The facets of interactive-self are:

*In-articulateness:* The facet of Inarticulateness refers to an interactive-self state of quiescence. This state is marked by stillness in the mental space where there are no more thoughts and voices. This state cannot be coherently integrated in verbal language and hence is termed as being inarticulate. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 308)

*Profoundness:* The facet of Profoundness implies the interactive-self state of depth, astuteness and sublimity. This facet points to a state of immenseness in the inner mental space of the creator. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 308)

*Transformation:* The facet of Transformation is the self state which points to a rejuvenation of the creator's self as well as his work. There is a metamorphosis of the self due to transcendence and realization of self during PLG. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 308)

*Flux:* The facet of flux refers to the self state of fluidity. Post the experience of PLG, the creator's mind seems to be in a state of transition where it slowly flows towards maturation, a realization. (Appendix IV C, Pg: 309)

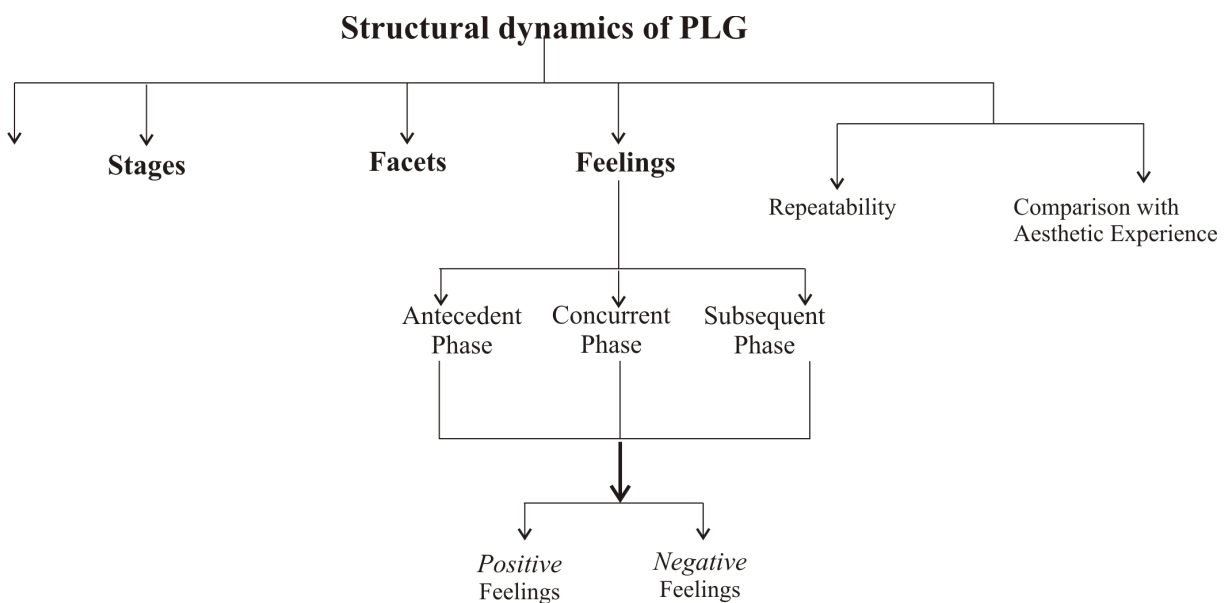
The experience of PLG can be gleaned from the facets flowing from the preparation states of antecedent phase, into the living through states of the concurrent phase, and finally to the realization states of the subsequent phase. The facets refer to varied array of mental states which the creator goes through so that he could achieve PLG, live it and bring closure to the

experience. The facets are endowed with corresponding intense emotions at each phase of PLG and hence let us now look at the feelings which accompany PLG.

#### 6.4. Feelings associated with PLG

Any experience comprises of two ingredients which make it; the mental state of the self (facet) and the affective state of the self. Every mental state is associated with a corresponding feeling which is evident from Dainton's statement that the phenomenal character of an experience refers to distinctive feel that the experience has (Dainton, 2000). While reflecting about PLG, the most prominent impressions are about the feelings that the creator experiences during PLG. The feelings strongly impact the way the creator perceives and values PLG experiences.

The structural dynamics of the dimension of feelings is described in the Figure 6.8

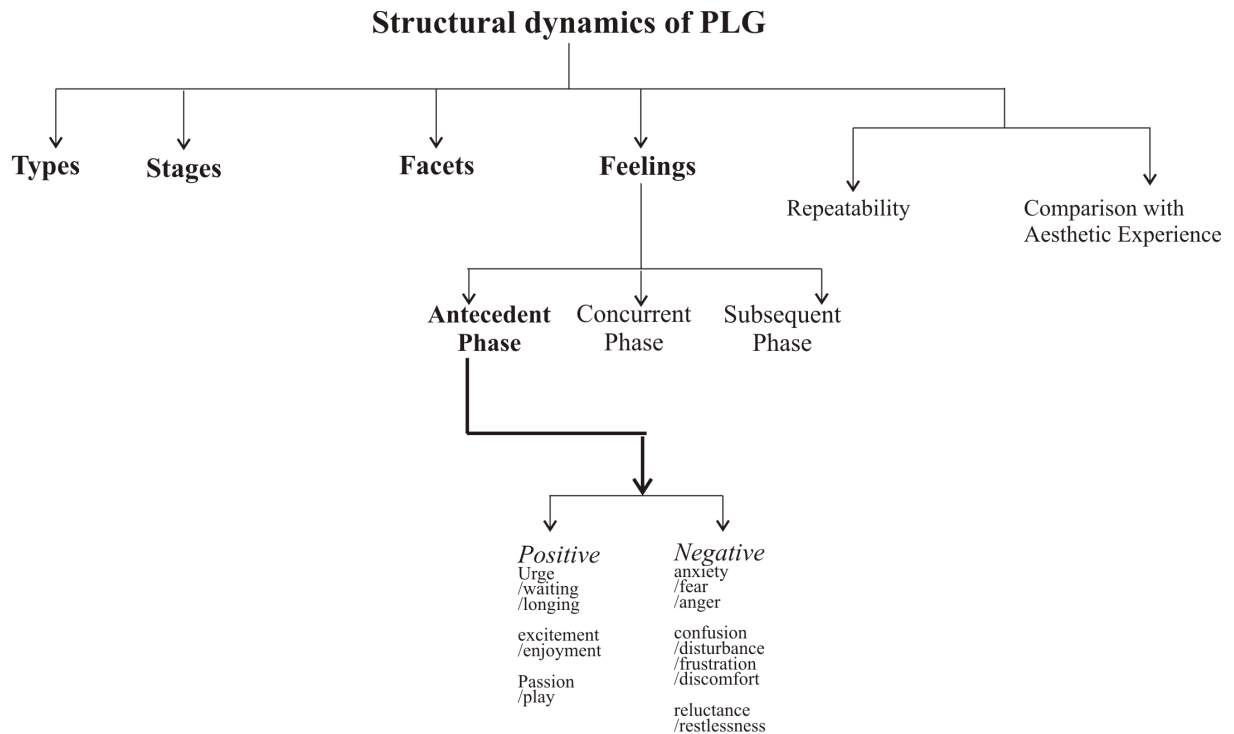


**Figure 6.8: Feelings associated with PLG**

Similar to the Facets, the feelings associated with PLG flow through the temporal phases of antecedent, concurrent and subsequent phases. During PLG, the creator experiences both positive and negative feelings which is patterned as per the facets which the creator experiences.

#### 6.4.1. Antecedent Phase

In the antecedent phase of PLG, the creator is assailed with both positive and negative feelings. These feelings accompany the facets which form the preparatory stages for PLG. Let us start with looking at the positive feelings of the creator before the onset of PLG. The positive and negative feelings associated with the antecedent phase of PLG are given in the Figure 6.9



**Figure 6.9: Feelings in Antecedent phase of PLG**

- ***Positive Feelings***

The creator experiences a myriad of positive feelings before the PLG. The feelings are

*Urge/waiting/longing:* At the initial stage of PLG of urge, the creator experiences a strong feeling of longing. This feeling of longing starts even before the creator can understand what he is longing or waiting for. This strong desire or urge is tinged with a waiting which seeks for clarification of the object of urge. While the creator experiences this longing, he is assailed with fears and anxieties, mainly due to fact that the object of longing is still not clear to him. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 311)

*Excitement/enjoyment:* Once the object of the longing is revealed, the creator feels an excitement to act on the object of urge. The creator involves himself into the object of his



urge and a general feeling of enjoyment sets in. As the intensity of enjoyment increases progressively, the creator moves further into the experience of PLG. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 311)

*Passion/play:* In the antecedent phase, just before the commencement of PLG, the creator is passionately involved with his work. The feeling of Passion is sometimes a result of enjoyment. This feeling of enjoyment also induces a playful feeling. Passionate playfulness is an important feeling which triggers the onset of PLG. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 311)

- ***Negative Feelings***

Along with the positive feelings, the creator experiences equivalent negative feelings in the antecedent phase of PLG.

*Anxiety/Fear/anger:* The antecedent phase is a time of preparation for the creator to let go and jump into the unknown during the experience of PLG. This instills a feeling of anxiety in the creator as he has to surrender himself to events that he doesn't expect and cannot comprehend at that moment. Many-a times, the feeling of longing does not translate into a clarified object which generates a feeling of anger in the creator. This anger is mostly directed at oneself for not been able to decipher the object of longing. Sometimes, the creator is assailed with feeling of fear about not being able to live up to the expectations of what events might unfold for him. This feeling of fear alludes to self-doubt and a general anxiety due to an uncertainty that surrounds the creator just before the start of PLG. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 312)

*Confusion/frustration/disturbance/discomfort:* In the antecedent phase of PLG, the creator is assailed with the negative feelings of confusion and disturbance. The creator who is engrossed in his work faces the difficult situation of an unresolved-form, which creates the feeling of frustration. These feelings give way to more positivity as soon as PLG starts. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 312)

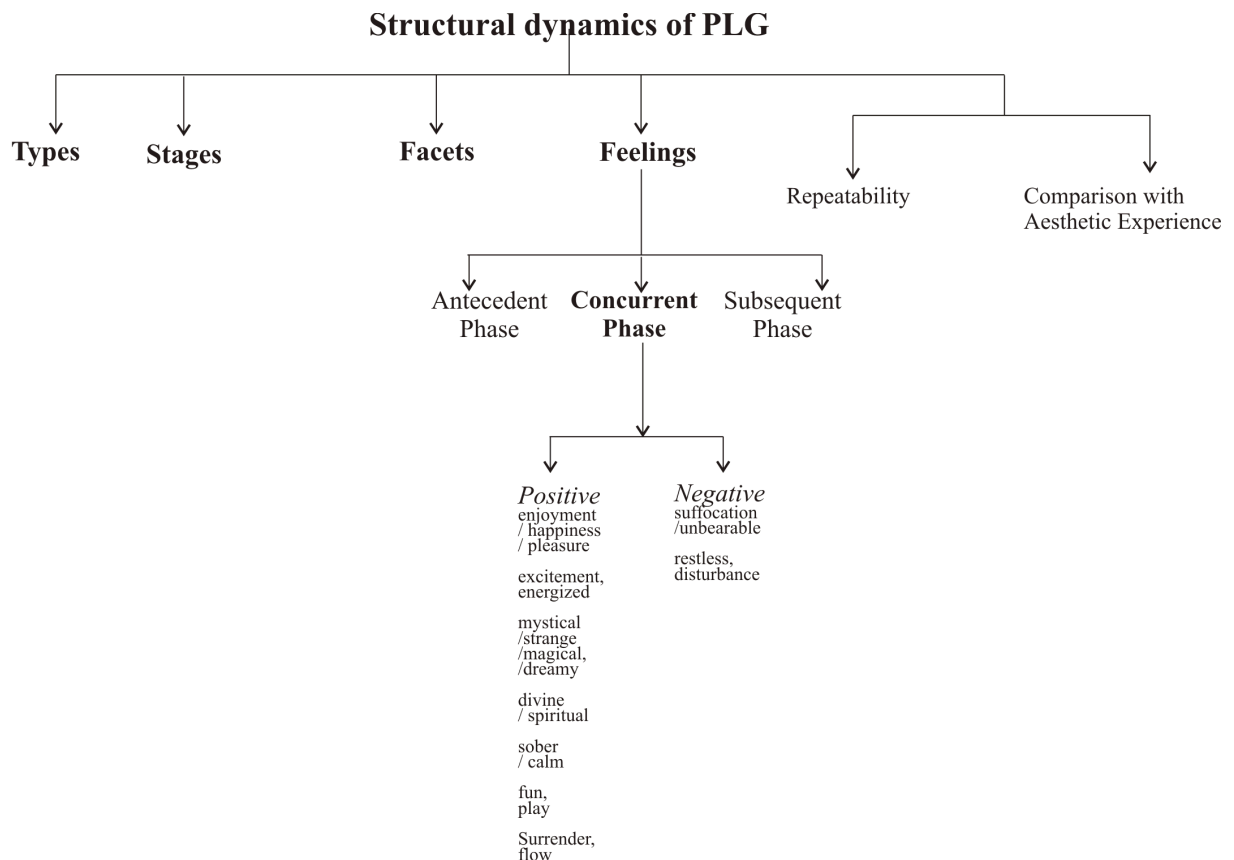
*Reluctance/restlessness:* In the antecedent phase of PLG, the creator finds himself reluctant to face the daunting task of finding solution to the problem of unresolved form in his work. This infuses the feeling of restlessness in him as he is disturbed by the frustrations and confusions that lie before him. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 312)

The antecedent phase of PLG is marked with feelings of excitement and frustrations. The concurrent phase makes the creator go through feelings of living through a transcending

and transforming experiential phenomenon. Let us turn our attention to the feelings that are present in the creator in the concurrent phase.

#### 6.4.2. Concurrent phase

During the concurrent phase of PLG, the creator is faced with a plethora of feelings which are associated with the phenomenon. As the experience of PLG is progressing, the creator is in an affective state where he experiences numerous feelings; he is in fact, living the various feelings which are presented to him during unfolding of PLG. The varied feelings associated with the subsequent phase are described in the Figure 6.10



**Figure 6.10: Feelings in Concurrent phase of PLG**

- ***Positive Feelings***

*Enjoyment/happiness/pleasure:* During PLG, the creator is assailed with feelings of happiness and pleasure. The creator takes enjoyment in his work, especially once a dialogue is established with the work. The creators feel great happiness and pleasure at being in a new positive zone where PLG happens. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 313)

*Excitement/energized:* The creator feels a deep well of excitement at the unfolding of the events during PLG. He feels a feeling of being alive in the moment when he is living through PLG. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 313)

*Mystical/strange/magical/dreamy:* During the unfolding of events during PLG, the creator is transported into a new realm which makes him feel that everything is magical and dreamy. There is a feeling of unreality, of strangeness, at what is happening. The creator feels a mystical feeling, as he finds himself in a selfless, timeless and space-less zone. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 314)

*Divine/spiritual:* The creator experiences the Sublime within the profound type of letting go. In such instances, there is an accompaniment of a divine feeling of being blessed. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 314)

*Sober/calm:* Sometimes, the phenomenon of letting go is accompanied by a feeling of soberness and calmness. This is in contrast to the feeling of excitement which discussed earlier. This might be due to the fact that the phenomenon occurs in different flavors each time. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 315)

*Fun/play:* The phenomenon of letting go establishes a dialogue between the artist/designer and the artwork/design. Sometimes, this interaction is very playful and in such instances it is accompanied by the feeling of fun associated with play. A feeling of playfulness is experienced. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 315)

*Surrender:* The phenomenon of letting go initiates when the artist/designer is in a state of surrender. The state of surrender is accompanied by a feeling of surrender, of giving over to the unknown. The feeling of surrender is similar to the feeling of submission where the creator feels a relinquishment of self to the unfolding experiences. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 315)

- ***Negative feelings***

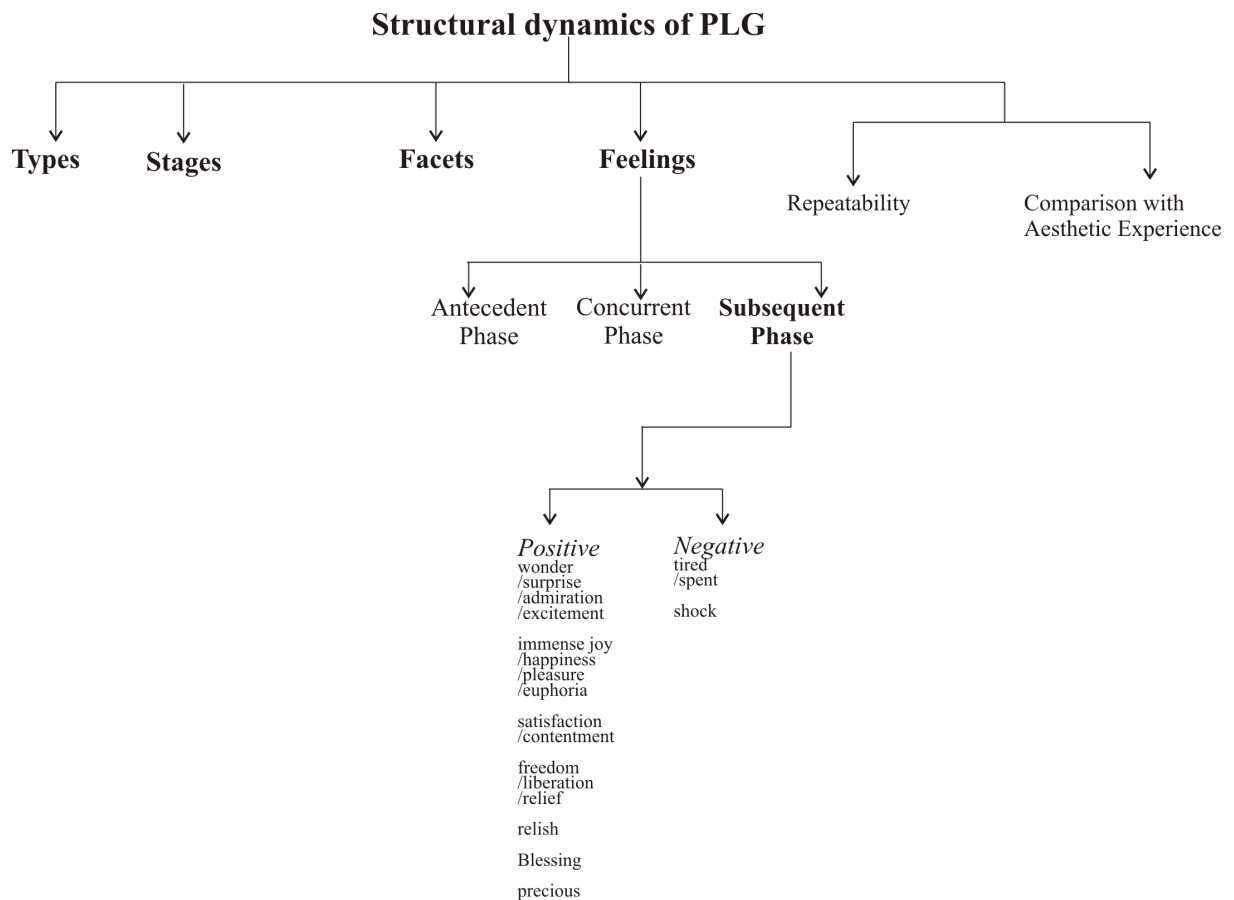
*Suffocation/Unbearable:* The artists/designers have reported a feeling of suffocation within the phenomena of letting go. This feeling is said to be very unbearable. In fact, sometimes the artists claim that they are waiting for the phenomena to subside. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 316)

*Restlessness:* The phenomena are accompanied with a feeling of restlessness and uneasiness as though the artist/designer cannot wait to know what is coming next. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 316)

*Disturbance:* The artist/designers are disturbed when PLG is going on. This disturbance might be due to the fact that the phenomenon shows its manifestation in the bodily changes and also it might be due to the fact that the phenomenon is about surrendering to the unknown. The creator loses the control and there is a fear of what is coming next and that could sometimes be disturbing. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 316)

### 6.4.3. Subsequent phase

In the subsequent phase, the artist/designer realizes the enormity of the experience of PLG and the feelings experienced are a reaction of this comprehension. The Figure no. 6.11 presents the feelings accompanying the subsequent phase.



**Figure 6.11: Feelings in the Subsequent phase of PLG**

- ***Positive feelings***

*Wonder/surprise/admiration/excitement:* Once the realization of the end of PLG strikes, the artist/designer is assailed with feelings of wonder. There is a feeling of surprise accompanied with admiration that such an experience was bestowed upon them. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 317)

*Immense joy/euphoria/happiness/pleasure/bliss:* There is a feeling of immense joy, euphoria and blissfulness at the end of PLG. This is accompanied by a great happiness and joy. The feeling of immense joy fills up the consciousness of the creator to such an extent that awareness of anything else recedes. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 317)

*Satisfaction/contentment/fulfillment:* At the end of PLG, the artists/designers get a feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment as the solution is presented to them. They seem to feel content about the work and the way it has shaped up. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 318)

*Freedom/liberation/Relief:* PLG gives an experience of freedom to the artists/designers. They feel liberated from the struggle they were involved in just before the unfolding of PLG. They experience a feeling of relief that the episode is over and the result is presenting itself to them. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 318)

*Relish:* The artist/designer relishes the experience. PLG has a facet of relish as well. The feeling of relish accompanies the state of relish. Relish is tasting; relishing the feel of PLG. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 319)

*Blessing:* The artist/designers feel blessed that the phenomenon of letting go in its profound brilliance is bestowed upon them. They feel lucky that such an experience must be planned by destiny to be happening to them. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 319)

*Precious:* The artists/designers experience a feeling of reverence that such a phenomenon happened to them and through them. They feel precious about the experience that just happened to them. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 319)

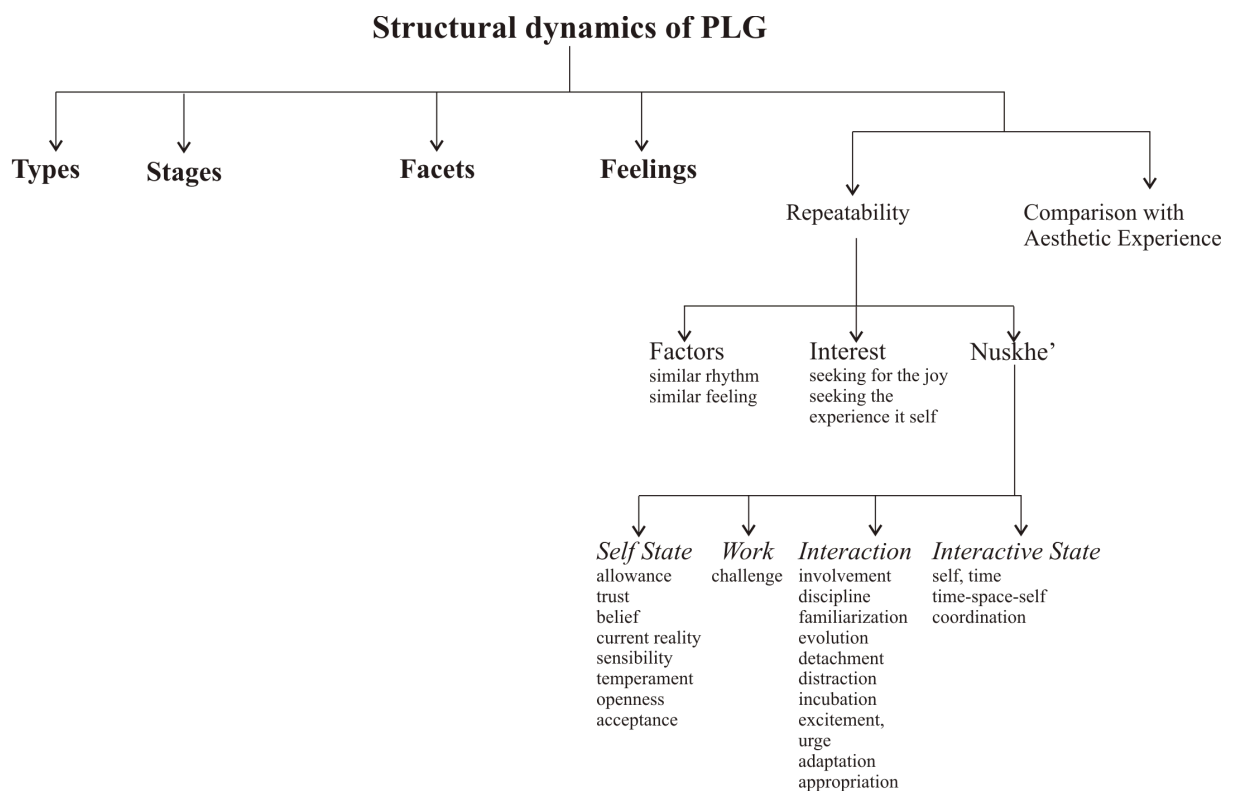
- ***Negative feelings***

*Tired/spent:* Due to high excitement and energy of PLG, the artists/designer's feel tired/spent and drained after the phenomenon is completed. The artists/designers feel exhausted at the end of PLG. (Appendix IV D, Pg: 320)

*Shock:* The artists/designers feel a shock about the recent experience of PLG due to the suddenness and the intensity with which it happens. Sometimes the feeling of shock could also be due to the easiness with which the ephemeral type of letting go just presents the form/solution into their consciousness. (Appendix IV D, Pg:320)

## 6.5. Repeatability of phenomenon of letting go

The aspect of Repeatability of PLG is expressed by the Artists only. The designers did not express such an instance when they could voluntarily repeat PLG. The analysis revealed that PLG is repeatable even though it is unpredictable. When the phenomenon is repeated, it occurs with similar rhythm. It is accompanied with similar feelings. Even though there is similarity in the repeated experiences, the phenomenon is different since it retains different flavors every time it occurs.



**Figure 6.12: Repeatability of phenomenon of letting go**

The Figure 6.12 presents the quality of repeatability as also the reasons for the artist to seek that repeatability. The Figure 6.12 enumerates the facets of the states of mind which should be achieved to voluntarily repeat the experience of phenomenon of letting go.

The artists seek the repetition of the phenomenon for two reasons:

~They seek the experience itself

~They seek the joy which accompanies the phenomenon

This does not mean that the artist is looking for the repetition of PLG every time he ventures into the creative process. It is true that they do wait and hope that it happens. But that would be like a hidden wish. On the analytical work front, focus on the work/problem at hand and finding a solution/form to it is the utmost on their minds. The artists shared that they would like to be able to repeat PLG just so that they could again feel the immense joy that they experience during the phenomenon. They not only wanted to experience the feelings accompanying PLG, they also want to repeat the experience itself. The artists expressed their wish to relive the experience not just for the transformation it brought about to the manifestation or the artwork but also for the experience itself.

The artist participants had had an experience of PLG innumerable times in their artistic journey. Somewhere they had formulated a method so that there is maximum probability of the phenomenon happening to them. These are the folk methods (*nuskhe*) which they prescribed to in their creative process. We will now look at the *nuskhe* in detail.

#### **6.5.1. *Nuskhe*' (Folk methods)**

Since the experience of letting go is highly personal and is never or very rarely shared with fellow artists, the artists had only their own experiences to draw from while trying to evolve a way to voluntarily or intentionally repeat PLG. They had devised their own tips and tricks, their own personal methods for the repeatability of PLG. These individual folk methods were collated and analyzed. The inferences drawn are the '*Nuskhe*', folk remedy/methods evolved out of the various tips and methods shared by the artist participants.

The *nuskhe* include various facets which one must achieve so that one is in a receptive state. It is within this receptive state that there is a maximum possibility of the occurrence of PLG.

