

[EMERGENCE]

Philip Harland

THE SIX-FIBONACCI SERIES

Welcome to the Numbers

A special offer for readers of ReSource

The next time you go to Pisa, look near the Leaning Tower for a statue of one the city's favourite sons. Leonardo of Pisa, nicknamed Fibonacci, was a 12th century mathematician who introduced the ancient Indian and Arabic numeral system to Europe, and became particularly well known for a pattern of numbers that goes:

1, 1, 2, 3, 5 ...

You may know it already. Some versions start with zero. It is a classic equation linked to the Golden Mean, and gratifyingly easy to follow. Add the first number in the sequence to the second to get the third: $1 + 1 = 2$, and so on. Each subsequent number is equal to the sum of the previous two numbers:

1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55 ...

Now does maths mimic nature, or is it the other way round? The significance of the Fibonacci sequence is that it describes a prevailing pattern in nature that had been around for a very long time before Sanskrit scholars and Signor Fibonacci discovered it. The numbers govern almost all branch, leaf and petal formation in trees, plants and flowers. There are a few mutations and variations to the pattern, but the exceptions, as usual, help prove the rule by being exceptional. How plants conform to the Fibonacci sequence is directly linked to the *efficiency of the growth process* and the *maximising of space and light* for each petal, leaf and branch. The plants have no idea of the numbers (I suppose). They have simply evolved by adapting to their surroundings. They know how to grow in the most efficient way possible.

Given that we evolved into an existing Fibonacci world, it is not too fanciful to suppose that the numbers underlie a natural pattern of growth innate to other forms of life, including ourselves. The Fibonacci sequence has been found in, and applied to, many different areas of mathematics, science, music and the visual arts, but to my knowledge David Grove was the first one to apply the pattern psychotherapeutically. David was particularly interested in the numbers through his ongoing work with Power of Six series (see ReSource February, June, and September 2008 for articles by Matthew Hudson and myself). Could a combination of the Power of Six methodology and the Fibonacci sequence help a client reconnect to a more natural, pristine state of being?

In 2007 David worked for a spell in Paris with the trainer and coach Silvie de Clerck, and one of the clients she introduced was PATRICK, a sound engineer and dancer. David designed a day-long session for Patrick that incorporated voice, space, dance, bodyscape drawing, the Power of Six, and the Fibonacci series. I have adapted and generalized the process Grove and de Clerck used with Patrick to bring out its basic structure:

- 1 The client speaks (or moves/embodies) something they wish to work on. Writes or draws it up. Is taken through an Emergent Knowledge 'Clean Start' process to establish a spatial and physical metaphor for their present relationship to the statement or drawing. Is then taken through a round of Power of Six questioning, and at the end asked what they know now.
- 2 The client writes up their learning *twice* (on *two separate papers*). Places them in relation to the first paper. Is taken through another Power of Six process – which may be static, moving or turning - and at the end asked what they know now.
- 3 Client represents this learning *three* times (on *three papers*). Places the papers in relation to the others. Is taken through another six-part process, and asked at the end what they know now.
- 4 Same procedure, representing their learning *five* times ...
- 5 *Eight* times ...
- 6 *Thirteen* times ...

At the end of the complete procedure the client has produced a Six-Fibonacci series of 32 papers (1+2+3+5+8+13), and is invited to arrange them in whatever way seems right.

Patrick spreads his papers on the floor in a spiralling pattern (which interestingly enough mimics the ascending Fibonacci spirals found in pine cones and sunflowers). The client has moved, danced, drawn, and voiced his way to something new. Getting as far as this has taken him most of the day.



Patrick's Six-Fibonacci set of 32 papers

He is now asked if anything needs to be moved or reorganized, and then invited to list six actions that he will take as a result of what he has learnt. The behaviours have to be specific and practical. David and Silvie spend some time eliciting these behaviours, including 'sixing' one item through a round of its own until it is detailed and do-able. A few weeks later, Patrick comments:

By speaking, writing, drawing, and moving so much, I really got a lot further in my understanding of myself than I have ever been before. Having the space and the time and the movement to get it into my body helped me integrate at all levels. The action plan part was very important. It helped me know why I was doing this, and made it happen. It has cleared up the

mess, and now I know what to do and how.

A few months later, Patrick confirms that he did what he had decided to do and fully realized his goals.

You don't need to be a dancer or a sound engineer to benefit from this exercise. *It adapts to any kind of issue or problem.* You *do* need to have upwards of a day or so of your time available, in either London or Paris. The Six-Fibonacci series is an experimental process at a beta stage of development, so the cost will be partly subsidised. Do get in touch if you are interested.

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LA SÉRIE SIX-FIBONACCI Bienvenue aux Nombres

Silvie de Clerck is a trainer and coach based in Paris. She trained in Metaphor, Clean Language, Clean Space, and Emergent Knowledge, and has a particular interest in creativity and movement. She worked on the Six-Fibonacci series with David Grove. You can contact her (in French or English) at sdeclerck@club-internet.fr

Philip Harland is a London-based psychotherapist specialising in Clean Language, Therapeutic Metaphor, and the Power of Six. He worked for many years with Grove, co-facilitated clients with him, and is writing a book, *The Joy of Six*, that they planned together. You can contact him at philip@powersofsix.com.

More about Emergent Knowledge and the Power of Six at www.powersofsix.com, and in ReSource magazine February 2008 ('Six Steps to Emergent Knowledge'), June 2008 ('A Clean Start to the Power of Six'), and September 2008 ('The Structure of Emergence').