- ***Self State***

The *nuskhe*' reveal that one must be in a state of mind where one is in the current reality, in the present moment, with complete openness. One must achieve the temperament and sensibility where one is in a mental state of acceptance of Self with all the positivity and negativity of one's person. One must have complete trust and belief in oneself, the present moment and also on the unknown, especially on the unknown. This will take one to the state of allowance. In this state, one can allow for unknown experiences to happen to him/her. One is standing on the precipice and allowing oneself to fall in full trust and belief of what lay ahead voluntarily or intentionally. (Appendix IV E, Pg: 322-324)

- ***Work:***

The *nuskhe*' also reveal that the probability of repeatability of the experience is more when the work is challenging. (Appendix IV E, Pg: 324)

- ***Interaction:***

The *nuske*' elaborate about the ways in which one should interact with the work so that one could experience the phenomenon. One should be completely involved with one's work with just the right amount of excitement and urge. One should work with the strict discipline and as one familiarizes with the work, one adapts and appropriates. The artists also recommend detachment and distraction in the right amount and at the right time. One has to incubate the thought for just the right amount of time and depth so that it evolves itself into a nurtured and matured resolution or an idea. (Appendix IV E, Pg: 324-327)

- ***Interactive Self:***

The *nuskhe*' reveal that when one is at the threshold or at the precipice, one should realize a Self-time-space synchronization so that one achieves the rhythm required within the experience of letting go phenomenon. (Appendix IV E, Pg: 327)

The *nuskhe*' form a guideline that could be followed to try to achieve PLG voluntarily. The artist participants claim that after a lot of trial and errors, they are able to voluntarily experience PLG when they follow some of the facets within the *nuskhe*'. The *nuske*' is not prescriptive list or a self-help list for everyone. It is a guideline for one's sensibilities to subjectively judge as to how each facet needs to be achieved and to what degree or intensity

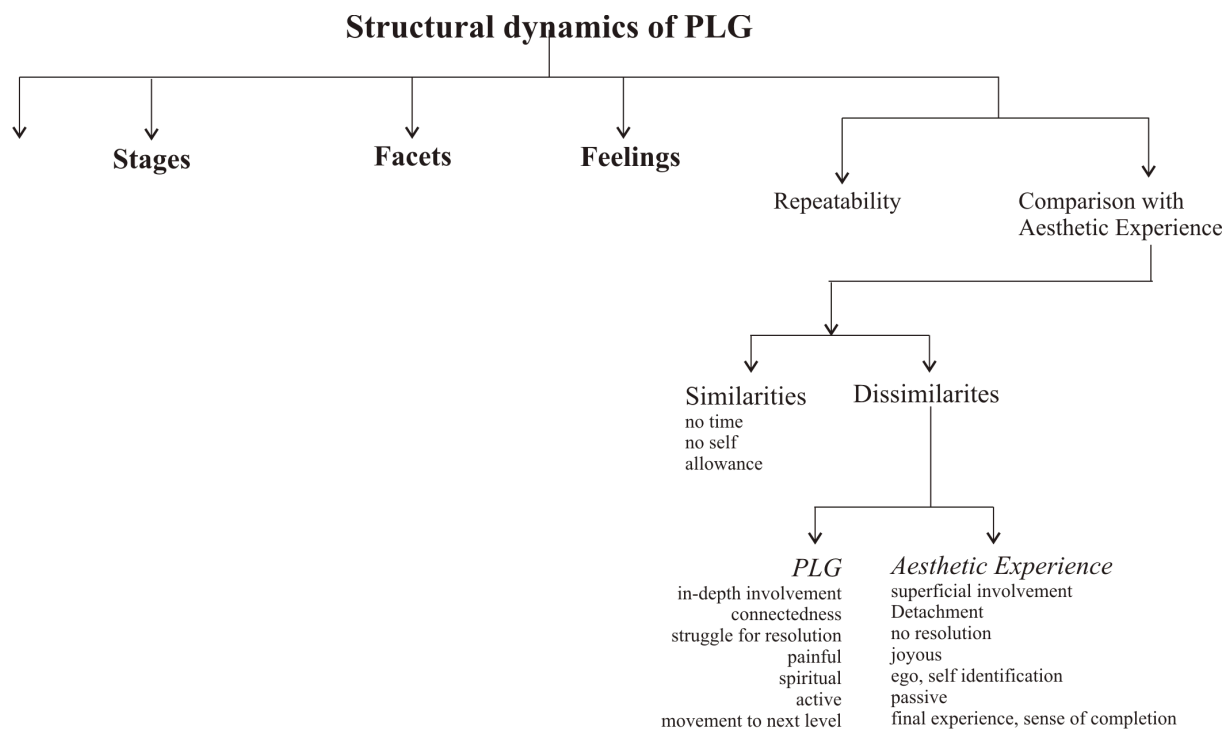


as per the person's temperament. An artist needs to sensibly assess requirements of his work and the environmental factors through which the artist interacts with his work.

Since the artists are claiming to be able to voluntarily achieve the experience with these *nuskhe*', one could treat them as a preliminary guide to practice and finds one's own prescription for the voluntary achievement of the experience of PLG.

## 6.6. Comparison with Aesthetic Experience

As in the case of Repeatability, the aspect of Comparison with Aesthetic Experience is also a part of the structural dynamics of PLG of artists only. The experience of the PLG always tends to leave a mark on the creator's memory. And when one looks back into these memories, one also finds some distinct memories of aesthetic experiences. The study also tried to throw some light on the correlation between PLG and aesthetic experiences. We will first look into the similarities and then dissimilarities between both the experiences. Figure 6.13 provides the points of similarity and distinction between PLG and Aesthetic experiences



**Figure 6.13: Comparison of phenomenon of letting go with aesthetic experiences**

### 6.6.1. Similarities

In a separate study on the investigation of creative and aesthetic experiences of designers, Sharma (2011), has stated that there is a correlation between the deep creative experiences like PLG and deep aesthetic experience. Sharma describes that the quality within the letting go experience and the deep aesthetic experiences have a lot of similarities.

The present study identified that most of the artists agreed that there is a similarity between some of their PLG experiences and aesthetic experiences. It should be noted here that the artist is the first viewer of the creation. Hence there is every possibility that the creative experience carries with it an aesthetic experience as well. The artists say that sometimes one can see transference of experiences. By this they mean that sometimes they notice that the creations in which they experienced deep letting go experiences, those creations were aesthetically highly appreciated. The viewer also experienced a deep aesthetic experience about it. This is an observation made by the artists and designers, which is not empirically tested, but would be difficult to contest on qualitative terms.

Like one of the artists said, *'Da vinci created the MonaLisa for me; Picasso made the Guernica just for me...so that I could experience the pain and ethos depicted in the artworks. But they also created it just for me so that I could feel the glory of their creative experience, even a miniscule of what they might have actually felt it.'*<sup>29</sup>

The artists claim there is a similarity in PLG and deep aesthetic experiences in terms of the facet of allowance. The artists describe that the mental state of allowance which they experience before the experience of PLG is very similar to that they experience in deep aesthetic experiences. They also say that they experience a similarity in the non-awareness of time-space and Self during PLG and deep aesthetic experiences. (Appendix IV F, Pg: 329)

### 6.6.2. Dissimilarities

The artists report that they could identify dissimilarities between both PLG and aesthetic experiences. Let us examine the differences between both these experiences. The experience of PLG necessitates an in-depth involvement of the artist in his work, whereas, an aesthetic experience involves a superficial interaction of the viewer with the artwork/product.

While the PLG experience involves a connection of one's work with ones thoughts and self, the aesthetic experience is very detached. In case of aesthetic experience, the viewer is involved with the work but only as an observer. He is not as connected as the artist when he is

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<sup>29</sup> Excerpted from interview of artist2, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010

creating. The PLG experience comprises of a struggle for resolution to the issue that the artist is pondering on. In contrast, there is no resolution to be sought in an aesthetic experience. The artists report that the PLG experience could sometimes be painful as well. There could be an experience of pain in the joy of creation or joy in the pain of creation. But an aesthetic experience is always felt as a joy.

The artists describe that the profound letting go experience brings a spiritual connect with the self on a very deep and primitive level. In case of an aesthetic experience, there is a connection of the ego, an identification of self of the viewer with the work. If a viewer identifies with the work of art, one is assailed with a deep sense of appreciation and connect.

PLG experience is an active experience where the artist is hands-on in the process of creation of the artwork where as an aesthetic experience is quite passive. The experience of PLG is a progression. It has a momentum, it moves from one level to the next. In that sense an aesthetic experience is static. It is felt as a final experience accompanied with a sense of completion. (Appendix IV F, Pg: 330)

## **6.7. Summary**

The results inferred in this section give a complete account of PLG. They also give elaborate details about the various aspects of the phenomenon. PLG is an unusual and unique creative experience and the inferences show the qualitative characteristics that identify and give form to the experience of PLG. The inferences comprehensively address the second research question about the characteristics of PLG. The inferences point to the four dimensions of PLG; PLG has five types. There are eight stages through which the creative experiences culminate into a PLG experience. The facets of the phenomenon give an elaborate account of the states of mind, the attitude towards the work, the interaction with the work, and the states of self which is in interaction with the work. All the facets are evolved across temporal phases of antecedent, concurrent and subsequent phases. They refer to the events happening in the mental states across these temporal phases. The inferences look into the feelings associated with the PLG across temporal phases of antecedent, concurrent and subsequent phases. The aspects of repeatability and *nuskhe* which could help in the achievement of letting go are also elaborated in this section. Lastly, the inferences also give a comparison of the PLG with the aesthetic experiences.

Once we have established the characteristic of PLG, we will move further to the defining of PLG so that PLG could have a distinct identity in the ongoing creative experiences. Let us move to Part B of the Chapter Six to proceed with the definition of PLG.

## **Part B**

### **Definition of phenomenon of letting go**

The present research journey started with the realization of existence of a special experiential event in the otherwise usual creative experiences of artists and designers during their creative process. As we delved deeper into our quest for an understanding of this special experiential event, we gathered data both from literature and the participants of research. At a higher level, there seemed to be no congruence in the terminology used to explicate such an event and the descriptions were varying as per the domain, the instance and the person to whom they occurred. But at a deeper level, the basic nature of the experience appeared to be the same.

To proceed further into our study, we took a general view of the special experiences and extracted the characteristics which made the experience ‘special and precious’. We formulated a premise for the experience and we termed these experiences ‘Phenomenon of letting go (PLG)’. The study revealed that all the twenty participants gave in-depth elaborations about their encounter of PLG. The further analysis revealed the complexity of the nature of PLG and that the phenomenon has more to its character than what the initial premise described. The premise was the start point from where the investigation into the phenomenon stated. It simply formed a wireframe of the character of the phenomenon that was being

investigated. The exploration revealed that PLG is an experience which arises out of complex combinations of psychological, sensory, mental and bodily actions. These aspects define the character of the PLG experiences.

We analyzed and inferred the structural dynamics of PLG in Part A of this chapter. But we are still left with the task of defining PLG itself. The Phenomenon of letting go is a special experiential phenomenon. Every experiential phenomenon cannot be defined and bracketed by precise language to give a complete and certifiable singular view of the truth about the experience. One can only present the schematized aspects<sup>30</sup> about the experience and the essence of the phenomenon is extracted from these schematized objects.

To arrive at the schema, we need to further deduce the core of the phenomenon from the inferred structural dynamics about PLG.

## 6.8. Core of PLG

The inferred structural dynamics reveals that there are five types of PLG. The five types vary in terms of facets (states of mind) and the feelings (affective states) within the experience. Taking the analysis ahead, we aligned the facets and feelings to represent each type of PLG. It was very interesting to find that there were many unique facets which made each type different. But more amazingly, there were facets which were common to all the five types of PLG. The facets which belonged to the concurrent phase were extracted since these facets describe the PLG as it is being lived through by the artist/designer. These common facets would represent the core facets of PLG.

Core facets
non-aware, non realization
no space, new space
no self
no time
involuntary, spontaneous, automatic, no-control
emergence, insight, revelation

Table 4: Facets common among all the types of PLG

<sup>30</sup> Kocay explicates that due to the representational quality of language, objects that are referred to or named by means of language. They are represented only by schematized aspects, a certain number of qualities, which do not and which cannot present a real object in its completeness. The schematized aspects presented are often sufficient to allow for recognition of the object, yet these cannot be exhaustive. (Kocay, 2002)

PLG is that creative experience whose core experience could be represented by the following schema:

- the artist/designer spontaneously loses the sense of space-time and self,
- there is no intentionality and control of the events happening,
- this results in an emergence, insight into the creative endeavor.

Though this schema represents PLG in creative experiences, we still need to define the phenomenon. We need to develop a definition or to mark a boundary so that the phenomenon has a separate and distinctive identity which makes it possible to isolate this phenomenon from the other myriad experiences within the creative process.

## 6.9. The Definition

The Phenomenon of letting go is an experience that occurs during the creative process. When a creator starts his/her creative process, he gathers himself and creates a space where he could start embarking on the creative experiences. The creative experiential world of the creator is an interfusion of the creator's inner psychic and physical realities. The dynamism of ever changing experiential scenarios partakes from the psychic and physical planes and is a result of interactions that occur in the space-time fields of both, psychic and physical realities. Interestingly, during PLG, the dynamics are no longer a part of any of the above mentioned space-times fields. They occur and are extrapolated into a new space-time which is not always easily accessible to the creator. He has to work towards finding himself in that space-time during his creative experiences.

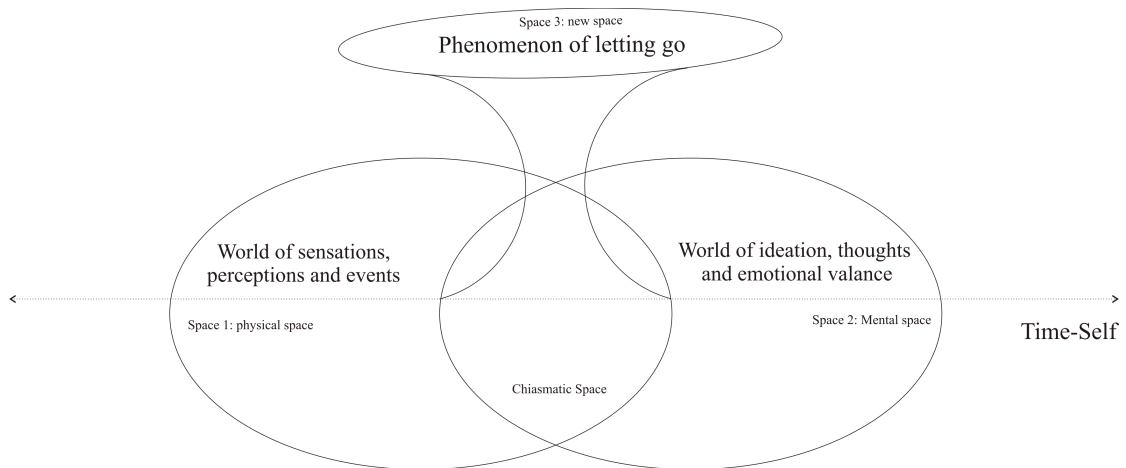


Figure6.14: Extrapolated new space of PLG experience

This new space-time field is a world of silence which is reverberating with rhythmic beat of the creator's interactions and dialogues with his work. There is a give-and-take of the psychic reality with the physical reality. It is akin to primordial dance of the creator with his thoughts, work, self and time in a timeless-space-less-selfless reality. This reality cannot be learnt, it has to be felt.

As part of the research, we are facing a difficult task of defining the phenomenon of letting go in precise words and language. As mentioned before, there are some realities for which words and language do not form an adequate vocabulary. The phenomenon of letting go is one such reality. The words will tend to grasp and bind a free-fleeting experiential event into a concrete reality, there-by resulting in a reduction of the essence and glory of the phenomenon.

Merleau-Ponty (1962/2003) very aptly writes, "The spoken word is a gesture and its meaning the world." By defining the phenomenon of letting go, we will only be providing an indication in words of the world that they signify.

The phenomenon of letting go can be defined as:

"The phenomenon of letting go belongs to the class of anomalous experiences with sensory and affective components resultant of the experience of living through the chiasm (Merleau-Ponty, 1968) within the creative experience. During this chiastic experience, the creator attains a state of pure passivity embedded in receptive spontaneity emerging from inner consciousness of self which is trans-spatio-temporal. Such an experience brings about transformation both in the self and the outcome of creation."

Let us look into the details of each nuance of the definition. Let us examine the uniqueness and various aspects which lend PLG its identity in the flow of creative experiences.

By the definition, Phenomenon of letting go (PLG) is an unusual, sensory and emotional experience which the creator is living through in the flow of his creative experiences. The phenomenon is categorized into class of anomalous experiences. PLG is taken as a paranormal experience as it is an unusual/special event in the ongoing creative experiences. Usually, paranormal experiences do not include sensory elements, but PLG presents the affective and sensory components within the experience. The creator lives through the creative experiences by being in a state where s/he experiences a present and intentional experience in which there is minimal/no awareness of self as the subject of

experience and without simultaneously being able to reflect on these experiences (Rinofner-Kreidl & Franz, 2002). The experience consists of a constant overlapping and intertwining of known and unknown, visible and invisible, sense and time (chiasm)<sup>31</sup> in a dialogue between the creator and his creation. The creator reaches a rhythmic state of pure receptive spontaneity<sup>32</sup>, where there is no intentionality at play, where the self is in a state of receptivity, a state of non-duality. In this abysmal moment of PLG, the inner consciousness of self, space and time are transcended to bring about a transformation of the creation/manifestation and to the creator himself. The definition points to the fact that it is not the transcendence of self and space-time but the inner consciousness of space-time and self are transcended in the experience of PLG. This leads to the opening of a third inner space where the passive and receptive self witnesses the events, which bring about transformative changes to the creation and the self as well.

Let us look into the phenomenon of PLG and understand its uniqueness among the various creative experiences of creator during the creative process.

The creative experience is a stream of experiences for the creator, which involves a constant interplay of dynamic interaction of the creator's body and his mind. Apart from an internal interaction between mind and body, the creative experience also involves a continuous dialogue between the work of art and the creator. This leads to numerous psychic inter-twining between mind, body and work of art, in which both the body and mind evolve with each interaction. Thus, there is a continuous and evolving interaction of the ever evolving mind, body and work of art. This interplay of psychic evolutions in the mental plane and the coordinating body dynamics in the physical plane, takes the creator onto a new plane which is bereft of sense of both the psychic and bodily awareness.

In this hyper-reality of the new plane, the creator's understanding of time coordinates becomes diffused. The general flow of creative experiences seems to have a linearity of time. In this linear time, the experiences are perceived by the intentional self. But this intentionality is altered at the onset of PLG. PLG experience is a state of pure spontaneity. At the threshold of this jump to pure spontaneity, the intentionality of self becomes non-existent. In PLG, the self is non-existent, non-intentional, but it still prevails in

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<sup>31</sup> Merleau-Ponty (1968) introduced the notion of *chiasm* which signifies the overlapping and intertwining of the visible and the invisible, the perceiver and the perceived.

Bourgeois takes it a step further to state that the chiasm could be extended to the overlapping and intertwining of senses and the time (Bourgeois, 2002).

<sup>32</sup> This state of pure receptivity is explicated by Kant as the transcendental spontaneity which can be located only in the abysmal moment of irresolvable uncertainty where receptivity and spontaneity unite (Schlutz, 2009).



silence. This state of non-intentionality leads to the self being in a state of passivity and receptivity where it opens itself for spontaneous interactions and manifestations of a selfless self, in a no space-time field/playground. The linear time ceases to exist, and the space is turned boundless, even space-less. In this immense space, begins the sublime emergence of 'The Other'. In case of Trance and Sublime types of PLG, the 'Other' is perceived as the Divine Other, the Sublime Other. But in the more fleeting types like Ephemeral and Temporal PLG, 'The Other' signifies the presentation of the solution to the consciousness of the creator.

The core experience of PLG remains the same irrespective of whether it is a profound experience of PLG or a fleeting one. But in case of PLG experiences which last for a longer time and are deeper like the rhythmic/Trance/Sublime experiences, the creator can witness a gradual unfolding of events in that self-less, time-less and space-less field. Interestingly, in this state of non-selfness, the creator does not have any 'body-sense' of himself and yet the body is continuing to act in a synchronized manner with the events that are unfolding onto the self-less, time-less and space-less canvas. The body/hand is automatically recording/following the intention-less mind in that mind-less state.

The experience of PLG brings about a transcendence of self, time and space and this state of transcendence transforms the creation which the creator is working on. The non-sensible body records the sublime visions and captures it on the canvas. Unawares, the actions of the mind in the third space are imbued on the creation, thus transforming it in the process. This experience of PLG is so compelling that the self of the creator is simply seduced to submission, to be evolved again into a transformed version of itself. The transformed self is akin to a butterfly that was born out of the transformation of a caterpillar. Post the experience of PLG, the transformed self is ready to glide, delighting in the glory of its transformation and tasting the beauty of its colorful new existence.

The exact point of end of PLG experience is a startled waking of the self out of its receptive slumber. The gears get shifted and the dynamic, volatile third space of self-less, time-less, space-less vacuum aligns itself in that exact space. In this alignment, the self regains itself, the time shifts into linearity and the space segregates back psychic and physical. It is an extremely smooth transition from being in the 'other' world and returning back to the real world. As silky as that, the experience of PLG is like a tissue of reality which permeates onto the self, clothes it and as a whiff, just vanishes, leaving its color on the self of the creator.

The self, thus regained, aligns itself into the linear time and awareness returns. This point is marked with a state of pure feeling. The creator is in a state of elation, experiencing 'pure and immense joy'. This state of pure feeling, in a way, paves way for the self to regain consciousness. It forms a blanket covering which diffuses the process of mental shift from transcendental realm to the normal experiential realm.

As the transcendental realm is left behind at the end of the PLG experience, the analytical processes, the memory of the past and the present are fore-grounded and the creator is able to realize the gravity of the experience he just encountered. The creator is now able to bracket the experience as being separate from the ongoing flow of creative experiences. The creator also becomes aware of the creation and the solution that is presented to him. The creators narrate as being surprised at the quality of the solution/creation as they felt that it was 'beyond' their usual capabilities and that they had surpassed their own personal standards. They will further evaluate whether the forms/solution presented to them are working towards the enhancement of their work. This is a very judgmental decision which is made by the artist post the experience of PLG. The experience of PLG brings about an enhancement in both the work as well as the artist/designer. Now it is up to the artist/designer whether he will retain it in this work or discard it.

Hence, we can summarize that the phenomenon of letting go is a highly positive experience which takes the creator from the usual flux of ongoing creative experiences to the heights of his mental capabilities by transcending the constraints of space/work, time and self. An experience which has the above mentioned characteristics can be identified as the 'Phenomenon of letting go'.

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## Part C

### Comparison of phenomenon of letting go in Visual Arts and Design

The last research question formulated for the present research questions the variance of PLG in the domains of Visual Arts and Design. The interviews and analysis revealed that the phenomenon was experienced slightly differently in the domains of visual arts and design. To understand this variance, the four dimensions of PLG in artists and designers were compared.

We will start with the comparison of types of letting go in artists and designers.

#### 6.10. Comparison of types of letting go

The comparison of types of letting go in artists and designers revealed that the artists experienced all the five types, ephemeral, temporal, synchronic, trance and profound letting go phenomenon within their creative process.

Table 5 describes the comparison of types of PLG in artists and designers. The designers experienced only the ephemeral and temporal letting go within their creative process. They do not experience synchronous, trance and profound letting go experiences.

Types	Artists	Designers
Ephemeral	✓	✓
Temporal	✓	✓
Synchronous	✓	
Trance	✓	
Sublime	✓	

Table5: Comparison of types of letting go

The occurrence of PLG depended on the facet of Allow in the antecedent phase of letting go. Depending on the degree of Allow in the self-state, the artist/designer will experience equivalent type of letting go (the intensity of PLG is proportional to the degree of allow). The designers seem to have a lower degree of allow since they experienced the first two types of letting go, Ephemeral and Temporal letting go. The artists demonstrated an openness to let things happen; they had more space to allow for images to form. Hence, the artists experienced the first two, Ephemeral and Temporal letting go and also the deeper three, Synchronous, Trance and Sublime letting go experiences.

This does not mean that the designers do not experience the deeper experiences. Their works seems to disallow them from fully letting go. This has been confirmed by installation artists as well. They acknowledge that they cannot allow themselves the liberty while doing installation/design as they would allow, maybe while painting.

Hence, the lack of deeper and intense phenomenon of letting go in design could be attributed to the constraints that the domain imposes on the designer.

### 6.11. Comparison of stages towards PLG

Stages	Artists	Designers
Urge	√	√
Focus	√	√
Immersion	√	√
Gestation	√	√
Conflict	√	√
Surrender	√	√
Experience of letting go	√	√
End of letting go	√	√

Table 6: Comparison of stages of PLG

The next global theme is Stages, which elaborates the points or junctures that the artists and designers experience during their experience of PLG. The comparison revealed that the stages experienced by both artists and designers were very similar in nature. The similarity of the

stages was prevalent in spite of the designers not experiencing the synchronous, trance and sublime letting go phenomenon.

Hence, it could be said that the type of letting go did not affect the Stages that a creator undergoes while achieving PLG. Both artists and designers acknowledged the clarity they experienced when the PLG started and ended, irrespective whether the designer was experiencing Ephemeral letting go and the artist was experiencing the Sublime letting go.

## 6.12. Comparison of Facets of letting go

The comparison of the facets of letting go between the artists and designers revealed that there were facets which were common to both artists and designers and some facets which were unique to that particular domain. The Table 7 below shows a comprehensive comparison of Facets between artists and designers. The common facets are presented in normal font, the facets unique to artists in bold font and the facets unique to designers in normal-italics.

Mental States	Antecedent phase	Concurrent phase	Subsequent phase
Self State	allow acceptance openness personal receptivity non self conscious <b>vulnerability</b> <b>trust</b> <b>belief</b> <i>internalize</i> <i>levitated</i> <i>flow</i>	non-aware, non realization no time no space, new space no self non intentional <b>involuntary, spontaneous,</b> <b>automatic, no-control</b> <b>movement, momentum</b> <b>high alertness</b> <b>jump</b> <b>blank, vacuum</b> <b>vigor</b> <b>grasp</b> <i>receiver</i> <i>vessel</i>	confidence surprise <b>newness</b> <b>achievement</b> <b>relief</b> <b>immense joy</b> <b>satisfaction</b> <i>unique</i> <i>eureka</i>
work	challenge, constraint, resistance, discipline	<b>emergence, insight, revelation</b> <b>complexity</b>	Discovery, completion <i>enhancement</i> <i>risk</i>

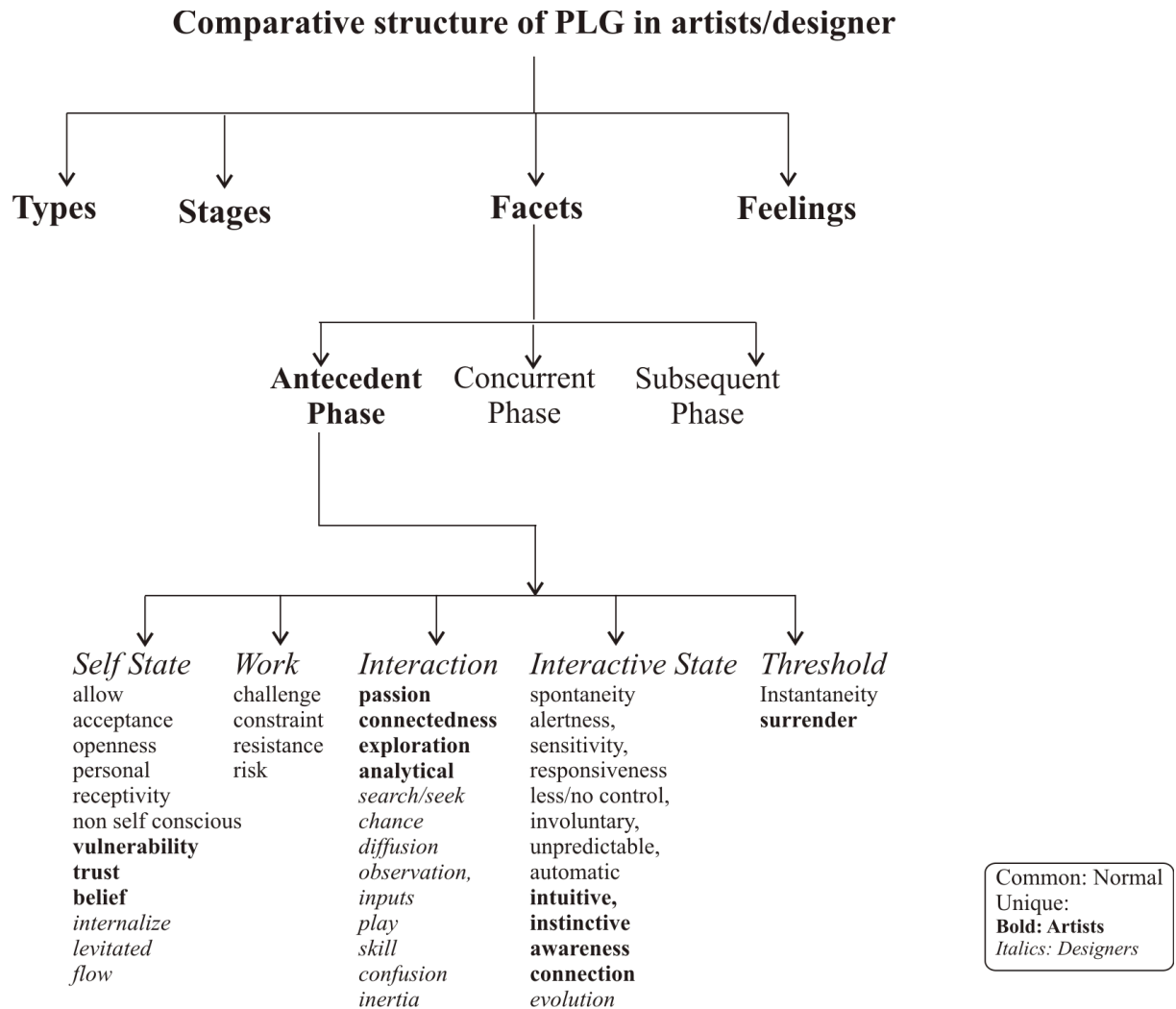
Interaction	<i>play</i> <i>skill</i> <i>confusion</i> <i>inertia</i> <b>passion</b> <b>connectedness</b> <i>search/seek</i> <i>chance</i> <b>exploration</b> <i>diffusion</i> <i>observation, inputs</i> <b>analytical</b>	<i>enjoyment</i> <i>energetic</i> <i>reciprocation</i> <b>synchronization</b> <b>rhythmic, tuned</b> <b>connections, transactions,</b> <b>interaction/dialogue, cross-</b> <b>fertilization</b>	<i>evolution</i> <i>revelation</i> <i>immeasurable</i> <i>adrenalin rush</i> <i>compulsion, addiction</i> <i>clarity</i> <b>resolution</b> <b>conclusion</b>
Interactive self	<i>spontaneity</i> <i>alertness, sensitivity,</i> <i>responsiveness</i> <i>less/no control,</i> <i>involuntary,</i> <i>unpredictable,</i> <i>automatic</i> <b>intuitive, instinctive</b> <b>awareness</b> <b>connection</b> <i>evolution</i>	<i>oneness, union</i> <i>meditative</i> <i>divine force, blessing, unknown</i> <i>force, guidance</i> <i>magical</i> <i>orgasmic</i> <i>dream</i> <i>beyond self</i> <i>perfection</i> <i>intense</i> <i>fragile</i> <i>balance</i> <i>energy, excitement, passion</i> <i>Hypnotic</i> <i>Beyond capacity</i>	<i>Inarticulateness</i> <b>Profoundness</b> <i>transformative</i> <i>fluctuating</i>
Threshold	<i>right moment, clicks</i> <b>surrender</b>	<i>submission, surrender</i>	

**Table 7: Comparison of facets of phenomenon of letting go in artists and designers**

### **6.12.1. Comparison of Facets of PLG in antecedent phase**

The facets are treated as similar only in general terms but they vary as per the type of letting go phenomena experienced by the artist and designer. The Facets are either present in a particular domain or absent. And in case they are present, then they could vary in terms of degree of intensity.

Since we have already established that the designers experience only first two types of PLG while the artists experience three more deeper experiences of PLG, it becomes evident that the similarities of facets must be viewed taking into consideration this major difference of types experienced within the two domains. Figure 6.15 shows the variation in the facets of PLG in the antecedent phase.



**Figure 6.15: Comparison of facets in antecedent phase**

- **Common Facets**

In the antecedent phase, the artists and the designers experience varied facets in the five categories of states of mind, work, interaction, interactive self and threshold which were compared to reveal the common facets. The common facets reveal the point of convergence between the PLG in artists and designers. Let us examine the common facets in the five states of mind.

*Self State:* Both the designers and artists experience the facet of non self-consciousness just before the letting go experience. Both expressed that the experience was very personal where they were in a very receptive state of mind. Both claimed that they were in a state of self acceptance and they experienced an openness in which they could allow for events to happen to them.



*Work:* Both the designers and artists claimed that, many-a-times, their work posed a constraint to the creative process. They both claimed that work resisted them and provided a challenge which they had to resolve. Looking the work process in the domain of design, one would easily align oneself to these facets. The Design domain requires the designer to look into multiple aspects of the client's requirements, the manufacturing process, the usability issues and so on. These issues make a designer to continue working into the analytical reality at most times. Hence the possibilities of the designer relinquishing of those practical realities are diminished. Therefore, the designers claim that the work retrains them from experiencing the letting go phenomenon.

In case of the artists, the work poses a constraint of a similar sort when the artist is working in the mediums of sculpture, installations and so on where the practical considerations are very high. There are other favorable instances where the practical considerations are minimal and in such instances, the designers and artists claim that their works still pose a challenge to them. Just before the experience of PLG, the work somehow resists their creative process or the line of thinking due to which they experience a struggle or a conflict stage which requires a resolution.

*Interaction:* There is minimal commonality in the facets of interaction of the artists and designers with their work. This means that before the experience of PLG, both the designers and artists display dissimilar behavioral pattern in the way they interact with their work. Only facets of discipline and repetition are common to the interactions in both the domains.

*Interactive Self:* Before the experience of PLG, the artists and designers experience the facets of spontaneity and responsiveness. Both, artists and designers experience an alertness and sensitivity to the events happening to them. The artists and designers claim that these events are unpredictable and are sort-of automatic. Both claim that they have very less or no control over the interactions and hence experience involuntariness. Both artists and designers claim that just before the experience of letting go, they experience non-awareness or diffusion about the process of unfolding of events. They are highly alert to the events that have unfolded and are presented to them.

*Threshold:* Just before the letting go experience, the artists and designers find themselves at the precipice or threshold. At this point, they report that they experienced a

moment of clarity where everything clicked. Both claimed to have reached the right moment from where PLG experience starts.

- ***Unique Facets***

The comparative analysis revealed that before the letting go experience there are facets which are different for artists and designers.

*Self State:* The analysis revealed that artists experienced a mental state of trust and belief in themselves, the work, the interaction and also destiny. They belief and trust in the process puts them in a vulnerable state. The artists reported that they felt vulnerable to mistakes and loss, as they were in a mental state where they had to let go of any kind of control. Comparatively, the designers claimed they were in a state of internalization, where they felt levitated to a higher plane. Many designers claimed that they experienced the flow experience.

*Work:* Most times, the facets in the state of work of the artists and designers presented similarly.

*Interaction:* Though the work presents itself in a similar fashion to the artists and designers, but both artists/designer interact in very dissimilar manner with their work. The artist experiences a very playful interaction with their work, where they claim to have a passionate connectedness. The artists find the interaction very exploratory in which they experience many moments of confusion and inertia as they continue to search and seek for an expression of their thoughts.

The designers have an analytical interaction with their work where the designer puts in his/her observations and skills. The experience is diffused and the designers claim that even though they are very analytical, they leave room for chance to play its role during the interaction.

*Interactive Self:* In the antecedent phase, the artists and designers experience similar facets of the interactive self. It is very interesting that the understanding of self is very similar for the artists and designers even though the interaction presents so many differences.

*Threshold:* The precipice from where the letting go experience starts is very similar to both artists and designers.

### 6.12.2. Comparison of Facets in Concurrent phase

The comparative analysis revealed that during the letting go experience, both the artists and designers experienced similar facets even though the intensity or the degree of the facet varied. Figure 6.16 elaborates the comparative structure of facets in the concurrent phase.

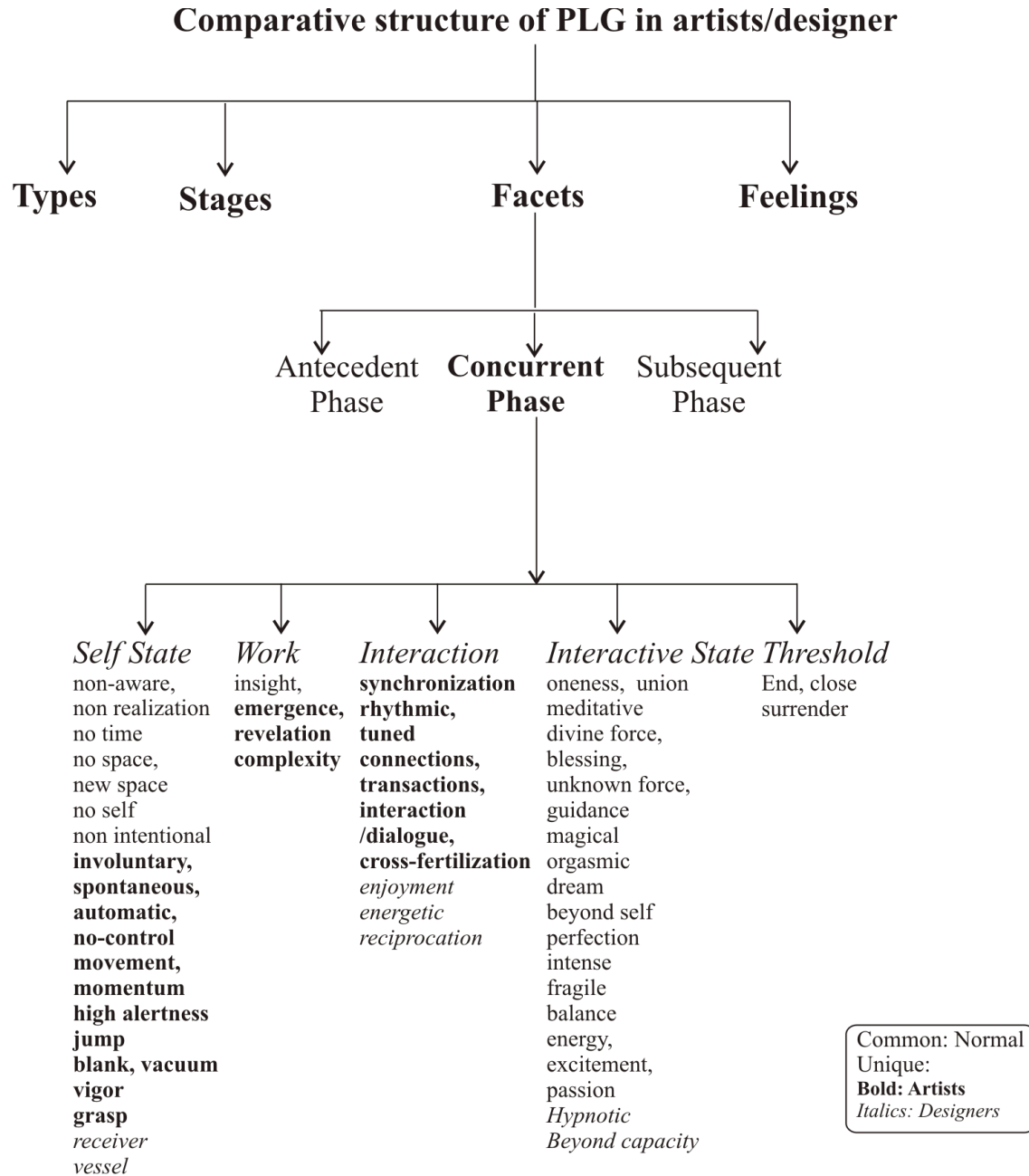


Figure 6.16: Comparison of facets in Concurrent phase

- ***Common Facets***

*Self State:* In the concurrent phase, both artist/designers claim that they experience a mental state of non-awareness or non-realization of what is happening to them. Both claim that they experience a mental state where they couldn't identify any time or space or self. They experience a state of very high alertness where they experience events involuntarily/spontaneously, as though they had no control on the events. They experience a vacuum or blankness in which all events are happening with a vigor, just as though the events didn't come intentionally, more as though the events had a momentum of their own.

*Work and interaction:* The comparative analysis revealed that during the letting go experience, the facets of work and its interaction with the artists and designers had no similarities between them. Both the artists and designers showed different patterns of the facets within the interaction of the creator and his/her work.

*Interactive Self:* Since the artists and designers experience similarity in at least two types of letting go, the facets of the interactive self during PLG also show a similarity. Both, artists and designers experience a state of intense balance and perfection during the letting go experience. They claim that it is dream-like and magical, which at times, is very fragile. It could break or shatter at the slightest touch or distraction. In the deeper types of letting go like the synchronous, trance and sublime letting go, the artists report that the experience is meditative and sometimes orgasmic, where they experience a union or oneness which was beyond their self.

- ***Unique Facets***

*Self State:* During the letting go experience, the artists and designers experience similar states of mind. The designers claim that they are in the mental state of a receiver. They feel that they are a vessel in which the experiences might pour themselves.

*Work:* During the letting go experience, the designers claim that there is a realization, an emergence or revelation within their work. The work presents insights which are of complex nature.

*Interaction:* During the letting go experience, the artists and designers experience similar facets of interaction with their works.

*Interactive Self:* While in the process of experiencing PLG, one finds a difference in the perceived mental state of the artists and designers simply due to the fact that the artists seem to experience three deeper types of PLG experiences than the designers.

The artists describe the mental state as a meeting with the destiny and they take this as a blessing. They also describe it as a hypnotic and trance-like experience. The artists also share that they feel the presence of a divine force or a guidance. They are into this unknown territory where they experience the Sublime Other.

### 6.12.3. Comparison of Facets in Subsequent phase

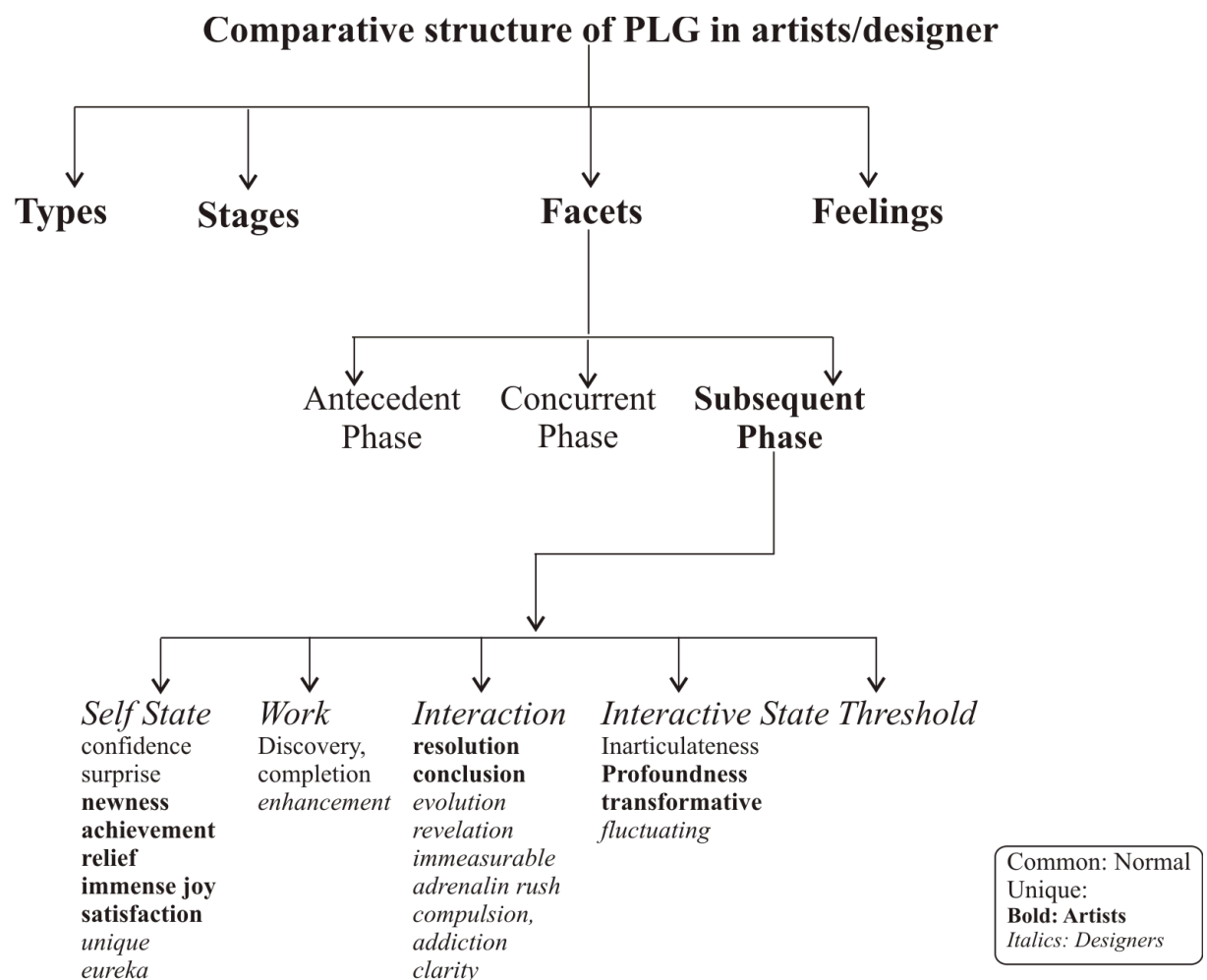


Figure 6.17: Comparison of facets in subsequent phase

- **Common Facets**

*Self State:* After the letting go experience, both, artists and designers, experience a mental state of surprise and confidence. They both claim that they were surprised by

realization of what had happened to them; but they have a clarified realization that the experience was over. Even though they were surprised, both of them experienced a quiet confidence.

*Work:* After the letting go experience, both the designers and artists were presented with a completion of their work or a part of their work. They experienced the facet of discovery at the completion of the work as well as on the quality of work achieved within the experience of letting go.

*Interactive Self:* After the experience of letting go, both the artists and designers experienced a loss of words or inarticulateness. They were unable to verbalize what had happened to them or what they had experienced.

- ***Unique Facets***

*Self State:* The artists and designers find themselves in different mental states of interactive self during the experience of letting go; both end up with different states of mind after the event has ended. The designers find themselves in the mental states of eureka moment. They describe that they realize a state of uniqueness and newness. The artists describe their mental state as that of immense joy and relief.

*Work:* The artists' and designers' work presented similar facets, yet there are some differences. The designers describe the presence of an enhancement in their work. They report that they were able to take risks in their work which under usual circumstances they would not.

The comparison of facets of artists and designers revealed the differences in the nature of PLG as experienced in each domain. The variance in the facets reveal that in the antecedent phase, there exists a variance in the facets of artists and designers which affect the type of letting go they experienced. In the concurrent phase, there is major variance in the state of mind induced by the interaction of the artist/designer with his artwork/design. This would be attributed to the constraints of the domain that brings about the variance in the interaction. In the subsequent phase, one can find a variance in the state of mind which is induced by work. This would be due the higher degree of analytical work involved in design as compared to art.

An interesting revelation was that there is a similarity in the self state and interactive self in the concurrent phase. One could infer that the basic quality of PLG is the same in both

the domains. It is attitude of the creator, the work constraints and the variance in interaction that generates a variance in the phenomenon.

### 6.13. Comparison of Feelings associated with letting go

A comparison of feelings associated with PLG in visual arts and design showed a higher degree of similarity in positive feelings as compared to negative feelings. The Table 8 enumerates the comparison of feelings associated with PLG in artists and designers. The feelings common to both artists and designers is shown in normal font, the feelings unique to artists in bold font and the ones unique to designers in normal-italics.

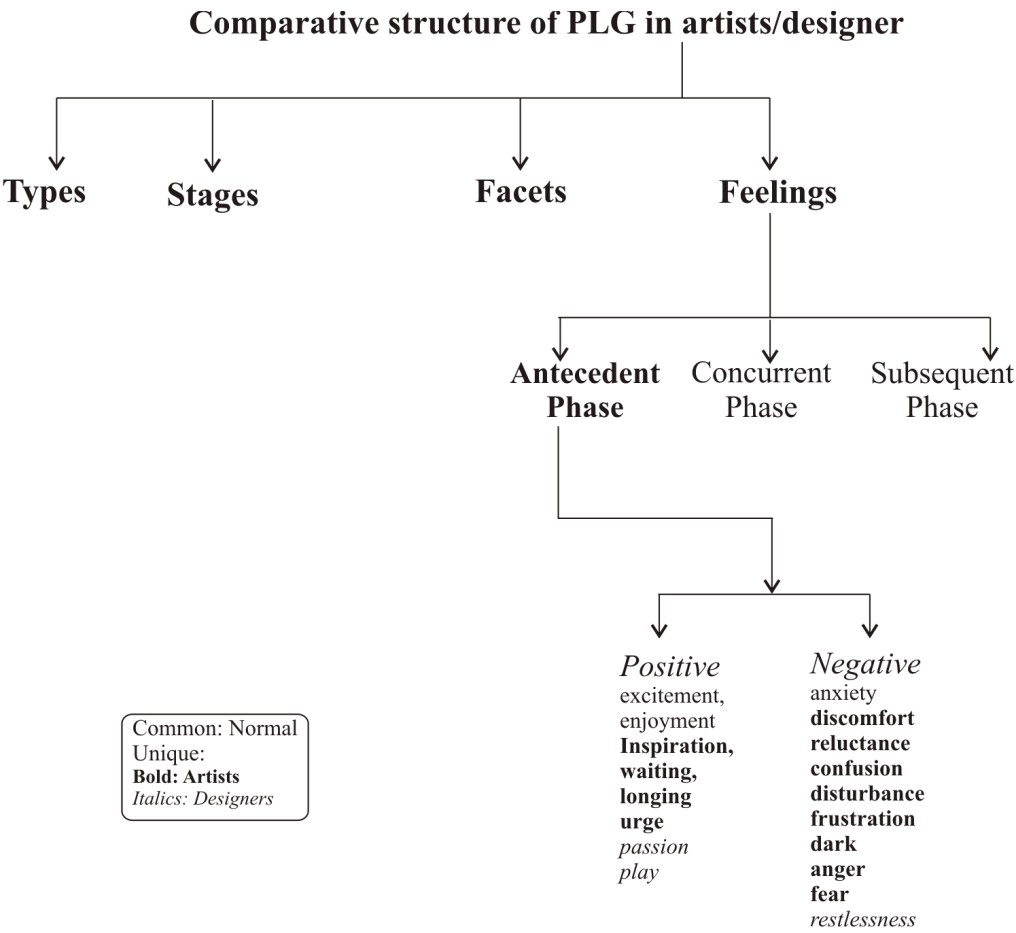
	Antecedent phase	Concurrent phase	Subsequent phase
Positive	<b>Inspiration,</b> <b>waiting, longing</b> <b>urge</b> <i>passion</i> <i>play</i> excitement, enjoyment	<b>mysterious, strangeness,</b> <b>magical, dreamy</b> <b>divine, spiritual</b> <b>sober, calm</b> <b>Surrender, flow</b> <i>wholeness</i> <i>passion</i> <i>humility</i> <i>joy</i> enjoyment, happy excitement, energized fascination, wonder pleasure fun, play	<b>wonder, surprise,</b> <b>admiration, excitement</b> <b>freedom, liberation,</b> <b>resolution</b> <b>relish</b> <b>Blessing, precious</b> immense joy, happiness, pleasure, euphoria satisfaction, contentment, relief peace
Negative	anxiety <b>discomfort</b> <b>reluctance</b> <b>confusion</b> <b>disturbance</b> <b>frustration</b> <b>dark</b> <b>anger</b> <b>fear</b> <i>restlessness</i>	<b>suffocating,</b> <b>restless,</b> <b>disturbed</b> <b>unbearable</b>	tired, spent shock

Table 8: Comparison of feelings associated with phenomenon of letting go in artists and designers.

#### 6.13.1. Feelings during antecedent phase

A comparative analysis of the feelings associated with the phenomenon of letting go in both artists and designers revealed that there are commonalities in the positive and negative

feelings across the antecedent, concurrent and subsequent phases of letting go.. This is elaborated in Figure 6.18.



**Figure 6.18: Comparison of feelings in Antecedent phase**

- ***Common Feelings***

*Positive feelings:*

In the antecedent phase of PLG, the comparative analysis revealed similar feelings of enjoyment and excitement felt by both the artists and designers. In the concurrent phase, both the artists and designers experienced happiness, pleasure, a sense of fascination and wonder. Both artists and designers reported that they felt very playful and were having fun.

*Negative feelings:*

The comparative analysis revealed that there is negligible commonality in the feelings associated with PLG. Both artists and designers expressed to have felt anxiety before the letting go phenomena.



- ***Unique Feelings***

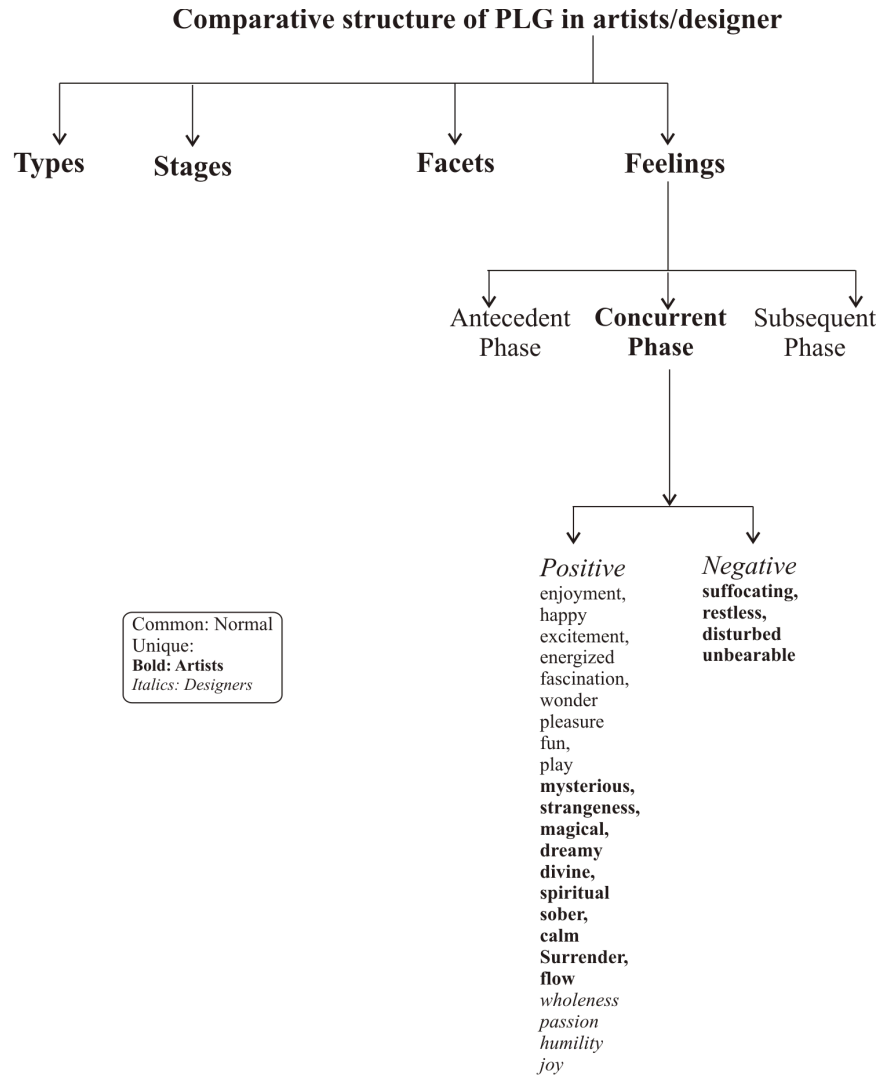
*Positive feelings*

In the antecedent phase of letting go phenomenon, there is dissimilarity in the feelings of inspiration, waiting, longing and urge which are felt by artists. Only the designers feel the feeling of playfulness just before the phenomenon of letting go.

*Negative feelings*

In the antecedent of phase, just before the start of letting go phenomenon, the feelings of discomfort, reluctance, confusion, and disturbance were felt by the artists but these feelings were not displayed by designers. There was dissimilarity in the feelings of frustration, anger, fear and darkness felt by artists. There was nothing common between the artists and designers about the feeling of restlessness which is felt by the designers before the letting go phenomenon.

### **6.13.2. Feelings during concurrent phase**



**Figure 6.19: Comparison of feelings in Concurrent phase**

- **Common Feelings**

*Positive feelings:*

The comparative analysis revealed that in the antecedent phase of PLG, similar feelings of enjoyment and excitement were felt by both the artists and designers. In the concurrent phase, both the artists and designers experienced happiness, pleasure, a sense of fascination and wonder. Both reported that they felt very playful and were having fun.

*Negative feelings:*

The comparative analysis revealed that there is negligible commonality in the feelings associated with the letting go phenomenon. Both the artists and designers expressed to have felt anxiety before the letting go phenomena.

- **Unique Feelings**

*Positive feelings*

The concurrent phase of PLG displayed no commonality in the feelings of mysteriousness, strangeness and dreaminess. The other uncommon feelings were the feelings of divine, spiritual, surrender and calmness which were felt by artists. Dissimilarity was observed in the feelings of wholeness, obsessive passion, humility and joy experienced by designers.

*Negative Feelings*

In the concurrent phase, the experience of PLG is accompanied by the feelings of suffocation, restlessness, disturbance, and un-bearability felt by the artist but not by the designers. The designers felt tiredness and shock after the letting go experience which does not find resonance in the feelings of artists in the concurrent phase.

### 6.13.3. Feelings during subsequent phase

#### Comparative structure of PLG in artists/designer

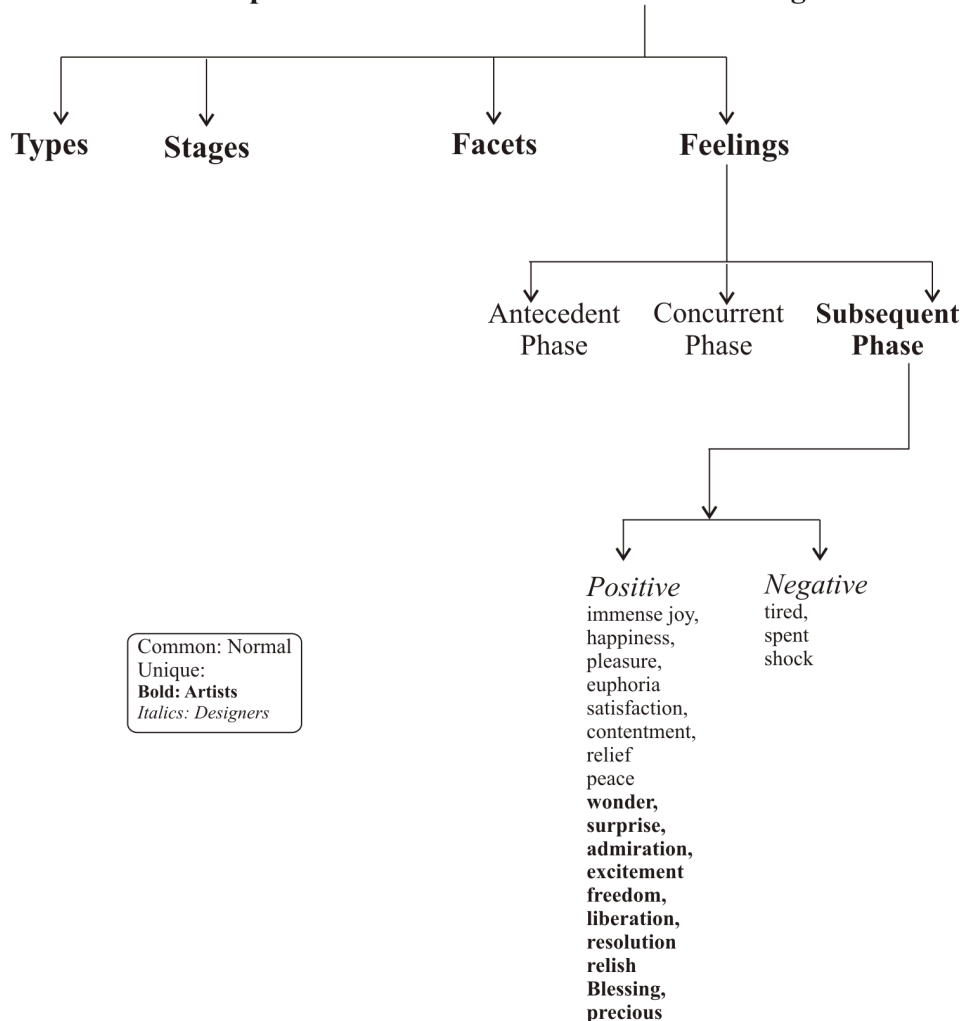


Figure 6.20: Comparison of feelings in Subsequent phase

- ***Common Feelings***

*Positive feelings:*

The comparative analysis revealed that during the antecedent phase of the phenomenon of letting go, similar feelings of enjoyment and excitement were felt by both the artists and designers. In the concurrent phase, both the artists and designers experienced happiness, pleasure, a sense of fascination and wonder. Both reported that they felt very playful and were having fun. And in the subsequent phase, at the end of phenomenon of letting go, both the artists and designers both experienced immense joy and euphoria. They both claimed to have felt contentment and satisfaction. They felt a sense of relief and were at peace.

*Negative feelings:*

The comparative analysis revealed that there is negligible commonality in the feelings associated with the letting go phenomenon. Both the artists and designers expressed to have felt anxiety before the letting go phenomena.

- ***Unique Feelings***

*Positive feelings*

In the subsequent phase, there is dissimilarity in the feelings of wonder, surprise, freedom, resolution which were felt by artists. The artists associated the feelings of relish, preciousness and blessing after the phenomenon of letting go had ended.

The comparative analysis of the four dimensions of PLG revealed very interesting insights. The analysis showed a drastic difference in the types of letting go between artists and designers. The comparison also displayed a very interesting similarity of the stages towards the occurrence of PLG. One can observe the similarity in the basic character of PLG even though they experience different types of the phenomenon. There is dissimilarity in the feelings associated with the phenomenon. The feelings vary as per the type of phenomenon experienced.

### **6.13. Discussion**

The chapter of Inferences examined the structural dynamics of letting go phenomenon, explicating the themes within each dimension of Types, Stages, Facets and Feelings, and aspects of Repeatability and Comparison with aesthetic experiences. The descriptions of gave a comprehensive understanding of the PLG during a creative process. Once the structural dynamics were elaborated, we delved into the derivation of the basic character of the experiences which would form the distinctive form of the phenomenon of letting go. We looked into the extracted facets and from them defined the phenomenon of letting go. We further looked into the variance in the phenomenon between the artists and designers.

We will revert back to the research questions and review the inferences as per the research questions.

- Investigate the qualities and character of the phenomenon of letting go  
Part B of this chapter extracts the core qualities of PLG from the structural dynamics and eventually defines the phenomenon. It very lucidly explains the qualitative character of the experience of PLG.
- Explore the dimensions which make the phenomenon of letting go  
The Part A of this chapter elaborates the character of PLG and elucidates the structural dynamics of PLG.
- Understand the variance in the phenomenon in the domains of Visual arts and Design  
Chapter Six, Part C explains the variance of PLG in artists and designers, thereby establishing the similarity of the phenomenon in both domains. It also looks at the thematic variance which gives a unique character to PLG in that domain.

Thus, it can be observed that inferences of present study comprehensively answer the questions raised in the research questions.

The next chapter will look into the verification of the inferences derived in the chapters of analysis and inferences. It will also evaluate the entire research process adopted for the study to provide substantiation to the inferences evolved in this chapter.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Criteria of Evaluation**

The topic of phenomenon of letting go (PLG) was studied, researched and analyzed in the domains of visual arts and design. The investigation employed the framework of Hermeneutic-phenomenological approach for researching the phenomenon. The earlier chapter 6 elaborated the inferences derived based on the analysis which described the characteristics that make up the phenomenon of PLG. The chapter presented the definition of PLG and it elaborated the variance of PLG in the domains of Arts and Design. The results have presented answers to the formulated research questions, yet how does one know whether there is rigor and qualitative depth in the research, the method of research and the results of the research.

This chapter is divided into two parts; the first part verifies the results inferred in the earlier chapter and elaborates the method of verification adopted for the same. The second part evaluates the entire present research done on the topic of PLG. It deals in detail about

these difficult questions which will provide strength and authenticity to the methodology employed and the inferences derived from the research.

## **7.1 Verification**

The earlier chapter reports the results of the analysis. The chapter provided definition of PLG and also described four dimensions (Types, Stages, Facets, and Feelings) and two aspects (Repeatability and Comparison with Aesthetic experiences) of PLG. As a next step, we need to confirm the results drawn. Within the hermeneutic-phenomenological tradition, the process of confirmation involves going back to the participants with the results and asking for their feedback. The feedback verifies the results and gives confirmation to the themes and concepts evolved from the research.

### **7.1.1 The verification process**

The verification process involved the feedback of the participants on a questionnaire form and further reconfirmation over telephonic conversation. For the feedback, a questionnaire form (Appendix V, pg: 333) was prepared which contained the results derived from the research. The same was sent to all the twenty participants through email. The questionnaire required the participants to tick a yes/no answers against a particular theme. In instances where the participants found uncertainty/doubt, the same could be indicated in the form. The researcher further could confirm these doubts over the telephone.

Each of the 20 participants was very meticulous in their feedback. Most of the participants confirmed the themes as per their experience of PLG. For the themes which were beyond their experience of PLG, they mentioned in the feedback about their uncertainty about the theme. None of them completely negated the themes they had not experienced. They reported that they felt that maybe they hadn't had that experience yet and hoped they would experience that theme in their PLG experiences as well.

*Feedback about Types of PLG:* The participants gave a positive feedback about the types of letting go. Both the designer and artist participants expressed similar feedback regarding the typification of experience of letting go. Some of the participants felt they could place their experiences within a particular type and were able to understand the variance in depth and intensity of their experiences. Some participants expressed the desire to be able to explore and experience deeper levels of PLG, which they had not experienced till then.

*Feedback about Stages of PLG:* The participants confirmed the eight stages of PLG. Surprisingly all the twenty participants were in agreement about the stages for achievement of PLG.

*Feedback about Facets of PLG:* The participants confirmed the facets of PLG. Each participant verified the facets that he had experienced in his PLG experience. When asked about the negation of other non-experienced facets all the participants stated that they could not confirm that the other facets did not exist. They believed that the facets were familiar and could be a part of deeper PLG experience which they have not yet experienced. The participants expressed surprise at the categorisation of Facets into states of mind. They found it to be appropriate that there is a progressive shift in the states of mind of the creator in the process of experiencing PLG.

*Feedback about Feelings of PLG:* The participants confirmed the various positive and negative feelings inferred in the results. The feelings evolved through the temporal phases antecedent and subsequent to PLG. Many of the participants reported that they could not clearly categorize a particular feeling as being in one temporal space. The feeling initiated into a temporal phase and encroached into the other temporal spaces as well. They reported that the initiation of the feeling was categorized appropriately though it was difficult to say that the feeling had stopped before the next phase started. For example, the feeling of play starts at the antecedent phase and continues into the concurrent phase as well. The participants reported that this continuity of residual feeling might be due to the quality of the feeling itself, the type of letting go and the introspective quality of reporting.

*Feedback about Repeatability of PLG:* The inferences about the repetitiveness of PLG were received positively. The themes were endorsed by participants. Since each person had his/her own methods/*nuskhe*<sup>33</sup> for probable repeatability of the phenomenon, they were sceptical about the themes which were not a part of their experience. They commented that they could not out-rightly reject the themes as it was possible that somebody else might have experienced it in their PLG. The participants attributed the presence or absence of a theme of repeatability to individuality of the artist, his creative process, his medium and domain of work and so on.

*Feedback about Comparison of PLG with Aesthetic experiences:* The feedback of the participants on the topic of comparison of PLG with aesthetic experiences revealed a variance

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<sup>33</sup> Nuskhe are personal and folk methods adopted by artists to achieve PLG during creative experiences.



as per their experience of the intensity of both PLG and aesthetic experiences. The feedback confirmed the themes as per the person's experiences. For example, if a participant has not had a deep aesthetic experience, his feedback contained more affirmations of differences between PLG and Aesthetic experiences. But the themes in the category of dissimilarities were confirmed positively by the participants.

*Feedback about the definition of PLG:* All participants expressed their satisfaction about the definition of PLG. They mentioned that the definition consists of the core characteristics of PLG experience. All participants agreed that the definition presented the core of the PLG experience.

### **7.1.2 Review of results after verification**

The feedback elicited from twenty participants not only confirmed the inferred results but also gave insights into the inferences. The results were revisited and appropriate changes were made as per the feedback received from the participants. Based on the feedback, modifications and enhancements were done to the inferences (the facets, feelings, repeatability and comparison with aesthetic experiences). The modified results were taken back to two participants who confirmed their approval. The verified results could be treated as the final outcomes of the present study as they were evolved through the methodology of hermeneutic phenomenology and verified and confirmed by the participants of the study.

Thus these results could be treated as comprehensive even though they reflect the experiences of the current twenty participants only. The modified results throw light on the PLG and its characteristics in terms of four dimensions of types, stages, facets and feelings and two aspects of repeatability and comparison with aesthetic experiences. At this stage the process of research has come to its point of completion. We will now examine the procedure of evaluation of the research process employed by the present study.

## **7.2 Questions about Quality of research**

The earlier section presents the process of verification and the further review and modification of results to arrive at the final, confirmed inferences about PLG. Let us now understand the modes by which we evaluate qualitative research.

A qualitative research follows a separate mode of validation of the research and its results from that of quantitative research. In case of quantitative research the issues of validity are dealt with in the traditional empirical standards of validity, reliability, measurability and

generalizability. Are these standards applicable to qualitative research as well? How does one validate experiential and transpersonal knowledge? Validity/Evaluation needs to be addressed separately for every research and it needs to be addressed holistically from the point of view of the topic of research as well as the philosophical approach of the methodology employed. The present study of PLG is subjective and experiential in nature and is conducted in hermeneutic phenomenological approach. It differs vastly from the quantitative research and to some extent from the traditional qualitative research as well since it employs first-second person approaches. To assess the quality of research about experiential phenomenon, one needs to look at the criteria of evaluation prescribed to qualitative research.

It is very common to use the term 'validity' to represent the assessment of quality of research. But Kvale suggests that it is inappropriate to use the term 'validity' in case of qualitative research due to its association to realist research (Kvale, 1995). While reviewing qualitative research, the concept of validity is replaced by that 'rigor' or 'quality criteria'. There are numerous criteria which are presented to evaluate the quality of interpretive research. Each domain of research has its preferred criteria conforming to the value system of that field. There is no definitive consensus as to the number and variety of criteria used for assessment of qualitative research. But there is unanimity that the criteria need to be flexible and applicable to the specific inquiry.

The present research on PLG employs the methodology of hermeneutic-phenomenology and the analysis is done through the method of thematic and comparative analysis. One needs to relate the criteria of evaluation to these conceptual framework and procedural groundings. We will now look at the criteria of evaluation of qualitative research from varied perspectives.

We start with the criteria prescribed by Lincoln and Guba for qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 2005). As Kvale had suggested that qualitative research should not be evaluated in terms of validity since validity is a quantitative research oriented term. Lincoln and Guba replaced validity with trustworthiness of research. They prescribe four criteria, initially for the naturalistic paradigm which are now used by varied streams of qualitative research. The four criteria for trustworthiness of research are: *Credibility*, *Transferability*, *Dependability*, *Confirmability*

In 1994, Leininger argued that all qualitative research do not conform to the naturalistic/constructivist approach and hence the criteria need to be changed to fit the

paradigm used by the research. She developed six criteria specifically for ethno-method which she used extensively in her research. She included the essence of Lincoln and Guba's criteria in the six prescribed criteria which are: *Credibility, Confirmability, Meaning-in-context, Recurrent patterning, Saturation, Transferability*

Though the above criteria are designed for ethno-method, they are applicable to other areas too. Even the present research could be evaluated by the above mentioned criteria. But we continued our search for criteria specifically addressing the present research employing in Hermeneutic-Phenomenological Approach. Surprisingly, search did not lead to the specific criteria. We found criteria for evaluation of phenomenological research prescribed by Munhall in 1994. She suggests that the research should elicit a phenomenological nod and prescribes the R's for evaluating phenomenological research. They are: *Resonance, Reasonableness, Representativeness, Recognisability, Raised consciousness, Readability, Relevance, Revelations, Responsibility, Richness, Responsiveness*.

Munhall's criteria of evaluation cater to phenomenological research. The present research is in the Hermeneutic-phenomenological framework. In his book, Interpretive Phenomenological approach, Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) propose Yardley's evaluation criteria of evaluation for research in IPA framework. Yardley's criteria are: *Sensitivity to context, Commitment and rigor, Transparency and coherence and Impact and importance*. (Yardley, 2000)

There are many more criteria for evaluation directed at various types of qualitative research. We reviewed the four types of sets of criteria enlisted above. The criteria enlisted by Lincoln and Guba are more general and are being directly applied for evaluation. In case of research where these criteria were considered not-enough, these criteria became the source of other criteria. This can be seen in Leininger's criteria which include Lincoln and Guba's criteria and suggest two more. Epistemologically the experience of PLG is in the experiential realm. Hence, it is possible to assess the present research with Lincoln & Guba's and Leininger's criteria. Munhall's criteria addressed to Phenomenological research are more like a checklist for the assessment of the research by others. It involves a high degree of subjective-ness on part of the evaluator. As part of the evaluation of the present research by the researcher, there was a danger that the researcher might bring his subjective biases into the evaluation. Lastly Yardley's criteria are broad-ranging and offer a variety of ways to establish quality of research, and which is similar to Lincoln & Guba's and Leininger's criteria. Hence

for the present research, we combined the above three criteria lists and formed our own list of criteria for evaluation.

### **7.2.1 Evaluation of research**

As mentioned in the earlier section, we have combined the criteria suggested by Lincoln & Guba, Leininger and Yardley. We prepared a list for evaluation of the present research. Let us now examine the criteria by which we will evaluate the research.

- Credibility
- Confirmability
- Meaning-in-context
- Recurrent patterning
- Saturation
- Transferability
- Transparency and coherence
- Impact and importance

Next we will assess the present research as per each criterion.

**Credibility:** (truth established through prolonged engagement). *Credibility refers to the truth as known, experienced or deeply felt by the people being studied and interpreted from findings with co-participant evidence as subjective, inter-subjective and objective realities (Leininger, 1994).*

The experience of PLG does find a resonance in the participants' individual experiences. The issue of credibility is tackled at the onset of the study by identifying eminent participants from the field of Contemporary Indian Art and Design. The results were confirmed, for the first time, by the descriptions of PLG by the twenty final participants during the interview stage of the study. The participants described the experience in various perspectives during the interview span of 1-1.5 hours. PLG is a highly personal and deeply felt subjective experience to each participant, and yet there is a resonance of the experience among all participants of the study. One can see the inter-relations of facets and feelings corresponding to each type of PLG experience. The researcher maintained contact with the participants and took timely feedback from them about PLG.

**Confirmability:** (Repeated and direct evidence from participants and documents). *Are the results confirmable/verifiable by the participants? Confirmability refers to the repeated direct participatory and documented evidence observed or obtained from primary informant sources* (Leininger, 1994)

The results inferred from the analysis were subjected to the task of verification. The earlier section describes the process of verification and illustrates how the participants confirmed the results inferred. The feedback shows that the participant's answers during verification stage are congruent with what they had shared during the interviews. The affirmation of the various themes is in sync with their experience of PLG.

**Meaning-in-context:** (data became understandable within holistic context) *Do the themes give a comprehensive understanding of PLG?*

The present research was conducted in the framework of hermeneutic phenomenology. All stages of research followed the hermeneutic arc. This is seen in the process of the interview where the researcher took the participants to the depths of their personal experiences of PLG. Even as the participants were lost in the recounting and reliving of the moments of PLG, the researcher was on the outside, witnessing it empathetically and yet never losing sight of the bigger context of the research.

The stage of analysis was conducted in congruence with the hermeneutic arc. The hermeneutic circle ascribes that the entire data be viewed in parts and as whole. The various stages of analysis saw the researcher going into the depths of the data and then coming out and viewing it holistically. This led to the formation of hierarchical themes and clusters

Each theme contained information about a particular aspect or dimension about PLG. When these themes were put together, they gave a comprehensive understanding about PLG. The results obtained present the types, facets, stages, feelings, repeatability of PLG where each illuminates an aspect about PLG. The results obtained, thus, give a comprehensive understanding of PLG.

**Recurrent patterning:** (instances, sequences of events, experiences or life-ways) *Is the account of the phenomenon of letting go repeating throughout the process of inquiry?*

One finds a recurrent pattern in the participant's reporting of their experience of letting go. It is true that every participant has articulated the experience differently and has used

different metaphors to express their experiences. Yet there seems to be an underlying similarity in the character of PLG.

There were ample instances when there were dissimilarities of in description of PLG which led to the derivation of types of PLG. Once realises that there is a pattern among the facets and feelings belonging to each type which overlap.

One also finds recurrent patterning in the varied themes evolved during the analysis. These patterns are derived in the themes during the analysis of each participant's experience. When the comparative analysis of themes between artists and designers was completed, we observe recurrent patterns in the similarities of experience.

**Saturation:** (Redundancy, no new information). *Has the study of PLG revealed answers to the research questions within the scope and focus of the present research?*

The research method employed rigor in terms of interviewing as well as analysis. A total of fifty interviews were conducted out of which thirty were pilot interviews and the remaining twenty were the final interviews. The pilot helped in understanding the pattern of the cues to be given so that the respondent gets ample space to be able to explore the depths of his/her personal experiences. The respondents did not feel cornered, or manipulated or pushed. The respondents were very comfortable, enough to share their deepest experiences.

The selection of final participants for interviews ensured that the participants would be able to give a descriptive account of PLG from varied perspectives. All the participants had achieved a high position in their respective field which made their accounts of PLG credible and reliable. The interviews resulted in approximately 30-35 hours of raw data on PLG which was further taken through the process of analysis.

Lastly, the raw data was transcribed and was subjected to analysis. Each transcript was treated separately and taken through the several steps of analyses to arrive at the final results. The themes evolved through each of the twenty transcripts were then compared to arrive at final themes for PLG

The analysis yielded six global themes (four dimensions of facets, types, feelings, stages and two aspects of repeatability and comparison with aesthetic experiences). It revealed thirty eight organisational themes under the global themes and about three hundred basic themes. These themes further led to the answers to three research questions formulated at the beginning of the study.

The present research was conducted in the constraints of its scope and focus and the results are inferred within the same framework. By answering the research questions, the study has yielded comprehensive understanding about PLG. This in no way means that the phenomenon could be limited to the results of the research. But within the present framework, the research has presented saturated results which give a comprehensive understanding about PLG and its characteristics.

**Transferability:** (whether findings can be transferred to another similar context) *Can the finding of the research be transferred to another similar context without losing the uniqueness of the present context?*

The present study examined the PLG through the framework of HPA in two domains of Visual arts and Design. A formulated research process was followed for the study of artists in the domain of visual arts. The same process was repeated for studying designers. It was realised that the findings elicited from the study of artists and designers showed marked similarity. For example, there is a similarity in two types of PLG in the domains of arts and design. This is not to say that there were no differences. The differences reflect the variance in individual experience and the constraints of each domain. This difference is not a result of the process of research but the variance the work dynamics of each domain. Hence the research process is transferable to other contexts and study revealed a high degree of similarity in the results.

Another important aspect of transferability would be the repeatability in case of transference of the researcher. In this aspect, the new researcher needs to embody the current researcher in terms of her world-view and attitudes to achieve maximum results.

**Transparency and coherence:** (Does the research provide sufficient details of the methods and processes employed) *Is there a coherence between the aims of the research method and means that are employed to ensure that the conclusions are valid?*

The present research has presented the details of every step of investigation. The details about the pilot studies, the learnings from the study, the selection of participants and their interviews are presented in chapter 4. Chapter 5 details out the step-by-step process of analysis and the derivation of results. The chapter 6 provides the clarity on the structural dynamics of PLG and also substantiates the final inferences with excerpts from the transcripts. This ensures

sufficient transparency in the research so that the findings derived from the research are in coherence with the questions raised at the start of the research.

**Impact and importance:** (whether the research provide value to the people or knowledge-base). *Does the research open new ways of looking at an issue, or provide new understanding?*

The present research makes PLG distinct from the other creative experiences. It opens up new way to look at the act of creation which brings about novel and original creations. The research findings suggest that there are five types of PLG which bring about transformation to the artwork/design and also the self of the creator. This brings to light a new perspective to the methods which try to bring about novel transformation to creation. The contributions of the present research are enumerated in chapter 8 of this thesis which describes the impact of the research on PLG on the existing knowledge base as also to the practicing artists and designers.

The evaluation of research on the eight criteria has presented assessment of varied aspects of the research as per the criteria. The evaluation of research has provided a self-assessment for the researcher about the research processes, methods and findings. The evaluation has given an assurance that the present research has justifiably investigated the issue of PLG and given it its distinct place in creative experiences.

### **7.3 Summary**

The chapter re-examined the inferences derived in chapter 6 through the process of verification. The earlier sections of this chapter present the process of verification where the findings/inferences were taken back to the participants for their feedback. The feedback on the findings is evaluated and the final findings are modified. The chapter further evaluated the entire research in terms of the research process and findings etc. based on eight criteria derived for this research. The criteria of evaluation of the research process presented a credible method of evaluation. The present research conformed to all the criteria thereby endorsing the research method and process. The varied aspects of the research were assessed to ensure that the research provides a comprehensive understanding into PLG and its characteristics. The evaluation established the findings within the study thereby validating the knowledge imparted on the phenomenon of letting go.



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## Chapter 8

### Conclusion

*A painting is never finished - it simply stops in interesting places.*

*~Paul Gardner*

As we complete the verification of results and evaluate the present research, we come to the difficult point of closure of research. The artists acknowledge that they find it difficult to decide whether the painting is finished. They are besieged with the questions of whether they had worked enough on the painting and whether they need to work a little more. More importantly, they need to decide whether doing any more work would harm the painting. They need to find that exact point where there is a harmonious balance in the painting. They have done just the right amount of work, they could do more work, but the painting is just right. The artists describe that they just know. They intuitively know that they have to stop and the painting is finished at this point of time. Whatever more is found to be done yet, could further be expressed in a new painting.

We have reached a similar point in our research. The research evaluation shows that work done is enough. The research has given directions and implications for further research, which might be taken up as separate explorations. Even as we close the research, let us look

back at the research journey, reiterate the concepts that emerged from the research and examine the implications of our research.

## **8.1 The Research journey**

Now that we stand at the end point of our research on the PLG in visual arts and design, let us look back at the milestones which provided the knowledge base about PLG.

The act of creation is crucial in the production of novel and innovative artworks and design. Various fields of study have investigated the act of creation from multiple perspectives like researching the artwork, studying the environmental factors, studying the process of creation and so on. But there is still a crucial question. What does it mean for a creator to experience the act of creation? This question is significant as the creator himself attaches immense significance to his experiential faculty in the creation of his artwork/design. The existing knowledge base emphasises on the tangible, observable objects and events in the act of creation rather than the intangible, subjective experiential realm of the creator. Our research aims to glimpse into the experiential dimension of the artist/designer and make a contribution in the knowledge base which is dedicated to PLG.

The thought of researching the Phenomenon of letting go has its roots in the visible disparity between the individual, personal understanding of PLG of the artists/ designer and the non-inclusion of experiential realm of creative experiences in theoretical foundations of domains of Arts and Design. The need to research this topic is also stemmed in the significance of the experience of PLG in the creation of novel and original works/creations. The present research aims to conduct a focussed investigation of the phenomenon. The study stems from a belief that this significant event is a crucial creative experience which needs to be substantiated with a knowledge base that could give the phenomenon its own identity and unique qualitative distinctness. The research aims to deconstruct the phenomenon so that the parts analysed would give an understanding of the full-picture of PLG experience.

The research process started by drafting the premise of PLG which consisted of characteristics and features which made the experience of PLG special and stand out from the ongoing creative experiences. We termed these experiences 'Phenomenon of letting go' after deliberating on the justifications of the phrases used in the terminology. The study further looked at various limitations it faced and drew out the scope and focus of the present investigation. We then define the research problem where we enumerate the specific questions which would be addressed in the present research. The present research aims to

study the Phenomenon of letting go and understand its structural dynamics. The research aims to get an understanding on the points of commonality and divergence in the PLG of artists and designers.

As the next step, we start the inter-disciplinary investigation of existing literature. To know an experiential phenomenon like PLG, we need to align our thinking to the dimension of tacit knowing (Polyani, *The Tacit Dimension*, 1966). We discuss theories about the act of creation and establish that these theories from the area of Creativity are deficient in explaining PLG in experiential terms. We turn our attention towards creative experiences where we start with the discussion on how to distinguish an experience<sup>34</sup> and further investigate the types of creative experiences.<sup>35</sup> Then we look at aesthetic experience and understand its correlation with PLG. Gathering from the insights of initial discussions with artist/designers and the research questions, we examine the concepts of 'Inspiration' and 'The Sublime Other'. We examine self-transcending experiences complimentary to the experience of PLG where we look at the characteristics and the approaches taken to study spiritual, meditative and other associated experiences. Then we turn our attention to each attribute presented in the premise of PLG (refer chapter1, Pg: ) and investigate the cross-disciplinary knowledge base available on it. We examine the phenomenological dynamics of time, space and self where we gain understanding into how the triad of space-time and self exist in our consciousness. We study the way the three intertwine and overlap at onset of varied experiences. We also look at the concepts of Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991) and Peak experiences (Maslow, 1970) which are closest to PLG and understand the experience that they signify and represent and compare their characteristic with that of PLG. We establish that both the concepts cannot be used for connoting PLG as they represent experiences which are separate from that which is denoted by PLG. Therefore, we need a separate concept of PLG to explain the special experience the present study is focussing on. We finally assess the literature review as per the formulated research questions. The present knowledge base acknowledges the presence of unusual events through dispersed descriptions, but it does not have a dedicated literature from which the creators can take learning about the experiences happening to them. Hence, there is pressing need to investigate into realm of creative experiences and build the groundwork for the knowledge-base on PLG.

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<sup>34</sup> We discuss Dewey's consummatory experience.

<sup>35</sup> We explain the four types of creative experiences (Sharma A. , 2011)

Equipped with the knowledge that was present in the existing literature, we move further to start investigation on PLG directed at the three research questions. To investigate the experiential realm of PLG, there is a need for a research methodology which would take us closest to the phenomenon. We probe the probable methods of inquiry and understand their suitability to investigation of PLG. We discuss five methods of Phenomenological Inquiry<sup>36</sup>, the Heuristic Method<sup>37</sup>, Co-operative Inquiry<sup>38</sup>, Organic Inquiry<sup>39</sup> and the Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA)<sup>40</sup>. The methods of Phenomenological Inquiry, the Heuristic Method, Co-operative Inquiry, Organic Inquiry tend to be inclined to either being highly personal and interpretive. HPA is considered appropriate for the present study of PLG due to its balance of interpretive and descriptive nature of data elicited. Following the hermeneutic arc, we further devised the Research Design. The Research Design is a three stepped approach which prescribed an in-depth interview method for data collection, methods of Thematic and Comparative analysis for deconstruction of the data and Lenienger's criterion for evaluation of the entire research.

Starting with the collection of relevant data, we examine the method of in-depth interviews as per the prescription of the Research design. We start by conducting 30 pilot interviews. The variance in feedback from different participants prepared the researcher in the art of interviewing for the topic of PLG. The pilots also helped in arriving at the criteria of selection of final participants. It helped in developing the sequence of questions to be followed for conducting the interview. For eliciting the final data, twenty interviews of ten artists and ten designers were conducted for the present research. The twenty interview sessions had a dynamic and self-evolving quality about them which brought rich data for present study. Each participant narrated their experiences in their own language which resulted in multi-dimensional data about PLG. Not only did the interview sessions bring extensive data, but they brought about positivity in the researcher-participant interaction and hence transformed both.

Once the data was collected, the next step was to analyse the data. The research design suggests the methods of Thematic analysis and Constant comparative analysis to be utilised at

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<sup>36</sup> Here we discuss Husserl's phenomenology and approach of investigation.

<sup>37</sup> Clark Moustaka's Heuristic method is an autobiographical inquiry into a phenomenon.

<sup>38</sup> John Heron's Cooperative inquiry is a co-participatory investigation into a phenomenon.

<sup>39</sup> C.J.Clements propounded Organic Inquiry as autobiographical inquiry into the transformative influence of the phenomenon.

<sup>40</sup> HPA is recommended by Van Manen which involves a hermeneutic investigation of the phenomenological description of participants.

various stages of analysis. The data elicited from twenty interviews is deconstructed to arrive at themes and thematic structures about PLG. The process of analysis treats the transcript data of artists and designers separately into two datasets. The first transcript of each set is analysed with the inductive thematic analysis followed by a-priori thematic analysis of remaining nine artist transcripts. A similar process was followed for the set of designers as well. All the thematic structures of one set were compared by constant comparative analysis to arrive at a consolidated structure of PLG for that particular set. This helped in revealing the thematic structure of PLG for artists and designers. These thematic structures were again compared by constant comparative analysis to arrive at the consolidated themes and differences to understand the variance in PLG in artists and designers. The consolidation revealed the structural dynamics of PLG and the differences presented the variance and uniqueness of PLG in the domains of Arts and Design.

Once the analysis was completed, the next step is to infer answers to the research questions raised at the start of the research. The thematic structures revealed during the analysis present knowledge about PLG. The next step was to relook at the results from the perspective of research questions.

Looking at the first research question of getting an understanding of PLG, the results revealed the thematic structures of PLG through four dimensions of Types, Stages, Facets and Feelings and two aspects of Repeatability and Comparison with Aesthetic Experiences. The experience of PLG is classified into five distinct types and it is achieved in eight phases. PLG exhibits approximately 200 facets across five states of mind which evolve and influence the occurrence of PLG in its progressive temporal phases. The experience of PLG is accompanied by feelings which are corresponding to the shifting states of mind of the creator. The experience of PLG is repeatable and there are a few achievable facets which work towards repeatable occurrence of PLG. The experience of PLG is comparable with aesthetic experience and there are both differences and points of convergence between the two experiences.

The second research question was to get an understanding into the phenomenon of PLG. We start by defining the phenomenon of letting go. For this, we extract the core facets from the five types of PLG by finding facets common to all the types. Then we proceed to the formation of definition of PLG. We further present a descriptive account of the experience of PLG and elaborate about what actually happens when one experiences it.

The third and last research question addresses the variation of PLG in artists and designers. The results of the analysis describe the thematic structures common to both the domains. They also present the points of variance between the PLG in artists and designers making PLG domain specific. The results revealed that the PLG in designers only exhibited first two types as compared to five in artists. The designers experience the Ephemeral and Temporal PLG where as the artists experienced Synchronous, Trance and Sublime PLG as well as the Ephemeral and Temporal PLG. The results further revealed facets and feelings corresponding to the types of PLG experienced by artists and designers. The results of artists/designers reveal a commonality of facets and feelings corresponding to the Ephemeral and Temporal PLG (since both experience it). The remaining facets and feelings are felt differently/uniquely by artists in the domain of Arts and the designers in the domain of Design. This is probably due to the kind of work they are involved in. This variance in facets and feeling attributes uniqueness to PLG as experienced in the domains of Art and Design.

Once the formulated research questions are answered by the results derived from the analysis, we proceed to verify and evaluate the results of study and the research process followed. Though the research process follows a very logical and analytical course, the experience of doing the research at each stage was a transformative one. The experience of doing the analysis following the hermeneutic arc helped gain insights into the researcher's own consciousness and brought interpretive and rich personal inputs into the analysis. Once the entire research process is over, the researcher is a transformed person with an empathetic knowledge of the PLG in the creative process.

After looking at the research questions, the final task of writing the research was started. By writing the thesis we are putting into words the experiential data gleaned from the research about an intangible experiential event of PLG. The writing of the thesis could not be complete without enumerating the significant findings of the research. We will now recapitulate the findings of the study and look at the concepts and thoughts introduced by this investigation.

## **8.2 Contributions of the study**

In this section, we will re-examine the ideas introduced and aspects revealed through the present study and understand the new knowledge contributed by this research.

### **PLG is a distinct and identifiable creative experience.**

The investigation confirms the presence of a special and anomalous experience of PLG in the flow of creative experiences. The investigation helped derive a definition of PLG which makes the experience distinct from other creative experiences and makes it identifiable. The study gave shape and form to an ineffable experience during the process of creation. The research helped identify PLG as the single most significant event which brings about a transformation in the work and the self of the creator.

The exploration into the self-transformative creative experiences revealed the existence of an intense event, which we termed as the phenomenon of letting go (PLG). The most important contribution of present study is the confirmation of existence of the phenomenon of letting go within the creative experiences of artists and designers. The study further explored this phenomenon and we have well-defined experiential event in the form of PLG which is cognisable and is acknowledged by the artists and designers who experience it. The artists and designers have expressed the experiential reality of the creative process and the existence of PLG within the experiential reality of the creative process. This study has taken into consideration the experiential subjective perception of the artists and designers about their creative process. The phenomenon of letting go is an experience in which the subject (artist/designer) loses the self, time and space and is in a rhythmic union with the object (artwork/design).

The inference that such a phenomenon exists in the experiential reality of the artists and designers is in itself an acknowledgement that the stage of insight, illumination is not just a clinical, objective process where connections are made and the solution just pops out. An artist's mind and the artwork is not something which can be only analytically observed to give an understanding into the artist's experiential reality. What happens in the experiential reality of the artist/designer's mind is a complex sequence of experiences which flow seamlessly. Once they achieve a very intense level, the artist/designer experiences PLG. This is a dynamic event tinged with intense feelings which has high positive energy that brings about a transformation in the artist/designer and his artwork/design.

### **Structural dynamics of PLG**

The research revealed the thematic structures of PLG. The thematic structure gives a tangible and definitive form to PLG. The structural dynamics reveals that PLG could be understood from four dimensions of types, stages, facets and feelings and it has two aspects of



repeatability and comparison with aesthetic experience. The details of each dimension and aspect are enumerated in chapter 6. It also helps getting an understanding into the dynamics of interactions and establishing interrelations between various aspects of PLG. The study presents the structural dynamics of PLG in both artists and designers. This gives an understanding into the commonalities and differences between the experiences in both the domains.

### **Five types of PLG**

The study revealed that there are five types of PLG; Ephemeral, Temporal, Synchronous, Trance and Sublime. PLG types vary in terms of depth, intensity and duration. Each type has facets which can be the identifiable markers for that particular PLG. There is a variation in the feelings and intensity according to the type of PLG. It was very interesting that the present study revealed the existence of Sublime type of PLG in which the artists were blessed with the presence of the Divine or the Sublime Other. The study explained that this is the most intense type of PLG. It is a profound experience for the artist/designer. The study showed that the experience is orgasmic in nature. This revelation is interesting for two reasons. One reason is that being profound and ineffable, the experience has a striking similarity to the spiritual/mystical experiences. The descriptions of PLG match to those of mystical/spiritual experiences. It is quite surprising to find the experience of an artist experiences something which is at par with spiritual experience. It is quite confounding to know that an artist indulging in the act of self expression experiences something similar to the highly revered spiritual experience. Probably, this might explain how Van Gogh or Picasso were able to express and present works which were way beyond their times.

It was also interestingly revealed that the designers experienced only two types of PLG while the artists experienced all the five types. This difference might be a result of the constraints the work done in each domain, in which there is a variance in the degree of freedom and self-expression.

### **PLG is multi-faceted**

The present research revealed the multiple facets which make the character and form of PLG. We have looked at facets in three temporal phases; antecedent, concurrent and subsequent. The study revealed the facets which are instrumental in the achievement of PLG in the

antecedent phase. In the concurrent phase, the study revealed facets which form the PLG experience and lastly, in the subsequent phase, the facets reveal the closure of PLG and the states of mind post the PLG experience.

The study revealed that PLG exhibited interesting facets of Trust, Allow and Play antecedent to the PLG experience. The artist/designer has complete trust in the fact that PLG will come to them. The trust is reflected in the way an artist thinks about the artwork and also the way he plans it. This is a very important revelation since the artist/designer knows, has confidence and ‘trusts’ that the creative process will yield the intense experience of PLG. This trust and confidence, in turn, will bring the solution to the problem the artist/designer has been struggling for so long. There is a trust that the solution will present itself to the artist/designer through the experience of PLG.

The investigation illustrated that in the presence of facet of trust, the artist/designer in a state of ‘allow’ where he lets things happen. The theme Allow within the dimension of facets is critical. The artist/designer is in a mental state where he is surrendering his self to the act of creation and allowing for things to emerge. Allow implies that there is an intentionality of the artist in the surrender. The artist/designer voluntarily makes a mental space where he takes the place of the passive onlooker watching the events to unfold. This puts the artist/designer in a position to watch the physical events as well as the experiential events to unfold. The artist/designer is in a state of receptiveness.

The study also revealed an element of ‘play’ before the onset of PLG. The study showed that the artist/designer establishes a relationship of play where the self of the artist/designer is in rhythmic interaction with the object or artwork/design. The state of playfulness is achieved during the creative process where the artist/designer forms a cohesive relationship with his work of art. This forms the base on which the intense states of mind catapult him into extrapolated space of PLG.

### **PLG is repeatable**

The research explained that there are eight stages towards the achievement of PLG. These stages are parallel to the stages of the creative process, while explicating the experiential reality of the creative process. The eight stages of PLG form a guideline towards the achievement of PLG experience. This also leads to the aspect of Repeatability. An interesting inference of the research has been that PLG is intentionally repeatable although

being highly unpredictable. The existing literature on spiritual and meditative experiences exhibit the stages through which the spiritual and meditative experiences are voluntarily achievable. Creative experiences are considered as experiential dimension of the creative process where the artist/designer experiences an A-ha moment which is not repeatable. Our research has confirmed otherwise that PLG is repeatable. The study demonstrated that the artists had devised their own methods to voluntarily achieve PLG. The personal methods have not been tested and proved as this was out of the scope of the present research. But the study has demonstrated that PLG could be repeated with practice.

### **PLG leads to transformation**

The investigation into PLG experiences of artists and designers revealed that PLG resulted in the transformation of self and the transformation of the artwork/design. During the occurrence of PLG, there is a fusion of the self with the object/work in such manner that there is a loss of space-time and also sometimes of the self. This leads to a truthful, within-the-moment and mindful manifestation into the artwork/design. Hence, many-a-times, the artists/designers claim that they are very surprised at what they had achieved from their artwork/design. They seem to have transcended their boundaries of space-time and self and hence self-capabilities. The manifestation becomes a result and witness of this transcendence. This revelation is interesting as it throws a new dimension to the already existing manifold theories and methods of enhancement in the field of creativity. The research gives a unique perspective which explicates the transformation and enhancement of both the creative product and the creativity of the artist/ designer.

### **Formation of a vocabulary for PLG**

It was realised in the interviews that the artist/designers were describing their experiences as spiritual, cosmic, divine, and orgasmic and so on. This shows that the nature of the experience is articulated with an analogy of what is known to the artist/designer in his knowledge base. A spiritual practitioner can easily articulate his experiences in terms of introvertive or extrovertive<sup>41</sup> spiritual experiences. The artist/designer does not have a vocabulary to explain or describe the experiences; the articulations about the experiences are done in the form of an analogy or corollary to the existing known experiences like meditative, spiritual or sexual

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<sup>41</sup> Spiritual experiences are classified by Stace as being introvertive and extrovertive (Stace, 1961).

experiences. The present research distinguished PLG from creative experiences and revealed the types, stages, facets and feelings about the PLG experience. Now the artist/designer can use the terms from the structures revealed in the present study. For example, now he can very eloquently describe that he experienced a sublime PLG experience where he witnessed the divine. Thus, the present study has provided a vocabulary to describe the PLG experiences which can be used by any artist/designer to share or exchange their experiences of the PLG.

### **The PLG: An initiation of a separate field of study**

The research analysis saw the emergence of the PLG as a distinct and identifiable phenomenon during the creative experiences in the domains of Art and Design. The present study has provided the domain of Arts and Design with a knowledge base about PLG along with the pre-existing literature on Art/design history, aesthetics and so on. The experiential realms have been discussed mainly in the domains of philosophy, psychology and so on. The research on PLG gave a new point of convergence to the domains of philosophy, psychology etc. This would mean that the varied domains are connected to each other on the basis of PLG as well. Looking at the characteristics of the Sublime PLG experience of artists, it is identifiable with the spiritual experience. The PLG now becomes the point of connection to not only creative experiences dealt with in numerous domains but it also gives associations with other similar experiences like spiritual, meditative and so on. These connections present an opportunity of knowledge exchange. The present study has initiated and identified PLG as a separate field of study where there is possibility of sharing of knowledge from perspectives of varied domains.

The study opened a new page in the study of creative experiences. This in turn would impact existing knowledge of concepts and processes of connected fields which need a mention in this thesis. We will now look into such areas where there is possibility of further research which will add to the knowledge provided by the present research.

### **8.3 Further implications**

We have examined the landmarks in the process of the study and identified contributions of the present research. We looked at concepts contributed by this study thereby adding to the current body of knowledge.

The existence of PLG is instrumental in the transformation and enhancement in the creative capabilities of the artist/designer. This makes us look at teaching of art/design differently. This study shows a new perspective to bringing about enhancements in students. This has implications on the way teaching and learning of arts/design and on the assessment techniques as well.

The present study looked at PLG in the domains of visual arts and design. The research gives a comprehensive picture of PLG limited to these domains. It would be interesting to examine whether PLG occurs in the creative acts in domains other than Arts and Design like performance, writing etc. Further study could elaborate the nuances and variances existing in PLG in varied domains.

The present study concentrated on understanding the PLG in terms of its quality and dimensions. The influence of gender, sexuality and culture on the phenomenon of letting go was not within the purview of the present research. It would be interesting to see the impact of gender and culture on the PLG experience. This would explain the dynamics of PLG and elaborate the changes in the phenomenon from a different perspective.

The present research looked at understanding PLG through the framework of the hermeneutic- phenomenological approach. This framework allows room for researcher's interpretations within the study. It would be interesting to see whether the understanding of PLG would change drastically in case other qualitative research methods were employed. It is our opinion that even though other research methods reveal different findings, these findings would give additional nuances to the inferences of the existing study and that the core of PLG will still remain the same.

The implications of the present study are diverse and one needs to be careful while choosing one's perspective from where one intends to pursue further study into the phenomenon of letting go. The perch from which one looks at an event usually determines the spectrum which becomes visible to that person. But what is interesting with research is that one could get access to multiple perches at the same time and review not just the events but also one's own position quite perceptively. Hence the enumerations of implications are from the perch of the researcher and are uni-perspectival. It is upon the reader to view it from their own perches to find further implications which may bring more strength to the present knowledge of PLG.

### 8.3 It is time to stop

How does one know that it is time to stop researching on a particular topic? Looking at the implications, one knows that investigation into PLG is far from over. But looking at the research questions and the scope of the present research, we seem to have reached the end of the road for this study.

Compiling the research into a thesis is similar to painting or designing a form. How does one know that the painting is finished, or it is enough to deliberate on a form? How does one say, ‘It is done’?

Most of the artist participants had replied that “they just know”. Like one artist replied, *“One knows, you come to know that you’re finished for the time being. It’s an inner need and inner call. I know I have to stop.”*

For the present research and this thesis, the stage has arrived when one can say that for the time being, the work is completed. The research into PLG is concluded from the perspective enumerated at the start of the study and the whole journey of documentation of this process has reached its end. But the possibility of investigation into the PLG is far from over.

By putting the phenomenon of letting go within the body of knowledge of creative experiences, this research has possibly started a new beginning, of new thoughts, of new connections. Like one of the artists says that *“I don’t know, if few years down the line, if all of this will cross-fertilize and act as stimuli elsewhere... and then few years later..They become artworks.”*

Possibly the future would see the present research as a seed which germinated into a sapling and further research would possibly help it grow into new leaves and blossom into the experiences of creators during the act of creation.

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## APPENDIX I A

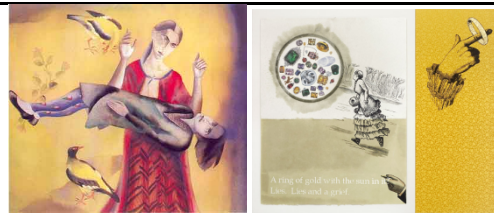
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### Artist Participants

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**Anju Dodiya**



<http://www.artnet.com/artists/anju-dodiya/>



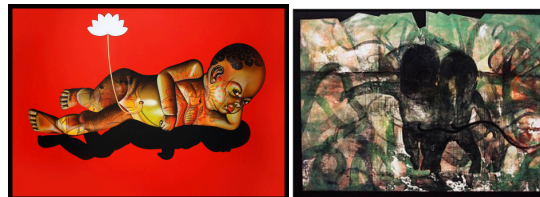
**Atul Dodiya**



<http://www.artnet.com/artists/atul-dodiya/>



**Chintan Upadhyay**



<http://chintanupadhyayunlimited.blogspot.com/>



**C. Krishnamachari  
Bose**



<http://www.artnet.com/artists/bose-krishnamachari/>





**Jitish Kallat**



<http://jitishkallat.in/>



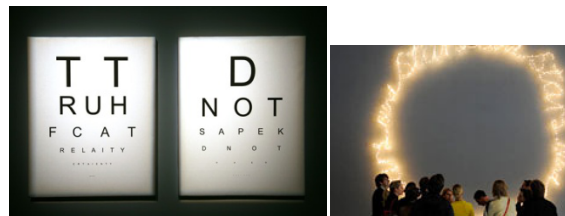
**Riyaz Komu**



<http://www.artnet.com/artists/riyas-komu/>



**Shilpa Gupta**



<http://www.flyinthe.net/>



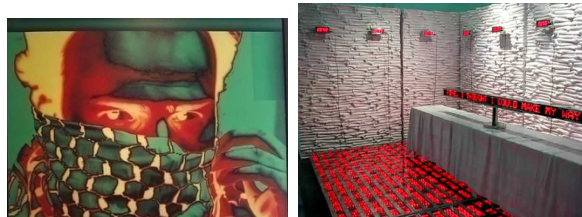
**Sudarshan Shetty**



<http://www.artnet.com/artists/sudarshan-shetty/>



**T.V. Santosh**



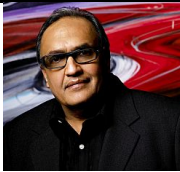
<http://www.artnet.com/artists/t.v.-santosh/>

## APPENDIX I B

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### Designer Participants

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**Dilip Chhabria**

Founder, Promoter, Dilip Chhabria Design Pvt. Ltd.

<http://www.dcdesign.co.in/home.htm>



**Jacob Matthew**

Co-founder, Idiom Design & Consulting ltd

<http://www.idiom.co.in/home.html>



**Kurnal Rawat**

Founder, Creative Director,  
Grandmother India Design Pvt. Ltd.

<http://www.grandmother.in/>



**Makrand Dharphale**

Manager - Design (HMI & DAQ),  
GM India Design Studio



**Prasanna Kulkarni**

Senior Creative Director, Oligvy India



**Preeti Vyas**

Chairperson, Vyas Giannetti Creative Pvt. Ltd.

<http://www.vgc.in/index-h.htm>



**Shridhar Marri**

Vice President, Infosys



**Sumit Patel**

Founder, Director, Leaf design

<http://www.theleafdesign.com/>



**Varshesh Joshi**

Principal Visual designer, Yahoo

<http://www.shoonyadesign.net/>



**Vinay Rao**

Founder, Director, Bang Design,

<http://www.bang.co.in/>

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## APPENDIX 1C

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### Pilot Participants

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1. Abhinav Dapke	Multidisciplinary Industrial Designer, Bangalore
2. Abhishekh Pratap Singh	Creative Director, GM Design, Bangalore
3. Anant Joshi	Artist, Professor, Chitrakala Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur
4. Anshuman Sharma	Head UXD, L&T Infotech, Bangalore
5. Avinash Bhalerao	Founder & Head, Iidenrt, Pune
6. Azmina Poddar	S. Designer, DesignCore, Bangalore
7. Baiju Parthan	Contemporary Indian Artist, Mumbai
8. Bharati Kher	Contemporary Indian Artist, New Delhi
9. Chandrakant Channe	Artist, Dean-Central India School of Fine Arts, Nagpur
10. Chintan Upadhyay	Contemporary Indian Artist, Mumbai
11. Hema Upadhyay	Contemporary Indian Artist, Mumbai
12. Dr. Manisha Patil	Dean J.J. School of Arts
13. Milind Mullick	Watercolour Artist, Pune
14. Mukta Hiremath	User Experience Designer, SAP Labs, Bangalore
15. Narendra Ghate	Head, Innovation Labs, Tata Elixis, Bangalore
16. Peeyush Aras	Design Director at Projex Event services LLC, Dubai
17. Prabhakar Patil	Artist, Professor, J.J.School of Arts
18. Raghavendra Rao	Artist, Faculty, Srishti School of Design, Bangalore
19. Rajavel Manoharan	Principle Designer, Infosys, Bangalore
20. Ravi Paranjape	Artist. Illustrator, Pune
21. Riyas Komu	Contemporary Indian Artist, Mumbai
22. Shama Rasal	Sr. UX Designer, Nokia Research Centre, Bangalore
23. Shilpa Naresh	Creative Consultant, The Information Company, Mumbai

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<b>24. Shri Hari Tulasi</b>	Senior Designer, Infosys, Bangalore
<b>25. Sourabh Dubey</b>	Principle Interaction Designer, Yahoo, Bangalore
<b>26. Sudhir Bania</b>	Lead, Lumium Innovations Pvt. Ltd., Ahmedabad
<b>27. Suparna Dapke</b>	Design Manager, Titan Industries, Ltd. Bangalore
<b>28. T. V.Santosh</b>	Contemporary Indian Artist, Mumbai
<b>29. Visvapriya Sathiyam</b>	Associate Design Manager, SAP Labs, Bangalore
<b>30. Yugandhara Singh</b>	Industrial Designer, GE India Technology Centre

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## APPENDIX II A

### Interview schedule

**Method of data collection** Semi structured interview/ conversations

**Samples:** Professional artists and designers

**Documentation of data:** Audio- video recording

**Probable interview schedule:**

Give an overview of what I'm doing and the phenomenon that I'm investigating.

**Questions:**

- How do you formalize your ideas for your painting?
- How long is this ideation time and does the experience of letting go happen in this stage?
- Elaborate the differences in the experience of letting go in the ideation and execution stage.
- Have you ever had a creative experience? Please describe it?
- What type of feelings do you associate with this experience?
- Have you ever experienced a letting go experience? Please describe it?

- Can you control it? Can you control the method of reaching it? Have you devised any personal method of achieving it?
- Are there any stages to this experience?
- Does the experience have any levels in terms of quality and what is the association to the final product?
- Is there any difference between the creative experience and a letting go experience?
- In your learning years were you taught any method to achieve this experience?
- Detail out the instances when this occurred.
- Details of events preceding the experience and events post the experience.
- Instances of experiences within the creative process i.e. which stage of the creative process does it happen more often?
- Significance of the experience vis-à-vis the final creative product.
- Importance of the experience to the work- when is it important, in which type of works does it hold more significance, which type of works don't?
- When was the first time you had this experience?
- Have you experienced this phenomenon in any other walk of life? How is it different from when it occurs in the field of Visual art?

## APPENDIX II B

### Personal Information

**Personal Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Professional

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Education: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail id: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX II C

### Request for Interview E-mail

Hello,

I'm Aneesha Sharma, Phd scholar from IDC, IIT-Bombay. The topic of my research is 'Phenomenon of Letting go in visual arts and design' and by letting go I mean the creative moments within the creative process, when in complete engrossment, there is a psychological shift in the mental space, when the creator lets go of his self, and is sort of unaware and unintentionally things seems to appear on the canvas or artwork.

I'm sending a brief abstract about my area of research. Also the same is available on the institute

website along with the abstract of the paper I've published (in the link paperwork). The link to the webpage is

<http://www.idc.iitb.ac.in/students/phd/Aneesha.html>.

As a part of my research I've to conduct interviews of artists' and designers and hence I wanted to request for time from you for an interview. I audio-video record the interview for research purposes and the interview should take about 1-1 1/2 hour.

It would be of great help to me if you could share your experiences of letting go within your creative process as it would be crucial and valuable for my research work.

Thanks,

Warm Regards,

Aneesha Sharma

=====

**Abstract:**

**Phenomenon of letting go in Visual Arts and Design**

The experience of letting go is much spoken about and written by many practicing creative professionals, especially artists and performers. Many claim that their best works happened when they were in a state of letting go. It is an individual experience which is highly personal and repeatable albeit very unpredictable.

Artists and designers have stated that the phenomenon of letting go is of great value and import to the level of creative output. The experience is of transcending nature which may have transformative impact upon the experiencer. These experiences are of very personal nature and are regarded as something akin to self realization. Though these experiences are of such import to the artist or designer, there is no formal knowledge base about the phenomenon.

As this phenomenon has maximum impact on the creative success of the output, the research aims at getting a complete understanding of the quality and causal factors of the experience as well as the method and factors which facilitate the self achievement of this experience.

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## Appendix III A

### Procedure of Thematic Analysis

#### Step 1: Coding of transcript

An excerpt from the entire transcript is shown below. As a first step of inductive thematic analysis, the description in the transcript has been bolded as per the relevance the content has to the context of PLG.

Artist 2: When i read your that mail of your, you know i was thinking ki I've certainly been through it..this...**there are moments of...like...yeah...you're not aware...and its like...its happened through you...more than u know...through a strategy or consciousness...but at the same time you know..i cannot isolate the moment...i couldn't point out in my work that this happened on its own...you know...i'm...in fact..i firmly believe that everything happens like that...in the sense that the whole creative process...i do...i dont know if you're familiar...with my work...so i just kept my catalogues out..the kind of images that...otherwise i think the whole when it finally happens...i really believe that it cannot be planned...its something that just happens(gesturing circular hand movements nr heart)...it comes from within as if...and in fact there are times when i wish to change the direction of things...and i find myself going back...to...ummm...it just takes it own course... the painting rejects it and then i've to start putting in the tones...and it ends up a very dark painting....so..there are so many things like that...umm..u start taking decisions which...you know the image demands it...so i dont know whether it has to do with what you're asking...does it?**

The bolded data was revisited again and a keyword was tagged to it. This keyword or the code was a single word which represented the meaning of the corresponding transcript. We will now look at a small example which will give a glimpse into how the coding process was done.

We will look into the bolded excerpt

*“there are moments of...like...yeah...you're not aware...and it's like...it's happened through you...more than u know...through a strategy or consciousness...but at the same time*

*you know..I cannot isolate the moment...I couldn't point out in my work that this happened on its own..”*

<b>Bold text</b>	<b>Selected text</b>	<b>Corresponding code</b>
there are moments of...like...yeah... <b>you're not aware</b> ...and its like...its happened through you...more than u know...through a strategy or consciousness	<i>you're not aware</i>	Non-aware

The phrase “You’re not aware” was chosen as it was found to be contextual with the PLG. A keyword/tag “Non-aware” is used to signify the sentence in the transcript.

The other sentences like, ‘there are moments’, ‘it’s happened through you..’ and ‘through a strategy or consciousness’ are relevant data about the creative process. But the researcher has interpreted within the hermeneutic phenomenological approach and found that only the excerpt ‘you’re not aware’ to be contextual to the whole picture of PLG.

## Step 2: Identification of themes

After tagging codes to the selected sentences of the transcript, these codes were identified for similarity. All similar codes were aligned together. The parameter by which the similarity of codes was identified was the meaning embedded within the transcript. E.g the codes of ‘Self’ and ‘time’

<b>code</b>	<b>Corresponding script</b>
<b>self</b>	in a sense one forgets oneself ..there’s an ease in which it becomes light and easy
<b>time</b>	it’s as if there is no time...that time...one forgets there is no sense of time

The codes of Self and Time was reformulated into the theme of ‘No Self’ and ‘No Time’.

<b>Themes</b>	<b>code</b>	<b>Corresponding script</b>
<b>No Self</b>	self	in a sense one forgets oneself ..there’s an ease in which it becomes light and easy
<b>No Time</b>	time	it’s as if there is no time...that time...one forgets there is no sense of time

Another way of arriving at themes was to put together similar codes or codes forming a pattern under a parent theme.

#### Step 4: Re-grouping of themes

The themes identified were grouped together to form a thematic group. These thematic groups helped give an easier understanding to the varied aspects of PLG. The grouping was done as per the affinities and according to the parameters mentioned in the chapter.

e.g.

Thematic Group	Theme	Corresponding transcript
<b>Joy</b>	<i>Joy-relief</i>	resolutions of the tough times are always associated with moments of joy
	<i>Joy-alert</i>	That sense of heightened awareness...we feel very aware and actually there is joy...there is..it's very ...
	<i>immense joy</i>	They feel immense joy, soon i seek it again and again...i seek that experience again. i come back
	<i>Joy-release</i>	There's a great release and sometimes...'joy'. but also I think at that point..You're not aware...you're totally one with it.

Another way to group the themes was to group them as per the state of mind they represented. One could find grouping as per the temporal phase that the theme represented. These thematic groups were relooked at and reorganisation of content was done. The themes were regrouped under a higher theme thus forming a hierarchical structure.

Types	
<i>momentary</i>	it comes and suddenly u know...its like oh...its falling together now
<i>sequential</i>	...intensely one image suggests and leads to another image and u just move on and it works well..everything works well and then there is another vision and u work towards the formal deadline
<i>rhythmic</i>	rhythm is a very useful word

---

<i>synchronised</i>	its like the pace u know when u u found it then u try to...its like u know dance as if ...u know u respond...u know like theres is music which you're hearing inside(gestures ears) to keep listening to it and not let go...otherwise u know ur not in synchronization...u know i think its about synchronization within something or...ummm...u find something which u hearing and u kind of keep responding to it ..but if that link breaks then again its a fresh beginning...it comes back but
---------------------	---

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## Step 5: Themes and sub-themes

The themes are then organised into levels where each level represents the themes and sub-themes. These yielded the final thematic structure of PLG described in that transcript.

<b>Global theme</b>	Facets					
<b>Organisational theme</b>	Antecedent phase					
<b>Organisational theme</b>	Self-state					
<b>Basic themes</b>	allow	trust	belief	acceptance	openness	receptivity

## Appendix III B

### Procedure of Constant comparative Analysis

#### Step1: Thematic Structures of Ten transcripts

The first step in the constant comparative analysis is the collation of thematic structures for all the ten transcripts of one set. The themes are aligned as per the global themes and then comparison is drawn.

Let us look at the collation of themes of all artists for the global theme of Stages.

Artist 1	Artist 2	Artist 3	Artist 4	Artist 5	Artist 6	Artist 7	Artist 8	Artist 9	Artist 10
connectedness	urge	need/urge	focus	urge	urge	urge	urge	frustration	emergence
concentration	concentration	excitement	engagement	inspiration		focus	longing	struggle	detachment
involvement	involvement	involvement	struggle	focus	involvement	involvement	gestation	end	
struggle	immersion	immersion		involvement	incubate	immersion	deep involvement		
intense phase	struggle	incubation		immersion	struggle	detachment	absorption		
letting go	let go	letting go		block		letting go	search		
end of PLG	end of PLG	end		struggle		end of PLG	struggle		
				frustration			letting go		
				detachment			end of letting go		
				clarity					
				letting go					
				end of PLG					



## Step2: Comparison of Thematic Structures of Ten transcripts

Once the themes are collated, a comparison of themes is done across the 10 thematic structures. Let us look at the comparison drawn for the themes in the global theme: Stages.

stages	Artist 2	artist 3	artist 4	Artist 5	Artist 6	Artist 7	Artist 8	Artist 9	Artist 10
connectedness	urge	need/urge	focus	urge	urge	urge	urge	frustration	emergence
concentration	concentration	excitement	engagement	inspiration		focus	longing	struggle	detachment
involvement	involvement	involvement	struggle	focus	involvement	involvement	gestation	end	
struggle	immersion	immersion		involvement	incubate	immersion	deep involvement		
intense phase	struggle	incubation		immersion	struggle	detachment	absorption		
letting go	let go moment	letting go		block		letting go	search		
end of letting go	end of letting go	end		struggle		end of letting go	struggle		
				frustration			letting go		
				detachment			end of letting go		
				clarity					
				letting go					
				end of letting go					

## Step3: Compilation of themes

Once the themes are compared, the next step would be to make a compilation of both the similar and dissimilar themes.

Stages	
Stage 1	<b>Urge, longing, inspiration</b>
Stage 2	<b>Focus, engagement, concentration</b>
Stage 3	<b>involvement</b>
Stage 4	<b>immersion, deep involvement, absorption</b>
Stage 5	<b>incubation, gestation, intense phase</b>
	<b>search, block</b>
	<b>struggle</b>
	<b>frustration</b>
Stage 6	<b>detachment, surrender</b>
Stage 7	<b>letting go</b>
	<b>emergence, clarity</b>
Stage 8	<b>end of letting go</b>

## Step 4: Final themes

Once the themes were compiled together, they were renamed to arrive at final themes.

Stages		
<i>Stage 1</i>	Urge, longing, inspiration	<b>Urge</b>
<i>Stage 2</i>	Focus, engagement, concentration involvement	<b>Focus</b>
<i>Stage 3</i>	immersion, deep involvement, absorption	<b>Immersion</b>
<i>Stage 4</i>	incubation, gestation, intense phase	<b>gestation</b>
<i>Stage 5</i>	search, block struggle frustration	<b>Conflict</b>
<i>Stage 6</i>	detachment, surrender	<b>Surrender</b>
<i>Stage 7</i>	letting go emergence, clarity	<b>Letting go</b>
<i>Stage 8</i>	end of letting go	<b>End</b>

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## APPENDIX IV A

### TYPES

#### Ephemeral letting go

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	it comes and suddenly u know...its like oh...its falling together now
A2	it just happened that i went and i saw it and suddenly.
A3	it can be a flash...
A4	the other is when u're really not thinking abt it...and then it surfaces sort of.
A5	Maybe momentary
A6	... It is continuous flashes
A7	but some certain kind of sensibility of light coming through a peek hole
A8	And it ... in a way declares itself ... the image or the
A9	in that one fraction comes something that you want to do and you feel like yes you produce the one thing that came together in that one second ... like it may be shorter than a second sometimes.
A10	and it happens within two seconds or three seconds, or whatever. It can happen in a flash
D1	I come to know the result even before I sketch! It is in my mind.
D3	I think ... I think it is ... it is for ... like a flash, and then you know ... then you sort of catch on to it or latch on to it.
D4	It can happen as a flash
D5	and just at that spur of the moment suddenly something strikes you
D6	because, it was a pure guess that we could do it. And we have reached to a maximum extent where we can do it.
D7	you start ... you are into a jolt
D8	No, no ... flashes are there, yes ... you know ... and these flashes are like ... you take forward and then ...

## Temporal letting go

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	...intensely one image suggests and leads to another image and u just move on and it works well..everything works well and then there is another vision and u work towards the formal deadline
A3	something gets the other...and its a chain of events....u dont know where its begun and where it'll end and where u may have rethought of something....
A4	u just cant go ahead..and then u clear the drums at some point...and when those drums are cleared...then u can juggle forward...
A5	And then you select one slowly, slowly.
A6	and that is a continuous ... focus on certain things a you know there are certain works that come together as an individual ... kind of unique piece ... just came together ...
A7	It is like love-making. You have to flirt, you have to ... it is not just the moment,
A8	, so it is a chain Each work is a chain to ... to somewhere else. But in our case, where you know things are organic and thought processes are organic, and situations are organic, it is like the environment ... it is a progression of experience
A9	multiple moments that you feel yes it is there
A10	... it can go on for a longer time ...
D4	It can happen over a period of time.
D5	And once you know you have to build on that, then you can keep working on that for let us say a month or two or even for a week and so on.
D6	as you said ... you are in that flow and that flow went on for that whole period.

## Synchronous

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	rhythm is a very useful word its like the pace u know when u u found it then u try to...its like u know dance as if ...u know u respond...u know like theres is music which you're hearing inside(gestures ears) to keep listening to it and not let go...otherwise u know ur not in synchronization...u know i think its about synchronization within something or...ummm...u find something which u hearing and u kind of keep responding to it ..but if that link breaks then again its a fresh beginning...it comes back but
A2	the painting the material...and this body...within that something happens
A4	when the object is not talking to you...and u're seeking to journey within
A7	It is almost, they create a situation, they let go and then make it ... hypnotize, or whatever

## Trance

---

### Artists/ Excerpt from transcript Designer

---

- A8** Where you allow things ... and ... in a way, I think sometimes you can go into a trance-like situation
- Where you allow things ... and ... in a way, I think sometimes you can go into a trance-like situation  
you don't know what to deal. You are closed  
You are outside ... you are outside ...  
one cannot say how long they last.  
the moment is the thing where you lose control  
So the moment is never long enough  
But the desire and the passion is, then ... could be a life time.  
because if you are in a trance, then you are not yourself.  
So there is no realization.  
Because even this possessor can lose his objectivity and intelligence also  
then you kind of want to push it and then carry it forward  
Suddenly something opens up.  
And it is a very beautiful space to be.
- 

## Sublime

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### Artists/ Excerpt from transcript Designer:

---

- A2** after a certain point...i'm just a tool.....to convey certain things...maybe i was chosen....to show,....things like that...u know....by God...by unknown force or the grt divine design....which i'm a part of it ....and so i have to follow...i cant be angry or i cant be unhappy or i can t be extremely happy...i have to just do things...u know....becoz i was chosen...i was guided..
- something else is supporting me....giving ,e a push...giving me energy
- someone is...some unknown force or unknown kind of which is kind of
- there is a kind of some divine force.....some blessings which is with me....supports me...helps me.....and which kind of guides and allows me to do things  
gave me that energy or power or that kind of specific....thing...which resolves the whole thing  
divine design....its like its was all destined...all to stay  
but when u totally forget and when u do you're so tuned with the whole process and u create then u do something...something profound comes..
-

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## APPENDIX IV B

### STAGES

#### Urge

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	...our concentration is on the moment.
A2	initially it starts...with something...there's an inclination...there is an inner urge.
A3	that i need to do this and how fast can i get to do this....
A4	Because of this need. I mean ... these mechanical paintings I do, it has its own need
A6	you know ... time is calling ... some kind of calling
A7	I don't want to be a kind of a Buddha, you know? Once you are enlightened, you are enlightened forever that is why I said you have to be inquisitive to know
A8	So ... for me, it begins as ... shall I say ... a need And that is when it kind of ... it... then the urge takes place to give it a form. there is a drive, an urge or a need, It is not happening for a long time and you are hoping it will happen. So ...
D1	And when you are getting a terrific high, every minute of the day, you want to be there

#### Focus

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A2	to concentrate,...on specific painting and within that it happens that change....suddenly u take certain decisions where u feel that it was necessary at that time
A4	you're very very focused about thinking about it... so it is now what I'm most focused in it might be a set of themes....a set of ideas
A5	It became suddenly about me and my body. It became suddenly about me and my body.
A7	But an artist is like ... he channelizes
D1	I put a lot of concentration, and then I do it with a lot of dedication and seriousness. Every sketch I make.
D4	you inter-focus



---

	then you are ... trying to focus on it.
<b>D7</b>	It doesn't come very casually that I am playing and I am getting an idea. You know ... your mind is diverted and not focused.
<b>D9</b>	so you dissociate yourself from ... everything else
<b>D10</b>	It is not that it doesn't exist, the world doesn't exist ... it does ... but I just manage to keep the facts in front of me, and all voices and static subside.

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## Immersion

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	it's like this great involvement i work intensely where the actual work is done is hours... intense...very intense...deeply 3 months
<b>A2</b>	when u're immersed totally....in the process that is the best.
<b>A3</b>	so its your involvement....your judgment...its a matter of a lot of...a combination of a lot of things..that makes it work... ...u're physically totally involved in that...
<b>A5</b>	No ... it is just a memory ... some you know ... when you open pages form the dairy, and you start looking from what you have done and what ... how it must have been done, it becomes some sort of a data system, you know? Which has lot to do with your feelings and experiences. I get involved into it So I have to get involved into it And I think, the most dangerous thing is your work. And the most adorable thing is your work there is this totally my own way of ... sitting in my own world, my own emotion, my own emotions, my own touch and everything
<b>A6</b>	I think they are more-or-less, it is very much related with your involvement with practice that your involvement is the key I am also physically involved in the whole act ...
<b>A7</b>	that is the research you take care of you kind of ... make perception of those people. If you don't involve with your painting, it won't happen.
<b>A8</b>	Because he has absorbed the environment, the circumstances, very differently who is so passionately involved with
<b>D1</b>	I realize that it is not good enough ... yet. So then I go further ... deep.
<b>D2</b>	I get more and more immersed in it, I doubt it ... because you are in depth here because you are not getting there.
<b>D3</b>	So ... I remember ... I mean ... I used to get up early in the morning ... say about ... Six – Six Thirty, and I used to just ... for, say an hour or so, I used to fill up pages of you know ... ellipse and ellipse and ellipse ... just to get, you know ... the hand right
<b>D4</b>	The time lag, probably gives the subconscious a space to absorb the phenomenon.  keeping yourself away from all the ... rest of the turmoil that happens you know that you are involved, you know you are doing something

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<b>D5</b>	<i>Haan (Yes)</i> ... I am ok with that ... Yeah. On the other hand, the other ... the positive side of it, you don't know ... you basically, you start ideating ... or you are about to start ideating or brain storming something, you know you have to come up with an idea, and so your thinking process should be something like this ... that is quite deliberate, that is quite intentional, because you have something which is planned for the next whatever time, or whatever hours or whatever it is ... or days or weeks for that matter.
<b>D6</b>	So it was going on and on and on all the things which look the same form ... we are looking at what all are the other things that I have seen in the past ... or you know wherever I go, I used to see for similar things. Whole day or two days or whatever it is we used to look for a similar object, safer solution. And finally it occurred that let us try this out.
<b>D7</b>	if you are into it, you would not need any book or anything Our involvement is much higher I have been with for long, gone through ups and downs, and let you learn lots of things rather than
<b>D8</b>	Then I felt like sometimes when I am like deep into it, it has happened I am doing it, I am doing it
<b>D9</b>	And I think that was ... very involving ... like you know ... if ... you are
<b>D10</b>	it is going deep into ... consciously ... whichever way ... to the ... through ... meditating, through listening

### : Gestation

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A3</b>	then it is in my mind and it keeps evolving so i may add a few lines
<b>A6</b>	I also wait ... maybe I will cook for day ... you know
<b>A8</b>	After it has gestated itself, then it becomes a need
<b>D4</b>	but that phenomenon is what probably is working with the sub-conscious layers of your mind, sometimes that sub-conscious needs a space for itself
<b>D6</b>	where it was going on in my mind for quite some time and it goes to a ...
<b>D7</b>	that has lead to you even when you are chilling out somewhere.

### : Conflict

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	that moment of struggle, might appear as moment of creativity. so it is dark and it is ...ummm extremely disturbing...u dont know where the painting is going  i was pushing ahead against a wall or i thought i was in deep gloom was actually good for me ...i'm arriving somewhere
<b>A2</b>	u constantly struggle

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<b>A4</b>	...with nothing moving...there are those frustrating days sometimes when things dont move
	there is an inability to discover, excavate and read ones thoughts...the illegibility of all that is in front f u and the frustration of it
	when i see myself locked in a certain time...in a dialogue with the work which i cannot understand fully...perhaps that experiences are similar to the experiences at school....and i think some joy at them
<b>A5</b>	I was trying many things for at least one and a half years and it was not happening ... like ... I had one particular idea but I didn't have any form of it and I had no idea what I am going to do
	I mean I was trying very hard to find it. Didn't happen
<b>A6</b>	How ... how much you have to fight! To get something done
	now I am talking about conflict in the completely different form
<b>A8</b>	At some point when you are struggling there is this kind of a "Eureka feeling" afterwards
<b>A9</b>	I think I have been screaming at every one of my thoughts (Laughs) ... two three days, I am completely phased out without something
	... in the state trying to grapple with the thing and then I am working with the sounds
<b>D1</b>	Frustrations, but I guess those are parts and parcels of life, so ... one must accept them.
<b>D3</b>	And you struggle, but you don't give up.
	And then ... but ... but I never gave it up, I kept on sort of doing it
<b>D5</b>	And you are nowhere and
<b>D6</b>	Then we realized, it is not working out. We have wasted two days. Everyone was disappointed. That this is not going to work, this guy has no experience, this is a guy coming and talking something let us ...
	ideation, then it just occurred, let us give it a try ... and took a paper and a pen, and tried doing the calculation, it was a little bit laborious ... at a given point.
	Preceding is more of a struggle.

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### : Surrender

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A4</b>	one is when u are engaging with material....its in a way an act of letting go...letting go into territories one does not know
<b>A5</b>	at the same time I was detached with them.
<b>A7</b>	If you have to make something new, you will have to forget about ... you know ... what you already have.
	And you have the distance to understand that
	you have to have a little distance to see
<b>A10</b>	you know you have to keep a distance between the work you are doing and ... this thing.
<b>D8</b>	... I just feel like I have to go, I have to do that.
<b>D10</b>	in that point in time I have completely surrendered

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## Letting go

Artists/ Designer	Excerpt from transcript
A1	it comes and suddenly u know...its like oh...its falling together now
A2	at some point suddenly u kind of change...dramatic shift u take...artist takes a dramatic shift...
A3	when i can start feeling positive and light...that i get excited...feel alive so to say
A4	one is when u are engaging with material....its in a way an act of letting go...letting go into territories one does not know all that accumulated stray strands of knowledge...collapse and crystallize to a form...across a period of time
A5	it is very interesting when you leave yourself out of it and ... things happen I let myself totally free. And then , my heart, my body, you know ... it happens. it happens ... if you don't leave yourself at that moment, then the moment goes and never comes back. , it is just a mix of emotions, spontaneity and intuition.
A7	It is almost, they create a situation, they let go and then make it ... hypnotize, or whatever
A8	One has to let go from the other dimension – that one is existing So one doesn't give up. As you said, one lets go.
A10	Lot of images might emerge out of nowhere They ... almost ... reach a level where they know what they are painting
D5	or you can clearly see the start and the end point
D10	I intuitively arrived at that

## End of letting go

Artists/ Designer	Excerpt from transcript
A1	sense of achievement that something happened...happens afterwards...ki ...oh...this was wonderful
A2	its done by me....how could i do this and i feel happy and i feel grt abt those moments
A3	u also know that the moment has ended
A8	But for the artist it becomes that moment to cherish and relish. Once he comes out of the trance, he feels very wonderful.
A9	like a full stop. Like a full stop.

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## APPENDIX IV C

### FACETS

#### ANTECEDENT PHASE

##### Self State: **Trust**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	at the right moment it clicks
<b>A2</b>	....so i have to be extremely loyal and i feel within...that i shd just kind of obey.....follow...and then that time will come..
<b>A3</b>	spontaneity in terms of ideas i can't be spontaneous in the making
<b>A5</b>	I mean, I said, let me just do it. I will see it later what happens. I take that risk and it works, you know?
<b>A6</b>	there are moments you feel ... you know that there is some kind of realization that "OK.  the artistic involvement is trust in it ...
<b>A7</b>	it like trust ... you believe in yourself,
<b>A9</b>	Then what happens is what I trust
<b>D3</b>	the feeling is there because you are again expecting that you know ... that you will again experience something new.
<b>D4</b>	you just know the one thing that once that is there in the mind that I have to think on these lines,
<b>D5</b>	More than me want ... any ... any want for any phenomenon, I think it will keep on happening.
<b>D10</b>	I will ... arrive there

##### Self State: **Belief**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	at the right moment it clicks
<b>A5</b>	I believe ... I believe ... you know
<b>A7</b>	it like trust ... you believe in yourself,

## Self State: **Allow**

<b>Artists/ Designer</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	you cling to that and allow that to happen, I've been painting for so long...so i had to always allow...and i feel that i shd just allow myself  I've been painting for so long...so i had to always allow and i feel that i shd just allow myself
<b>A3</b>	and then there is room to...and just to be able to suggest...changes in terms of size...scale...  the thing is i'm looking for less control....
<b>A5</b>	So sometimes you have to let it happen
<b>A6</b>	You are actually following your own destiny in a different level ... I mean what ...
<b>A8</b>	So I let it be. And if doesn't go away, then I act upon it. So I wait for that to kind of happen Where the possessor is so pressed, that he has to kind of do ... make the body do that.  Because you have kind of allowed that to come into your studio or wherever
<b>A9</b>	I cannot do anything I just have to wait.
<b>D1</b>	? So ... I allow for that.
<b>D2</b>	you have to ... you will have to work yourself into it. I don't think you'll like throw yourself into a switch.
<b>D3</b>	and then, you know letting you things ... letting you do things.
<b>D5</b>	it is not the situation that we are talking about at the moment because my hand is actually doing a free hand. It is free. So it is actually drawing freely.  It depends whether it is complete freedom or it is calculated ... it is like a calculated thing
<b>D10</b>	I think eventually none of this can happen without the permission of the higher self.

## Self State: **Acceptance**

<b>Artists/ Designer</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	to come to terms that this is the way i am...this is the path that i have to follow
<b>A5</b>	And I also accepted that fact that ok ... maybe it has gone for some time.
<b>A6</b>	Actually I enjoy a certain kind of madness
<b>A7</b>	So I accept that

## Self State: Openness

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	<p>this huge space...in between that moment and me.</p> <p>so one is trying to make connections..u dont quite leave it...its still somewhere inside..</p> <p>there is a certain pattern in which i respond to the world....of images</p>
A2	<p>artist remains open...he's not like this is what i'd thought and this is what i want to depict...this is what i want to paint...but even saying all this to yourself...the artist...the whole mind...one still is sort of open</p>
A3	<p>it is mostly open-ended.....i just go with a u know</p> <p>i'm not completely concretized the idea..</p> <p>so i keep it open ended when i go to them</p> <p>i dont put it on paper...becoz it gets conditioned by the drawing...so i normally dont go ahead with putting it down</p> <p>the thing is i'm looking for less control....</p>
A6	<p>Actually I enjoy a certain kind of madness</p>
A7	<p>The perforations also come from different areas</p>
D3	<p>Your own receptive mode, how absorbent you are of that mode</p> <p>when you are in perfect receptive mode, I am not talking about you as a person but your subconscious ... then that intensity is much higher</p> <p>A state of complete receptivity.</p> <p>think it becomes totally receptive to the phenomenon that happens around you ... which helps you do your creative work.</p>
D7	<p>so that is why you are more open while you are thinking. And try and push as much unique way you go about thinking.</p>

## Self State: Vulnerability

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	<p>i think the whole when it finally happens...i really believe that it cannot be planned...its something that just happens</p>
A2	<p>this si the way it shd go...the way it shd happen and all that...but it doesn't happen</p> <p>its the chance..is it something that predestined kind of situation thing something was already decided.</p>
A3	<p>u know just comes to you</p>
A9	<p>But it is actually stems from a very vulnerable</p> <p>I am completely fragile and completely vulnerable ...</p> <p>But I have a feeling that it will still keep me vulnerable and on tenter hooks for the next four, five days and then ... maybe.</p>



### Self State: **Internalization**

Artists/	Excerpt from transcript
Designer:	
D10	And it is ... I think ... you internalize it

### Self State: **Levitate**

Artists/	Excerpt from transcript
Designer:	
D1	I think I am levitated into that state all the time

### Self State: **Non-self consciousness**

Artists/	Excerpt from transcript
Designer:	
D2	you have to be in an un-self conscious state.
D5	you really don't know whether to be happy or what's happening to you. It is just that something strikes you; you know

### Self State: **Cohesion**

Artists/	Excerpt from transcript
Designer:	
A5	and then you also know that you have had certain experiences because if you don't let you go on that moment, then you can't walk. I mean, it all depends upon how sensitive we are about things.
A6	If you are not aware of certain degree of living, you can be misguided It is a very personal ... So you are in the right time, right temperament you are in the studio So there is an immediate relationship which happens
D6	that is an observation period ... you use it, and extrapolate it and you picture yourself in ... this is how it works.

### Work: **Challenge**

Artists/	Excerpt from transcript
Designer:	
A2	whats the fun...whats the point...one shd put oneself into the difficult position...come out try new things...it shd become a new experience to you also..
A6	So your mind has to sense several things and deliver it
A8	So it ... it is a challenge.

<b>A9</b>	you are struggling with your work, it is more like you
<b>D1</b>	the more difficult the problem, the more intense the experience is
<b>D6</b>	So it is more like a challenge ... you have put up a challenge that comes up
<b>A2</b>	whats the fun...whats the point...one shd put oneself into the difficult position...come out try new things...it shd become a new experience to you also..

### Work: **Constraint**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A3</b>	i could do only so much...if i delve on it to would be only within my limits of understanding of how things are made....
<b>D4</b>	pressured by several other factors which is not letting it go to
<b>D5</b>	It depends whether it is complete freedom or it is calculated ... it is like a calculated thing
<b>D6</b>	Here what is happening is most of the time the freedom is either contained by the requirements or something.
<b>D7</b>	because these processes restrains you also sometimes.
<b>A3</b>	i could do only so much...if i delve on it to would be only within my limits of understanding of how things are made....
<b>D4</b>	pressured by several other factors which is not letting it go to

### Work: **Risk**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A5</b>	and that is a risk one has to take somewhere.
<b>A8</b>	I don't allow it to approve it. I mean, I take risks. Very calculated risks
<b>D1</b>	if you have nothing to lose, you tend to be more creative. I
<b>D5</b>	As a result of which you get a chance, you get a beginning to work
<b>A5</b>	and that is a risk one has to take somewhere.
<b>A8</b>	I don't allow it to approve it. I mean, I take risks. Very calculated risks
<b>D1</b>	if you have nothing to lose, you tend to be more creative. I

### Interaction: **Connectedness**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	so one is trying to make connections..u dont quite leave it...its still somewhere inside..
<b>A5</b>	.I think there is a constant communication because it is not the only thing that is alive ... everything has its own life.
<b>A6</b>	So I thought I should do a show there, club it with an idea ... then I thought ...

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	So there is an immediate relationship which happens
A7	because I am an artist, I am looking through these kinds of stuff and I relate it to my own practice, and I randomly, I associate make corrections
A8	there is a an immediate ... you respond
A9	but for me, in my practice where it sort of concludes ... comes together and ... they are very brief
D5	So something strikes or ... something ... that particular element hits you and then the whole thinking process starts and you somewhere try to make sense of it and then you find it drag.  I know it is all connected. So it comes to biology or whatever it is, it works because of the linking and stuff like that
D9	So you start making the connection you need to
D10	because there is a connection and you know what that means? – Connection.  And ... and it is one true connection  and has a beautiful sense of connection  And that is perhaps the kind of connection with your higher self. I mean the higher self takes over

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### Interaction: **Playfulness**

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Artists/ Designer	Excerpt from transcript
A5	And so whatever I was doing, it was just like a play, it was just like a ... something
A2	its also kind of a play...its play with yourself...play with ideas....play with the viewer...
A1	u're more playful...u see new sides of yourself  when there is fun when there is play....  this thing abt surprises like u think arey waah ...this happened
A5	play, fun is a part of it ... part of it.  And so whatever I was doing, it was just like a play, it was just like a ... something
A8	There is a lot of play and it is like you are playing scrabble with a person you cannot see.
D7	It doesn't come very casually that I am playing and I am getting an idea. You know ... your mind is diverted and not focused.
A4	but sometimes this piece gets the energy and then thats this type of work...the act of moving it is an act of play..

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### Interaction: **Discipline**

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Artists/ Designer	Excerpt from transcript
A2	those kind of things come from experience of all these years...one learns...one is aware of these things
A3	in terms of thinking...in terms of being receptive to things around you...looking for ideas...rather than waiting for it to happen....so there is a compulsion there are deadlines to things.
D3	something that you keep on doing it again and again and over and over again

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	it is like doing the whole thing ... you know ... keep on doing the same thing again and again and again. It is like actually ...
<b>D9</b>	you need a little discipline to bring things together
<b>A3</b>	there is a compulsion of producing so much when you're working towards a show or a deadline..gallery creates a discipline and all so there is always this compulsion to think and create a discipline for yourself where you're productive
<b>A10</b>	you will have to keep on working until and unless you are able to satisfy ... the image.
<b>D8</b>	I am doing it, I am doing it

### Interaction: **Skill**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	those kind of things come from experience of all these years...one learns...one is aware of these things
<b>A3</b>	i just feel like a contact so that it all just it all just you surprise you know you have worked with mechanical engineer..so to him i go with an idea but thru that kind of collaboration there are things that kind of come up which are unexpected
<b>A4</b>	of strands of experiences that one has accumulated of collected over time there is this totally my own way of ... sitting in my own world, my own emotion, my own emotions, my own touch and everything
<b>A6</b>	I think it is beyond something that is involvement which gives you a certain degree of mastery in ... in your own space and time. you actually master yourself he develops a certain degree of understanding with his world ... he understands the nature better. He understands the time better. He is a better thinker. You know? He gives a lot of time to himself. He is lonely. He loves that idleness.
<b>A7</b>	you have to be familiar.
<b>A8</b>	So one is kind of acquiring these sorts of vocabulary. With them one constructs sentences and as I see it as a skill
<b>A10</b>	Each and every detail and every aspect of it is pre-planned then only I go to actually executing the work.
<b>D3</b>	So ... I remember ... I mean ... I used to get up early in the morning ... say about ... Six – Six Thirty, and I used to just ... for, say an hour or so, I used to fill up pages of you know ... ellipse and ellipse and ellipse ... just to get, you know ... the hand right

### Interaction: **Inertia**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A8</b>	It is ... you see ... the body, without the impulses is inert.
<b>A4</b>	there is an inability to discover, excavate and read ones thoughts...the illegibility of all that is in front f u and the frustration of it

### Interaction: **Passion**

<b>Artists/ Designer</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	i;m detached enough to see that passion
<b>A3</b>	getting an idea is u know...u're physically totally involved in that... ...u're physically totally involved in that...
<b>A8</b>	and there are moments of passion who is so passionately involved with
<b>D3</b>	Yeah ... at least at that particular moment, yes ... I would say. Because I mean, then it was a different kind of an energy,
<b>D7</b>	and to enter into that level of passion
<b>D8</b>	any of these strong emotional state I can associate ...

### Interaction: **Search**

<b>Artists/ Designer</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>D4</b>	but you start out to achieve something and you
<b>A10</b>	one stage is to ... find or discover the images from the main

### Interaction: **Chance**

<b>Artists/ Designer</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	i think the whole when it finally happens...i really believe that it cannot be planned...its something that just happens a game of exchange
<b>A2</b>	its the chance..is it something that predestined kind of situation thing something was already decided.
<b>A3</b>	u know just comes to you
<b>A4</b>	I love accidents. It is like ... it is like fate ... it is like destiny.
<b>A10</b>	but it is the very fact that creative activity is such that a lot of accidents happen. , there can be chance of accidents. There can be a chance of something you thought was never going to happen. And also, there are certain chances of accidents even in the process of finding and discovering the image.
<b>D5</b>	So it really happens. So out of nowhere, As a result of which you get a chance, you get a beginning to work So that freedom is not entirely completely, you know, shooting in the dark, it is definitely for some goal or something ... so it ... it is that way.
<b>D8</b>	... I just feel like I have to go, I have to do that.

### Interaction: Diffusion

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	it comes from within as if...and in fact there are times when i wish to change the direction of things...and i find myself going back...to...ummm...it just takes it own course
A2	u actually forget...that i'm in such a space  i forget all that...and those are the moments which are kind of very very precious to me and one becomes much more broad....inside...within urself...u start appreciating many things...  no i dont realize then....at that time
A8	So there is no realization.
D4	And when so many obstacles are around you which you are not even aware of, then the sub-conscious is not going into a state of complete receptivity.
D8	I am just illustrating without knowing what is happening all around me and then some ... after three, four hours I realize that so much of time has passed by.
D10	And it ... what is wonderful is that the world becomes meaningless  At that point in time I find that everything recedes  It is not that it doesn't exist, the world doesn't exist ... it does ... but I just manage to keep the facts in front of me, and all voices and static subside.

### Interaction: Exploration

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
D3	the method is basically focusing on one thing and maybe exploring ... exploring whatever ... is within your reach, I think that would also ... I think that's what I would say ... is the method. It is like practice, practice and practice. That's what I am saying ...
D6	When I do the sketch, you explore the other side, which your image is not able to do it.
D10	So that is my own sense of ... my own evolution as a person  if it has expanded into a kind of an evolved experience

### Interaction: Analytical

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	so constantly you're with it...u know u might do anything else...  theres always logical connections
A2	logically feels that one would probably one is aware becoz of the past...experience
A3	i just feel like a contact so that it all just it all just you surprise you know you have worked with mechanical engineer..so to him i go with an idea but thru that kind of collaboration there are things that kind of come up which are unexpected  my work is dependent on a lot of other people...the way we build it up.

	they have worked with many different mechanical engineers at the same time so they have their different ways of looking at things so that allows me to kind of you know do much more than what i could do alone
	i could do only so much...if i delve on it to would be only within my limits of understanding of how things are made....
A5	I am so bond to conceptual thing, that sometimes you don't let ... let yourself go out of it
A8	I don't allow it to approve it. I mean, I take risks. Very calculated risks
A9	and the thing sort of came together ... maybe it is a puzzle in your mind and you ... look at a reference and the reference completes it. forcing yourself to sort of like at that point, crystallize, crystallize It is a collapse of ... of ... of a ... set of thinking patterns.
D5	It depends whether it is complete freedom or it is calculated ... it is like a calculated thing So then I am processing those thoughts, those things. And hand is ... it is in a supportive role. So it is just supporting that thought.
D7	You start with a mechanical work, a mechanical mind ...

### Interaction: **Compulsion/Addictive**

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	i just find myself gravitating towards it
A2	....so i have to be extremely loyal and i feel within...that i shd just kind of obey.....follow
A3	Sometimes you feel very strongly that this has to be done....and i've to go and do this now....so it varies...in terms of intensity.
A4	one has to be open to even see thru just simple porous moments in the day that allows u vision into other moments,,and other moments and that in a way gives u a sense of of rather sometimes it doesn't give a sense of...but it rather gives u a broader vision of things
A6	Actually I enjoy a certain kind of madness
A8	So when one is in ... the state of passion, that means that one is not in command
D1	To me, everything stems from obsessive passion
D8	Yeah ... it is like a compulsion ... it is like ... it is like an addiction ... I just feel like I have to go, I have to do that.

### Interactive Self: **Spontaneity**

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	i think the whole when it finally happens...i really believe that it cannot be planned...its something that just happens
A9	when I am doing it so you are just doing it
D1	Because, anyway it is spontaneous
D4	Yeah. If you deserve it, you get it. At that moment.
D5	But sometimes something triggers, but that trigger part can be anything ... it can be as simple as anything . It can be mood you are in, it can be people around you, interruption – So it really happens. So out of nowhere,

### Interactive Self: Alertness

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A6	I mean it is that consciousness ... that alertness If you are not aware of certain degree of living, you can be misguided
A10	there is conscious knowledge about why this is happening.

### Interactive Self: Involuntary

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	at the right moment it clicks
A2	its the chance..is it something that predestined kind of situation thing something was already decided. this si the way it shd go...the way it shd happen and all that...but it doesn't happen
A6	when I am working ... in the whole process of making ... sometimes, you take a "U-Turn". Actually I enjoy a certain kind of madness
A7	so it is like naturally, it comes to you when you are painting It naturally comes to your space, and it is also random
A8	I wouldn't know how to go into a trance
A9	I sometimes feel can I ever do it again And it comes and it goes and it takes you by surprise.
D1	you know when you... then it becomes like ... then you are engaging
D4	you have not planned it, things are happening and then when something else is ... when it is required it sort of comes ... t Yeah. If you deserve it, you get it. At that moment.
D5	I mean, it is not a question of me wanting one
D8	but sometimes it just comes out It just happened, when it happened
D10	But at the same time, the moment is not of our choice.

### Interactive Self: Unpredictable

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A5	. I think there is a constant communication because it is not the only thing that is alive ... everything has its own life. because of a lot of combinations. There was combination of lines; there was combination of line, emotions, feelings, experiences around me.
A8	So I take a long time and as a strategy, I don't react immediately to a thought or an idea.



### Interactive Self: **Intuitive/Instinctive**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	u have certain clarity abt ur subject matter
<b>A5</b>	I mean, it all depends upon how sensitive we are about things. and then you also know that you have had certain experiences because if you don't let you go on that moment, then you can't walk.
<b>A6</b>	I think the process of working in that sense, I mean it's like ... intuitive.  So you are in the right time, right temperament you are in the studio  most of the time he is very instinctive of all the decisions one of the materials in my work is intuition. (Laughs) I enjoy that <b>A7</b> everything has its own contended meaning
<b>D5</b>	So something strikes or ... something ... that particular element hits you and then the whole thinking process starts and you somewhere try to make sense of it and then you find it drag.
<b>D10</b>	there is something in me which makes it happen

### Interactive Self: **Awareness**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	those kind of things come from experience of all these years...one learns...one is aware of these things  logically feels that one would probably one is aware becoz of the past...experience  no i dont realize then....at that time these things one was not aware i think i'm aware partly
<b>A5</b>	So I was aware of them at the same time
<b>A9</b>	super aware at these moments.

### Interactive Self: **Non-aware**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A10</b>	they are not at all aware of what is going to happen ... they are not aware of what is the final result  . If you are aware of it, then it is not really spontaneous it is
<b>D4</b>	When it happens, you don't even realize it. You are, nut ... not as you generally are
<b>D5</b>	you really don't know whether to be happy or what's happening to you. It is just that something strikes you; you know
<b>D10</b>	How did that happen, I am not sure

### Interactive Self: **No-Control**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A5</b>	the thing is i'm looking for less control... which gives you a certain degree of mastery in ... in your own space and time. you actually master yourself
<b>D4</b>	I don't think you are ... you are in-charge
<b>D5</b>	sometimes hand could take over.
<b>D7</b>	You can ... can't ... difficult to control it because so much

### Interactive Self: **Intentionality**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>D2</b>	You have to. You have to ... otherwise
<b>D3</b>	Yeah. ... in the consciousness than in the sub-conscious mind.
<b>D10</b>	And when you are surrendering, the idea for me is not just to surrender in a moment of  the idea for me is to be in that union.

### Interactive Self: **Evolution**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>D10</b>	So that is my own sense of ... my own evolution as a person if it has expanded into a kind of an evolved experience

### Threshold: **Instantaneity**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	at the right moment it clicks

### Threshold: **Surrender**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A9</b>	when I am doing it so you are just doing it
<b>D4</b>	Yeah. If you deserve it, you get it. At that moment.
<b>D5</b>	sometimes hand could take over.

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	I mean, it is not a question of me wanting one
<b>D10</b>	in that point in time I have completely surrendered

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## CONCURRENT PHASE

### Self State: Anoesis

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	there are moments of...like...yeah...you're not aware...and its like...its happened through you...more than u know...through a strategy or consciousness
A4	one is not a full witness to everything
A5	You don't know what is happening.
A7	They may not be aware of all this You are, in a way, unconscious.
A8	We are not aware of anything else
D10	, I am not aware of that

### Self State: No-time

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A1	its as if there is no time...that time one forgets there is no sense of time
A3	u dont know how long it has happened
A7	You ... you are in a ... you don't know when you are painting,
A8	one cannot say how long they last.
A9	I guess this is the longest letter, it would have been about ten, fifteen minutes? Yeah. Because it is a longish letter but not all some works you just write and you wake up and you are drawing it and it is over.
D8	and then suddenly, there is no sense of time See, actually the time component, which I don't even realize ... what ... how much time has gone

### Self State: No-space/new space

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A2	u actually forget...that i'm in such a space unique experince of sudden shift...a dramatic change it'll...you'll carry on...no...every time its a new experience
A3	its like a port...it opens up spaces that
A4	you're in a different space opening their crust and finding something you hadn't seen before...that it is this main piece of information...

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<b>A5</b>	and I think sometimes I live on the space itself and the moment you make communication with space or the place, then the space itself starts telling you what you should do.
	. Because I think there are certain areas where you go inside your mind.
<b>A8</b>	Suddenly something opens up. And it is a very beautiful space to be.
<b>A9</b>	you are in another ... you are in another excitement, I don't think there is a space ... most of the time I am quite surprised.
<b>D4</b>	The achievement of that space depends on so many factors
<b>D7</b>	Let the creative mind have its own space to think and blossom

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### Self State: No-self

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	in a sense one forgets oneself
<b>A2</b>	u forget urself in the process...like the mystics if u forget yourself...u lose the whole identity within the process...when often this moment comes...which u know which you're so involved...that one has often forgotten himself...and i think that is one of the greatest  but when u totally forget and when u do you're so tuned with the whole process and u create then u do something...something profound comes..
<b>A4</b>	you're not aware of yourself
<b>A5</b>	My feelings and my experiences make me know about my own existence in a very different way. it is very interesting when you leave yourself out of it and ... things happen I let myself totally free. And then , my heart, my body, you know ... it happens. it happens ... if you don't leave yourself at that moment, then the moment goes and never comes back.
<b>A7</b>	it has to be like a kind of hypnotic moment So it is forgetfulness is also nice
<b>A8</b>	In a way it is quite easy for me to lose myself. So I have let go of the artist you don't know what to deal. You are closed because if you are in a trance, then you are not yourself.
<b>A9</b>	And I ... I wonder ... who was the person who wrote it sometimes. I cannot ... want for anything in this state. It has to come <u>into</u> ... I cannot even desire for ...
<b>D2</b>	you try and pull yourself out of there.
<b>D4</b>	you know ... to ... to sort of explain it you have to be out-sided.
<b>D6</b>	it triggers that ... it ... the whole thing you have to put it. The whole and soul.
<b>D7</b>	The thing has to come from within ... you. So that's the way to ...
<b>D8</b>	I am just illustrating without knowing what is happening all around me and then some ... after three, four hours I realize that so much of time has passed by.
<b>D10</b>	I mean whether it is me feeling or somebody feeling

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### Self State: **Non intentionality/witness**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A4</b>	over that one is often an audience to that process
<b>A7</b>	it is almost like a voyeur in a different sense, you know
<b>A8</b>	You are outside ... you are outside ...
<b>A9</b>	And I ... I wonder ... who was the person who wrote it sometimes.
<b>D4</b>	You have to be an observer. You are aware in the sense that you know that there is something happening
<b>D10</b>	I mean whether it is me feeling or somebody feeling

### Self State: **involuntary**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	it comes from within as if...and in fact there are times when i wish to change the direction of things...and i find myself going back...to...ummm...it just takes it own course
<b>A3</b>	u know just comes to you ....i think it lasts as long as it needs to last....no...u dont have a control.....
<b>A8</b>	then you get into all sorts of mutations and So when one is in ... the state of passion, that means that one is not in command
<b>A10</b>	there is an extreme level of spontaneity where we call automatism, where the artist is not going to control anything
<b>D1</b>	I have never felt the need to control them
<b>D6</b>	I don't think it is in the control basically,

### Self State: **momentum**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	...intensely one image suggests and leads to another image and u just move on and it works well..everything works well and then there is another vision and u work towards the formal deadline it comes and suddenly u know...its like oh...its falling together now
<b>A2</b>	theres a movement
<b>A3</b>	its ever evolving once u get an idea...then u evolve it in your mind
<b>A4</b>	and then it moves....now to me that moment is pretty indefinable
<b>A6</b>	And then you want to move on. Maybe these kinds of things I am thinking. I am not thinking maybe about the concept at all.
<b>A8</b>	But in our case, where you know things are organic and thought processes are organic, and situations are organic, it is like the environment

<b>A8</b>	And that is when the body acquired quote, unquote “A sort of a ... a momentum of its own”.
	”. Or an action of its own
<b>A10</b>	So every time there is a ... there is a movement, you make a decision
<b>D5</b>	I really don’t want to break that moment or the momentum or the overall process or the way it is functioning.

### Self State: **Aliveness/vigour/high alertness**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	so u’re alert to that moment.
<b>A3</b>	....i think one needs to be aware
<b>D3</b>	Yeah ... at least at that particular moment, yes ... I would say. Because I mean, then it was a different kind of an energy,
<b>D9</b>	I am aware that I am there
	but at the same time I think there was a will ... there was s strong will that you know
<b>D9</b>	but it is really hard to sustain energies

### Self State: **Aliveness/vigour**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>D3</b>	Yeah ... at least at that particular moment, yes ... I would say. Because I mean, then it was a different kind of an energy,
	but at the same time I think there was a will ... there was s strong will that you know
<b>D9</b>	but it is really hard to sustain energies

### Self State: **Vacuum/Blank**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>D5</b>	So you are about to basically come up with an idea or string or some thread, which will eventually lead you to an idea or the kind if an output that one is looking for. It suddenly goes. So you are completely switched off from that particular situation and you are completely blank.
<b>D8</b>	kind of ... vacuum kind of a thing

## Work: **Emergence/insight/revelation**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	it gives u something...and u again start....the ball starts rolling.
<b>A4</b>	that is the act of witnessing the persistent legibility and the occasional readability emerges and then how u click on to those and then u get to jaywalk into further regions of illegibility...so the work then gathers meaning density and depth through this engagement...
<b>A5</b>	And it came exactly the way I wanted.
<b>A6</b>	and your thinking, you translate into a kind of an image ... It is there ... I am imagining now ...
<b>A8</b>	And it ... in a way declares itself ... the image or the But if you have allowed that to happen and declare itself and generate itself,
<b>A9</b>	there seems to be a definite moment of truth or maybe condensation of emotion  forcing yourself to sort of like at that point, crystallize, crystallize It is a collapse of ... of ... of a ... set of thinking patterns.
<b>D4</b>	it is just emerging right in front of you. if there is slit there. And we can fill it all the time, When it is emerging, you are one with it ... in a way ... and you are part of it.

## Interaction: **Synchronous**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	the painting the material...and this body...within that something happens
<b>A5</b>	it was a nice communication with the medium.  there is a sort of synchronization after a certain point, because the mind wants something very specific. And the feeling mostly deliver it in a very specific manner.  And with the coordination fo mind and emotions, it comes
<b>A7</b>	It is like understanding the space, understanding the body, and then you work  It is like your mind and your hand works according to that

## Interaction: **Rhythmic/tuned**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	rhythm is a very useful word



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	its like the pace u know when u u found it then u try to...its like u know dance as if ...u know u respond...u know like theres is music which you're hearing inside(gestures ears) to keep listening to it and not let go...otherwise u know ur not in synchronization...u know i think its about synchronization within something or...ummm...u find something which u hearing and u kind of keep responding to it ..but if that link breaks then again its a fresh beginning...it comes back but
	its like a dance...it like u're hearing this music inside your head
<b>A2</b>	but when u totally forget and when u do you're so tuned with the whole process and u create then u do something...something profound comes..
<b>A4</b>	u need to experience the varied rhythms of life
<b>A10</b>	the whole process is to balance between the accidents and the control,

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### Interaction: **Dialogue/cross-fertilisation/connections/reciprocation**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	a game of exchange u're constantly innovating
<b>A3</b>	once u get an idea...then u evolve it in your mind
<b>A4</b>	of strands of experiences that one has accumulated of collected over time and there is a point at which all of these strands being to cross fertilize into a third entity...
<b>A5</b>	. Because I think there are certain areas where you go inside your mind.
<b>A6</b>	And you have an immediate space where you can juxtapose things
<b>A8</b>	It is a dialogue, in the work when you have dialogue, and there is resistance from your work
<b>A9</b>	there is like another set of transactions, sort of taking place between various brain cells and then you are working and then you are in touch with your other
<b>D6</b>	if you see, there is a high level of dialogue happening at every level.
<b>D7</b>	. Think internally and put down notes and thoughts
<b>D4</b>	it is very reciprocatory

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### Interaction: **Fragility**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	u know its all magical...its happening by itself
<b>A3</b>	its like a dream

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## Interaction: **Energetic**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A3</b>	its different u feel excited...physically so excited that u cannot sleep.
<b>A5</b>	So I think this whole energy which has been exchanged between the ... even with the still things, it has a lot of communication – a lot!
<b>A6</b>	there is an energy which you can derive from your own surroundings.
<b>A8</b>	and it is so intense, that ... that ... these moments
<b>D3</b>	Yeah ... at least at that particular moment, yes ... I would say. Because I mean, then it was a different kind of an energy,
<b>D9</b>	but it is really hard to sustain energies

## Interactive Self: **Pre-destined**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	when i'm alone and actually working in my studio...this something happens u know that I've forgotten myself...when I've forgotten myself...during that moment..coz i;m so tuned with my...whatever i'm doing...that there is something which is like unknown force....or unknown guidance...which i feel...which takes over....and then i feel that after doing the painting....i feel very happy that oh....this is so good and different...i never experienced such a thing
<b>A6</b>	It is the right time you are going to the right place I always feel that there is a strange intuitive element which surrounds you
<b>A7</b>	The destiny of the space where I am working

## Interactive Self: **Union**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A4</b>	A moment of oneness with the idea that one is grappling with and i would still attach that with a unison between the self and and the other meditative space is that we often think of is something else altogether.
<b>A7</b>	then you can merge into the other ... you know, merge into the space
<b>A8</b>	That is when the body and the possessor become one and get lost. Then you become the dialogue
<b>A9</b>	So you think like very complete and I feel very lucky although ... to be able to experience, go through these states of
<b>D3</b>	. It is just a matter of you know ... doing it ... being with it and doing it ... I think.
<b>D4</b>	When it is emerging, you are one with it ... in a way ... and you are part of it. When you become it, you are it and then, that is the state. That is the perfect thing. You are part of it. So when you are part of it, The achievement of that space depends on so many factors
<b>D8</b>	I am like really into it ... being there with the thing

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	it may just be happening in that particular moment ... just ... being there and ...
<b>D10</b>	then I become the one with ...self. ... It is oneness in something ... I am aware of just the union. then it is about ruling out and ... comes together

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### Interactive Self: **Meditative/yogic**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	...that there is something which is like unknown force....or unknown guidance...which i feel...which takes over.  there is a kind of some divine force.....some blessings which is with me....supports me...helps me.....and which kind of guides and allows me to do things  but when u totally forget and when u do you're so tuned with the whole process and u create then u do something...something profound comes..
<b>A4</b>	it is very meditative  In that moment, which is actually a Yogic moment
<b>D10</b>	And spiritual side  I am aware of the divinity.  I think that would be ... probably "Nirvana"

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### Interactive Self: **Orgasmic**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A7</b>	It is like ... it is like orgasm ... or whatever
<b>D1</b>	There is ... this is akin to being on drugs, this is akin to orgasm, or whatever

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### Interactive Self: **Spiritual/Divine/Sublime Other**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	and then it just rejects...the painting rejects it so..there are so many things like that...umm..u start taking decisions which...you know the image demands it
<b>A2</b>	when i feel if its only me....who' s doing these things  ...that there is something which is like unknown force....or unknown guidance...which i feel...which takes over.  after a certain point...i'm just a tool.....to convey certain things...maybe i was chosen....to show,....things like that...u know....by God...by unknown force or the grt divine design....which i'm a part of it .....and so i have to follow...i cant be angry or i cant be unhappy or i can t be extremely happy...i have to just do things....u know....becoz i was chosen...i was guided..

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	something else is supporting me....giving me a push...giving me energy
	someone is...some unknown force or unknown kind of which is kind of
	there is a kind of some divine force.....some blessings which is with me....supports me...helps me.....and which kind of guides and allows me to do things
	gave me that energy or power or that kind of specific....thing...which resolves the whole thing
<b>A4</b>	and i think to be alert to that larger divine design or ray
<b>A5</b>	. Many times things happen and I have to change it and it happens with a totally different ... with no reasons many times. I think I will leave it on its own life So there is a strong ego tussle between work and you if it decides that you should not touch it, then you do anything, you cannot touch it.
	I mean, sometimes it hates you, sometimes it loves you
<b>A6</b>	So it completely started changing. So, it just moves on. the artist is somebody in this world you know ... maybe after god, who has created objects Then you know ... the mobility of the work became crucial and then I started thinking differently
<b>A7</b>	the process can select a medium
<b>A8</b>	see the medium will not allow you to ... the medium challenges you in a way. then it becomes a presence. And that presence is almost like someone sitting with you and the work is again kind of counting you I destroy because it is not what I want, but there is a stubbornness in that object ... what is coming to ... physicality. So the outside being dictates it's influence on you and then your experience becomes repetitive
<b>A9</b>	parallel like you are in one living state where you are aware and there is another state where it is working. you have said that and you wonder, is this your work? What happened? I can feel my ... I can feel like ... something like there is
<b>A10</b>	you will have to keep on working until and unless you are able to satisfy ... the image.
<b>D3</b>	I think that would be ... probably "Nirvana"
<b>D5</b>	So brain is actually coming out and drawing something, so brain is actually helping
<b>D10</b>	And spiritual side I am aware of the divinity.

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### Interactive Self: **Trance/Dream/Magical/Hypnotic**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A8</b>	Where you allow things ... and ... in a way, I think sometimes you can go into a trance-like situation
<b>A1</b>	u know its all magical...its happening by itself

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<b>A7</b>	Artist is not a magician, you know? Artist is an inventor. He is much more serious as a scientist. Or much more serious than a scientist. Or when you draw, every moment is a magical moment
<b>A3</b>	its like a dream
<b>D3</b>	Yeah. I do ... I do see the picture and the visual in the dream
<b>A7</b>	It is almost, they create a situation, they let go and then make it ... hypnotize, or whatever

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### Interactive Self: **Beyond Self/Beyond capacity**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	this is much beyond this whole cosmic energy. divine design....its like its was all destined...all to stay
<b>A6</b>	you call is blessing, you call it inclination that you have, you call it I think it is beyond something that is involvement Always feel like that ... there are certain things that are destined to happen
<b>A7</b>	So the process helps, the accidents helps, for me, destiny helps, fate, everything is part of it.
<b>A8</b>	in a way one is a prisoner in one's ... I don't want to say mind because it is beyond the mind. It is the ... it is the ... soul – like the possessor. It is pushing the body and also ... in a way – And the body sometimes is limited in going to that 'beyond' It is that what you want to go into that beyond. Your action, your physicality. And then there is something outside which happens in a way, in a sort of what you call ... automate ... automation
<b>A9</b>	this is another kind of language. It has its own vocabulary, which is not words. I have to allow it to function
<b>A10</b>	That is how we actually call it responding inside
<b>D3</b>	changing the view point ... and it was like you know ... they say – “Divya Gyan” (Divine Knowledge) kind of a thing ...
<b>D4</b>	that there is a phenomenon beyond you and you know that some ... something else is also happening.
<b>D5</b>	So most of the time it is not in your head, it is not in your mind, but hand is doing justice to what was there in your head, which is like a fifty percent idea and your hand is making to ... making it full ... making it complete.
<b>D10</b>	... it is actually immeasurable. In fact, it is not of this world. that is like out of this world ... but the moment of collection is the other world. Where the ideas come from.
<b>A9</b>	so they allow you to express something which otherwise you cannot ...

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### Interactive Self: **Perfection**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A6</b>	which gives you a certain degree of mastery in ... in your own space and time.
<b>A8</b>	you have such precision that what you have predicted or planned comes out. and then it becomes special.
<b>D4</b>	it is the perfect equilibrium When you become it, you are it and then, that is the state. That is the perfect thing.
<b>D5</b>	So you don't really want to let that go ... so you don't really want to stop the ... disturb the moment, and even the momentum, you know ... carry it on.
<b>D10</b>	. And so to arrive at that peaceful bubble within the chaos of the world, its perfection

### Interactive Self: **Intensity**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A8</b>	and it is so intense, that ... that ... these moments
<b>A8</b>	and there are moments of passion

### Interactive Self: **Balance**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>D6</b>	it triggers that ... it ... the whole thing you have to put it. The whole and soul.
<b>D9</b>	where do you get into the soul just like that ...
<b>D4</b>	at the ... at the ... at it's ... at its most beautiful state, you are not thinking about anything

### Threshold: **End/Stop**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A3</b>	u also know that the moment has ended
<b>A5</b>	I know it has ended
<b>A6</b>	I know its over
<b>A8</b>	I'm out of it
<b>A9</b>	...and it ends
<b>A10</b>	I know it has ended...and it starts again
<b>D4</b>	you can just get out of it, slip it in, keep out of it, slip it in ...
<b>D5</b>	I really don't want to break that moment or the momentum or the overall process or the way it is functioning.

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<b>D10</b>	I have come out of it and it is finished.
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Threshold: **Submission**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
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<b>A2</b>	within the process...when often this moment comes...which u know which you're so involved...that one has often forgotten himself...and i think that is one of the greatest
<b>A3</b>	u know just comes to you
<b>A4</b>	it just clicks
<b>A5</b>	and I think sometimes I live on the space itself and the moment you make communication with space or the place, then the space itself starts telling you what you should do.
<b>A6</b>	It just clicks ... and it is possible because you are in the stream
<b>A7</b>	when cat drinking milk, they always close their eyes. It is almost like that
<b>A8</b>	somewhere you are surrendering to what is happening outside of you
	So one doesn't give up. As you said, one lets go.
<b>D4</b>	you can only be ... a receiver
<b>D6</b>	when I do that, when I submit,

---

## SUBSEQUENT PHASE

### Self State: **Newness/ Uniqueness**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A5</b>	And I think it was suddenly a totally different proposition for me So I started discovering the form and when I discovered the form
<b>D1</b>	To me it comes in a built up form.
<b>A2</b>	unique experience of sudden shift...a dramatic change it'll...you'll carry on...no...every time its a new experience
<b>D3</b>	Or experience something unique.

### Self State: **Achievement**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	sense of achievement that something happened...happens afterwards...ki ...oh...this was wonderful

### Self State: **Confidence**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A9</b>	or this is what will begin and end it right away.
<b>D3</b>	there was a different kind of ... you know the grasp of the whole thing or the confidence I got

### Self State: **Immense Joy**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A4</b>	I think some joy in them
<b>A8</b>	But for the artist it becomes that moment to cherish and relish. Once he comes out of the trance, he feels very wonderful. ... there is tremendous joy, there is exuberance, there is so much ... fun!



### Self State: **Surprise/Eureka**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	this thing abt surprises like u think arey waah ...this happened
<b>A3</b>	like there are times when i've had worked thru the night and in the morning I have no recollection
<b>D3</b>	... while working with the model also you know ... you will discover something ... Aha! Oh ... I need to work this out like this, you know?
<b>D5</b>	when the hand is working, sometimes you would realize Oh! The thought was that, but the way I drew it, or the way I have already drawn it, it is actually ... I can see the growth
<b>A8</b>	When there is a eureka moment, there is euphoria.
<b>D3</b>	after that ... that oh, yeah! It is like ... Eureka types, you know? Okay -I have cracked this code or something, you know? That kind of an experience was there. So ... yeah ... I mean, that is ...

### Self State: **Contentment**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A5</b>	So I started discovering the form and when I discovered the form

### Self State: **Relief**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	when the anxiety resolves...there is that great sense of relief as if i 've overcome a big hurdle..its about life and death
<b>A8</b>	if something has worked out, it is heave ... heaving a sigh of relief

### Work: **Discovery**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A5</b>	So I started discovering the form and when I discovered the form
<b>D3</b>	... while working with the model also you know ... you will discover something ... Aha! Oh ... I need to work this out like this, you know?
<b>D6</b>	if you look at it, it goes to such a ... discovery ... basically you are looking for a ... you are looking for all your past memories.
<b>D7</b>	about ... you discover
<b>D8</b>	... it is just ... experience of discovering something that you have to simply

### Work: **Integration/completion/deviation**

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Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
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A9	You feel really energized, you feel really complete, you think that things are resolved,
----	--

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### Work: **Enhancement**

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Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
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A8	Because output is, in a way a by-product, of the existence of a human being
A9	the work fascinates you
D4	And I think it was suddenly a totally different proposition for me

---

### Interaction: **Resolution/clarity**

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Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
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A9	You feel really energized, you feel really complete, you think that things are resolved,
D5	get the results, but suddenly, you know, the thinking process itself, takes you to an extent, to a situation where you suddenly, you don't ... you don't travel the same path.
D6	if you see, there is a high level of dialogue happening at every level.
D10	. I have complete memory of it.

---

### Interaction: **Conclusion**

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Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
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A8	then you step back and you look, And then finally, if I step back, and I allow the work to be and then it becomes special.
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### Interaction: **Revelation**

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Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
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D4	It is a revelation
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### Interaction: **Adrenalin rush**

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
D6	When your stake is very high. I think it is like adrenalin.

### Interaction: **Immeasurability**

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	this huge space...in between that moment and me.
A2	there is no defined structure.....its constant movement.
A8	Suddenly something opens up. And it is a very beautiful space to be. But in our case, where you know things are organic and thought processes are organic, and situations are organic, it is like the environment

### Interactive Self: **Inarticulateness**

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A9	then you know it is completely undefined.
A10	I think it is very difficult to put into words because it is a very complex situation
D4	... is something you cannot ... I mean you ... I don't know ... I don't know

### Interactive Self: **Profoundness**

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
A2	but when u totally forget and when u do you're so tuned with the whole process and u create then u do something...something profound comes..

### Interactive Self: **Transformation**

Artists/ Designer:	Excerpt from transcript
D5	I have actually taken it to a different level and I think the next plan is this. So your hand sometimes enhances it.

---

But you know when your hand is actually taking it to a different level it is actually rush ... actually I would say it is quite fast. So it happens very rapidly.

it is just that it happens because hand is doing justice or doing ... or enhancing it, or more than doing justice, it is taking that thought or the concept of the idea to an extent or to a different level which my mind cannot do.

**D10** It has radically changed me. It has changed the way I work.

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### Interactive Self: **Flux**

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**Artists/ Designer:** Excerpt from transcript

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**A4** you can just get out of it, slip it in, keep out of it, slip it in ...

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## APPENDIX IV D

### FEELINGS

#### ANTECEDENT PHASE

##### Positive Feeling: **Urge/waiting/longing**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A8</b>	So I wait for that to kind of happen

##### Positive Feeling: **Excitement/enjoyment**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	on another blank space and create a world of its own...so and while thats happening...one is enjoying u feel so charged ...so good
<b>A3</b>	but u'll enjoy the moment or the process sof making it.
<b>D2</b>	I think it is ... it is a fairly excited stage.
<b>A4</b>	one is when u are engaging with material....its in a way an act of letting go...letting go into territories one does not know
<b>D5</b>	I ... sometimes it is not really calm, it is really a rush, you know

##### Positive Feeling: **Passion/play**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>D7</b>	and to enter into that level of passion
<b>A5</b>	play, fun is a part of it ... part of it. And so whatever I was doing, it was just like a play, it was just like a ... something
<b>D8</b>	Keep playing with the same drawing and then ...

### Positive Feeling: **Anxiety/fear/anger**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	my process usually starts with a strange fear of the white...the white paper so there is that deep anxiety...
<b>A2</b>	and it keeps u awake in the night ...
<b>A8</b>	So there is always this under-current of angst and ... angst and say anxiety.
<b>D4</b>	That may not be happening because of the other pressures, the anxieties, all of that.

### Negative Feeling: **Confusion/frustration/disturbance/discomfort**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	so it is dark and it is ...ummm extremely disturbing...u dont know where the painting is going
<b>A1</b>	sometimes...its a kind of laziness...a sort of reluctance...to start u know and then...to impose on it...there's this great fear...at the same time there's this...its difficult to define...there is a fear to enter and at the same time a discomfort that i'm here..not entering it...so...its almost like an illness..u know...u're uncomfortable...u're angry..with people...its a block which when once its overcome...there a great release....
<b>A2</b>	...with nothing moving...there are those frustrating days sometimes when things dont move
<b>A8</b>	and sometimes it is almost very frustrating

### Negative Feeling: **Reluctance/restlessness**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	sometimes...its a kind of laziness...a sort of reluctance...to start u know and then...to impose on it...there's this great fear...at the same time there's this...its difficult to define...there is a fear to enter and at the same time a discomfort that i'm here..not entering it...so...its almost like an illness..u know...u're uncomfortable...u're angry..with people...its a block which when once its overcome...there a great release....
<b>A2</b>	i remember being very restless.....
<b>D8</b>	... I would say restlessness is there when something is not coming out and you want to do more

## CONCURRENT PHASE

### Positive Feeling: **Enjoyment/happiness/pleasure**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	on another blank space and create a world of its own...so and while thats happening...one is enjoying
<b>A3</b>	but u'll enjoy the moment or the process sof making it.
<b>D7</b>	where you start enjoying it
<b>D8</b>	... and I have drawn, I have taken longer time also and like ... I have really enjoyed them also.
<b>A2</b>	when that happens then u feel very happy...artist is very happy that he feels that this is new this is exciting.. well i first of al i feel very happy....very good
<b>A3</b>	and u might feel very good
<b>A5</b>	I was so happy with it, you know
<b>A7</b>	It is almost like happiness
<b>A9</b>	you feel good, you feel complete
<b>D2</b>	emotionally you feel very happy, physically you feel tired.
<b>D3</b>	was a different kind of ... I would say, happiness
<b>D4</b>	there is an element of happiness and joy.
<b>D5</b>	internally your mind is very bright or happy, in a pleasant situation, pleasant ... you feel peace
<b>D6</b>	it is taking shape ... then you feel really happy. That is something which ... I cannot put in words. Basically it is something you ... you ... your ... your ... your happiness is at the highest level.
<b>D10</b>	Because it is really whole moment of peace, happiness,
<b>A7</b>	It is that kind of pleasure ... I get out of it.
<b>D1</b>	When you are doing that, there is a huge pleasure.
<b>D5</b>	internally your mind is very bright or happy, in a pleasant situation, pleasant ... you feel peace

### Positive Feeling: **Excitement/energised**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	u feel so charged ...so good
<b>A3</b>	u're so excited with the idea so u don sleep in the night...
<b>D2</b>	I think it is ... it is a fairly excited stage.
<b>D5</b>	I ... sometimes it is not really calm, it is really a rush, you know
<b>D7</b>	the excitement comes when you see things happening



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<b>A1</b>	this moment when it happens...it just happens easily....u flow into it....and its very difficult to define...when it actually....u know it just clicks...it just sits/sets into place...there's a great release and sometimes...'joy'. but also i think at that point..you're not aware...you're totally one with it...so its only in retrospect that u...you go back and u say...u know....u feel that sense of elation or...
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### Positive Feeling: **Mystical/strange/magical/dreamy**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A3</b>	in a beautiful way...it is a very very mysterious way....it is a very difficult thing to sort of explain...or share u forget urself in the process...like the mystics
<b>D8</b>	Or when you draw, every moment is a magical moment
<b>A1</b>	that is like oh...now its going to start...the magic...the magical moment u know its all magical...its happening by itself
<b>A7</b>	it has to be like a kind of hypnotic moment
<b>A8</b>	Where you allow things ... and ... in a way, I think sometimes you can go into a trance-like situation

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### Positive Feeling: **Divine/spiritual**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>D10</b>	I am aware of the divinity.
<b>A2</b>	there is a kind of some divine force.....some blessings which is with me....supports me...helps me.....and which kind of guides and allows me to do things  this is much beyond this whole cosmic energy. divine design....its like its was all destined...all to stay
<b>D10</b>	In that moment, which is actually a Yogic moment And spiritual side
<b>A2</b>	after a certain point...i'm just a tool.....to convey certain things...maybe i was chosen....to show,....things like that...u know....by God...by unknown force or the grt divine design....which i'm a part of it ....and so i have to follow...i cant be angry or i cant be unhappy or i can t be extremely happy...i have to just do things...u know....becoz i was chosen...i was guided..

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Positive Feeling: **Sober/calm**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A9</b>	it is ... very sober
<b>D2</b>	Yes ... it is calm, because if you are thinking
<b>D5</b>	then it is really calm because you really want to build it in your head,

Positive Feeling: **Fun/play**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	when there is fun when there is play....
<b>D8</b>	Keep playing with the same drawing and then ...
<b>D10</b>	it is great fun. It is a wonderful feeling. It is great fun ... great fun ... and even that playing around that idea is a wonderful feeling.
<b>D2</b>	its also kind of a play...its play with yourself...play with ideas....play with the viewer...
<b>A8</b>	... there is tremendous joy, there is exuberance, there is so much ... fun!
<b>A1</b>	u're more playful...u see new sides of yourself when there is fun when there is play....
<b>A8</b>	There is a lot of play and it is like you are playing scrabble with a person you cannot see.

Positive Feeling: **Surrender**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A8</b>	then you surrender and then you say "Okay, let it happen".
<b>D6</b>	it triggers that ... it ... the whole thing you have to put it. The whole and soul.
<b>D10</b>	I may be aware ... I am in a moment of surrender to my higher self.
<b>A8</b>	somewhere you are surrendering to what is happening outside of you

### Negative Feeling: **Suffocation/unbearable**

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Artists/	Excerpt from transcript
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Designer:
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A1	but while its happening...its very serious..and it ummm..suffocates...
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A3	its so unbearable sometimes sometimes u know its too much to handle
----	--

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### Negative Feeling: **Restlessness**

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Artists/	Excerpt from transcript
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Designer:
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A3	i remember being very restless.....
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D8	... I would say restlessness is there when something is not coming out and you ;
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### Negative Feeling: **Disturbance**

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Artists/	Excerpt from transcript
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Designer:
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A1	so it is dark and it is ...ummm extremely disturbing...u dont know where the painting is going
----	---

A8	Where the possessor is so pressed, that he has to kind of do ... make the body do that.
----	--

A3	when i feel very hassled thru the night jaar
----	--

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## SUBSEQUENT PHASE

### Positive Feeling: **Wonder/surprise/admiration/excitement**

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
<b>A1</b>	this thing abt surprises like u think arey waah ...this happened
<b>A7</b>	you feel "Oh! This works great!"
<b>A9</b>	And it comes and it goes and it takes you by surprise.
<b>D3</b>	after that ... that oh, yeah! It is like ... Eureka types, you know? Okay –I have cracked this code or something, you know? That kind of an experience was there. So ... yeah ... I mean, that is ...  ... while working with the model also you know ... you will discover something ... Aha! Oh ... I need to work this out like this, you know?

### Positive Feeling: **Immense joy/euphoria/happiness/pleasure/bliss**

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
<b>A2</b>	that certain type of JOY....which a work of art gives u...the enjoyment the ...u know the path and u go there
<b>A1</b>	that sense of heightened awareness...we feel very aware and actually there is joy...there is...its very ... they feel immense joy, soon i seek it again and again...i seek that experience again . i come back
<b>A2</b>	forgetting myself.....there are moments when u feel.....immense joy....like those moments u know....u feel so happy.
<b>A4</b>	sheer joy which i get out of painting when i see myself locked in a certain time...in a dialogue with the work which i cannot understand fully...perhaps that experiences are similar to the experiences at school....and i think some joy at them
<b>A8</b>	... there is tremendous joy, there is exuberance, there is so much ... fun!
<b>A9</b>	you feel good, you feel complete
<b>D3</b>	... you know the joy of finding something new and you know, you start working on it like vigorously, a yeah, it is a different kind of a ... different sense of achievement, different kind of a ... joy. Very personal thing, Because I think it gives you a lot of ... lot of joy, happiness, sense of achievement, and ... yeah ... I mean, I think it is something very ... it is priceless.
<b>D4</b>	this state of bliss  if you ask I think it is a pure state of joy. It is a state of joy. It is a pure state of joy  it is just emerging right in front of you.  Similar in the sense of joy, similar in the sense of ... you know ... sense of seeing things ...emerge. there is an element of happiness and joy.

<b>D6</b>	it is taking shape ... then you feel really happy. That is something which ... I cannot put in words. Basically it is something you ... you ... your ... your ... your happiness is at the highest level.
<b>D10</b>	There is a moment of joy. And spiritual side
<b>A2</b>	when that happens then u feel very happy...artist is very happy that he feels that this is new this is exciting..
<b>A9</b>	you feel good, you feel complete
<b>D2</b>	emotionally you feel very happy, physically you feel tired.
<b>D3</b>	Yeah ... at least at that particular moment, yes ... I would say. Because I mean, then it was a different kind of an energy, was a different kind of ... I would say, happiness
<b>D5</b>	internally your mind is very bright or happy, in a pleasant situation, pleasant ... you feel peace
<b>D6</b>	it is taking shape ... then you feel really happy. That is something which ... I cannot put in words. Basically it is something you ... you ... your ... your ... your happiness is at the highest level.
<b>D10</b>	? Because it is really whole moment of peace, happiness,
<b>A8</b>	But for the artist it becomes that moment to cherish and relish. Once he comes out of the trance, he feels very wonderful. When there is a eureka moment, there is euphoria.
<b>D1</b>	There is ... this is akin to being on drugs, this is akin to orgasm, or whatever

### Positive Feeling: **Satisfaction/contentment/fulfilment**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	u're very content and one becomes much more broad....inside...within urself...u start appreciating many things...
<b>A6</b>	there are moments you feel ... you know that there is some kind of realization that "OK.
<b>D3</b>	or ... you know ... satisfaction or
<b>D7</b>	the satisfaction you know about this thing
<b>D8</b>	the kind of satisfaction I would have had while drawing a good piece of illustration but then just once I get into it then it was long term ... satisfying.

### Positive Feeling: **Freedom/liberation/relief**

<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	joy is such a big word...i kind of associate it with almost like relief

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	so there is that deep anxiety...when the anxiety resolves...there is that great sense of relief
<b>A8</b>	that is the trance-like state that one goes in. when the body is so liberated or lose,
	I feel so free, I feel so liberated
<b>A9</b>	You know I think they are very similar because they ... sometimes ... are conclusive
	, I feel at peace.
<b>D5</b>	internally your mind is very bright or happy, in a pleasant situation, pleasant ...
	you feel peace
<b>D9</b>	It feels fulfilling while you are in there
<b>D10</b>	the ratification or variation, apart from being a very blissful, peaceful moment

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### Positive Feeling: **relish**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A7</b>	when cat drinking milk, they always close their eyes. It is almost like that
	It is like ... it is like orgasm ... or whatever
<b>A8</b>	But for the artist it becomes that moment to cherish and relish. Once he comes out of the trance, he feels very wonderful.

---

### Positive Feeling: **Blessing**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A6</b>	you call is blessing, you call it inclination that you have, you call it

---

### Positive Feeling: **Precious**

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	u're going in a certain direction and suddenly u found something which is totally unknown area...unknown element...and which u go...ohhh...this is something very special i forget all that...and those are the moments which are kind of very very precious to me but those moments are extremely precious
<b>D3</b>	Because I think it gives you a lot of ... lot of joy, happiness, sense of achievement, and ... yeah ... I mean, I think it is something very ... it is priceless.

---

### Negative Feeling: **Tired/Spent**

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>D2</b>	You feel ... tired..you feel spent emotionally you feel very happy, physically you feel tired.

---

### Negative Feeling: **Shock**

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<b>Artists/ Designer:</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A7</b>	Like there are accidents if certain colors go with certain colors you feel "Oh! This works great!"
<b>A8</b>	At some point when you are struggling there is this kind of a "Eureka feeling" afterwards
<b>A9</b>	I don't think there is a space ... most of the time I am quite surprised.
<b>A10</b>	Things can happen out of nowhere.

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## APPENDIX IV E

# REPEATABILITY

### FACTORS

#### Similar Rhythm

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	it comes back as the same rhythm-no its more fun if its different
A10	the whole process is to balance between the accidents and the control,
D10	Not really ... they are similar ... they are pretty much in the same domain

#### Similar Feeling

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A8	I cannot say that I ... the experience is the same. I would not say. But the feeling it may experience the same.
D4	Similar in the sense of joy, similar in the sense of ... you know ... sense of seeing things ...emerge.

### INTEREST

#### Seeking for joy

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A8	Suddenly something opens up. And it is a very beautiful space to be. is very special It is not happening for a long time and you are hoping it will happen. So ...
D1	And when you are getting a terrific high, every minute of the day, you want to be there
D10	And it is ... I think ... you internalize it you learn to create that moment and that really becomes the true standard by which you live.



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Because it is really whole moment of peace, happiness,

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### Seeking for the experience itself

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	they feel immense joy, soon i seek it again and again...i seek that experience again . i come back
A8	Suddenly something opens up. And it is a very beautiful space to be. is very special It is not happening for a long time and you are hoping it will happen. So ...
D3	the feeling is there because you are again expecting that you know ... that you will again experience something new.
D10	it is really all you seek at the end of the day. It is nothing else that you really want. the idea for me is to be in that union. And when you are getting a terrific high, every minute of the day, you want to be there

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### Self State: Allowance

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A3	so in the sense that it allows you to kind of explore things which were earlier beyond your scope of understanding of how

### Self State: Trust

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	so even if one painting fails so i get very desperate and anxious like has it gone forever...will it return again...will i be able to work again  earlier it used to be very painful...but now i know that relax calm down...it'll come

### Self State: **Belief**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A6</b>	something called belief, something called knowledge, something called your ... you know ... I think your time ... where you are ... the time you live in, the space, the co ordinations, what you see, what you saw yesterday, you know? How you relate, how do you learn art ... I think all these things contribute a lot in a work which the artist is doing

### Self State: **Current reality/ Sensibility**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A6</b>	something called belief, something called knowledge, something called your ... you know ... I think your time ... where you are ... the time you live in, the space, the co ordinations, what you see, what you saw yesterday, you know? How you relate, how do you learn art ... I think all these things contribute a lot in a work which the artist is doing  there is an energy which you can derive from your own surroundings.
<b>A7</b>	you know your time, you know your space, why don't you make it happen?

### Self State: **Temperament**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A6</b>	it is his temperament ... it is his ideation time ... it is So you are in the right time, right temperament you are in the studio

### Self State: **Openness**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A3</b>	so i keep it open ended when i go to them and then there is room to...and just to be able to suggest...changes in terms of size...scale...

### Self State: **Acceptance**

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A6</b>	he develops a certain degree of understanding with his world ... he understands the nature better. He understands the time better. He is a better thinker. You know? He gives a lot of time to himself. He is lonely. He loves that idleness.

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### Work: **Challenge**

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	the greater the difficulty the greater the value or also the surprise
<b>A4</b>	there is an inability to discover, excavate and read ones thoughts...the illegibility of all that is in front f u and the frustration of it

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### Interaction: **Involvement**

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A3</b>	so its your involvement....your judgment...its a matter of a lot of...a combination of a lot of things..that makes it work... getting an idea is u know...u're physically totally involved in that... ...u're physically totally involved in that...
<b>A7</b>	that is why I said you have to be inquisitive to know
<b>A8</b>	So I take a long time and as a strategy, I don't react immediately to a thought or an idea.
<b>D1</b>	I put a lot of concentration, and then I do it with a lot of dedication and seriousness. Every sketch I make.
<b>D2</b>	I get more and more immersed in it,
<b>D3</b>	the method is basically focusing on one thing and maybe exploring ... exploring whatever ... is within your reach, I think that would also ... I think that's what I would say ... is the method. It is like practice, practice and practice. That's what I am saying ...
<b>D4</b>	you inter-focus if there is slit there. And we can fill it all the time,

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### Interaction: **Discipline**

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	i would do in the situation is that maintain the discipline
<b>A4</b>	one keeps certain works where either there is a discipline or whether it is skill

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<b>D1</b>	I put a lot of concentration, and then I do it with a lot of dedication and seriousness. Every sketch I make.
<b>D3</b>	something that you keep on doing it again and again and over and over again
<b>D3</b>	the method is basically focusing on one thing and maybe exploring ... exploring whatever ... is within your reach, I think that would also ... I think that's what I would say ... is the method. It is like practice, practice and practice. That's what I am saying ...
<b>D9</b>	you need a little discipline to bring things together

### Interaction: **Familiarisation**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A7</b>	It is like love-making. You have to flirt, you have to ... it is not just the moment, It is like understanding the space, understanding the body, and then you work Being with your lover, your space, you medium, etc. you have to be really familiar

### Interaction: **Evolution**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A3</b>	because of a lot of combinations. There was combination of lines; there was combination of line, emotions, feelings, experiences around me.
<b>A6</b>	he develops a certain degree of understanding with his world ... he understands the nature better. He understands the time better. He is a better thinker. You know? He gives a lot of time to himself. He is lonely. He loves that idleness.  so that's why it connects you know
<b>A8</b>	So I take a long time and as a strategy, I don't react immediately to a thought or an idea. , as it is developing, you are letting go a lot of the time You are letting go  Now from the two- dimensional, one is going to the three-dimensional, one is letting go all the time.
<b>A9</b>	there is like another set of transactions, sort of taking place between various brain cells and then you are working and then you are in touch with your other
<b>D4</b>	maybe tomorrow or day after, and then it starts evolving again.
<b>D5</b>	And once you know you have to build on that, then you can keep working on that for let us say a month or two or even for a week and so on.

### Interaction: **Detachment**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	when looking if its other person's or my own thereis a kind of detachment ...like this is kind of resolved
<b>A3</b>	u feel that u need to do something to subside it...and say that okay there is tomorrow....u know like calm yourself....
<b>A5</b>	So I was aware of them at the same time at the same time I was detached with them.
<b>A7</b>	And you have the distance to understand that you have to have a little distance to see
<b>A10</b>	you know you have to keep a distance between the work you are doing and ... this thing. appropriating and adopting and evolving of that particular image in different levels
<b>D9</b>	so you dissociate yourself from ... everything else

### Interaction: **Distraction**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	for a diversion and that diversion gives a kind of new...vision or new view of..
<b>A4</b>	its kind of wander through and then that moment
<b>D3</b>	changing the view point ... and it was like you know ... they say – “Divya Gyan” (Divine Knowledge) kind of a thing ...
<b>D7</b>	if you get stuck, go for a walk, again, come back and do something else, don't think too hard on it, if ou think hard, you will just get stuck. Read something else ... completely. that has lead to you even when you are chilling out somewhere.
<b>D9</b>	usually is try and get to some distance very quickly.

### Interaction: **Incubation**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A3</b>	its in my mind...there are a lot of ideas that come and some remain...some i dont know they disappear
<b>A4</b>	the other is when u're really not thinking abt it...and then it surfaces sort of.  a lot of things start forming in the head
<b>A5</b>	. Because I think there are certain areas where you go inside your mind.
<b>A8</b>	After it has gestated itself, then it becomes a need
<b>A9</b>	there is like another set of transactions, sort of taking place between various brain cells and then you are working and then you are in touch with your other  I cannot do anything I just have to wait.

### Interaction: **Adaptation**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A10</b>	<p>you will have to keep on working until and unless you are able to satisfy ... the image.</p> <p>you know you have to keep a distance between the work you are doing and ... this thing.</p> <p>appropriating and adopting and evolving of that particular image in different levels</p>

### Interaction: **Appropriation**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	u try to retain that balance...its a very fragile thing and it goes away
<b>A7</b>	<p>But an artist is like ... he channelizes</p> <p>so that channelizing is very important</p>
<b>A10</b>	<p>you know you have to keep a distance between the work you are doing and ... this thing.</p> <p>appropriating and adopting and evolving of that particular image in different levels</p>

### Interactive Self: **Self-Space-Time coordination**

<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	<p>its like the pace u know when u u found it then u try to...its like u know dance as if ...u know u respond...u know like there's is music which you're hearing inside(gestures ears) to keep listening to it and not let go...otherwise u know you are not in synchronization...u know i think its about synchronization within something or...ummm...u find something which u hearing and u kind of keep responding to it ..but if that link breaks then again its a fresh beginning...it comes back but</p>
<b>A6</b>	<p>... I think your time ... where you are ... the time you live in, the space, the co ordinations, I think all these things need to be in synchronization</p>



## APPENDIX IV E

### COMPARISON WITH AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

#### SIMILARITIES

##### No-time

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A3	i dont know for how long i was looking at that painting, i dont know if it was half hr or 1 hr or 40 mins.....

##### No-self

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A2	when i see other people's work...i forget myself this i'd never experienced at anytime ever...in front of any painting.  it was like a the ultimate spiritual experience..

##### Allowance

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A5	but what matters is that I got those emotions which I wanted to give. And people also find that, you know? like they were feeling like I mean, the form looks very strong it is very interesting when you leave yourself out of it and ... things happen



## DISSIMILARITIES

### Involvement

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	there is this great involvement there's also this knowledge ...you have a history of the thing. you've been looking at some things which connect you to this object. this image this thing about making is definitely different than looking at something which is made.
A8	the interaction while viewing a painting is almost detached

### Connectedness

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	when you're making it...your hands are dirty...you're actually in it...involved so...its hands on...absolutely...you're sweating and u know...its a physical connect
A2	and if it is new and strange ot me...it will definitely be a new and strange experience to my viewer also....thats the main thing
A5	but what matters is that I got those emotions which I wanted to give. And people also find that, you know?
A8	It is very different the maker becomes the observer

### Resolution

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A2	while creating...u fumble...u struggle...u work hard....and then u abandon it...u leave it and then u know it is there in front of u...and in this very fine moment
A9	But there is a similarity of codes of different ... visual codes being exchanged. it is a sense of completion The sense of coming together

### Painful/joyous

Artists/ Designers	Excerpt from transcript
A1	the creative process more painful i find it more joyous

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	i find the experience of looking more joyous and i think its a different involvement
<b>A6</b>	And aesthetic experience is like something that follows as a kind of celebration of it. Others also enjoy it. You also enjoy it. You also see it from different perspectives.

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### Spiritual/self-identifying

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A1</b>	when i'm in front of it i totally lose myself
<b>A2</b>	ultimately u know.....ego comes out...later on and i become almost..i feel that i have done the painting.....its first time happening in this world....through me  it happened thru me  this i'd never experienced at anytime ever...in front of any painting.  it was like a the ultimate spiritual experience..

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### Active/passive

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	ultimately u know.....ego comes out...later on and i become almost..i feel that i have done the painting.....its first time happening in this world....through me
<b>A8</b>	the maker is very active. But the observer is very inactive Almost detached

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### Movement

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<b>Artists/ Designers</b>	<b>Excerpt from transcript</b>
<b>A2</b>	who is the first viewer...its myself...the creator himself...becoz its happening in front of me and i'm the first viewer...and i'm the creator....and im creating becoz in the process I'm also changed...i discard things...i add things....i keep on changing whatever i've been doing
<b>A8</b>	most of the time, it pushes you to the next level

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## **APPENDIX V**

Verification forms