There is a scene towards the end of the animation film “Chicken Run” where 2 lovable rascal rats discuss “which came first, the chicken or the egg?” It is a nice sort of pun, having their chief source of food become the topic of their philosophical debate - and needless to say, all they succeed in doing is going round in increasingly familiar, and entertaining, circles.

It seems to me fairly self-evident that the longer we have been on the planet as not-self beings, the more we have to do to de-condition. Human Design is, truly, for children; so that they have the chance for correctness as beings without having to take on the burden of the de-conditioning process. To have any chance of this becoming a reality, however, there is a prerequisite that their parent [most probably their mother] is going to have to take Human Design on board for themselves.

Given that Human Design is at base a dualistic system, the answer to the question which should come first, child or parent, the answer (for me) has to be ‘both’.

It is hard enough, I find, to take on board what it means to de-condition as an adult; how hard is it, then, to take on board trying to do this whilst also attempting to respect the rights of a growing child for whom one has an all-encompassing duty of care, whilst also facing the expectations, ongoing behavioural patterns and perspectives of one’s own partner and/or parents?

How can one even begin to change one’s own behaviours when meeting the uncomprehending concern, anxiety, annoyance, even alarm [resistance] of immediate family members, let alone brave their allegations of irresponsibility, or even instability, that might ensue after getting one’s Design analysis and attempting to introduce change into the way even the most basic domestic activities are carried out? The pressure to conform is enormous. Parenting already carries an enormous built-in potential burden of guilt and anxiety before adding into the mix the realisations that come from Human Design into the way the conditioning field works and how one might begin to offset some of its homogenising effects.

I wrote the article The Mad Hatter’s Tea Party (see the link in the Journal) in 2007, after a period of intense and prolonged observation of the dynamics of one particular (3 generation, 8 person) extended family; at this time I had been involved in Design for over 6 years, was taking the family penta training and had been in my own PHS (dietary) experiment for well over a year.
It struck me forcibly how much this small scene from family life, around which the story is written, reflected and encapsulated the way a homogenised family accepts it should behave - the formula for conformity - and what the consequences of that homogenisation can be for a young, growing, consciousness.

What impacted me most deeply of all was the realisation that the pattern of eating disorders that was present was potentially all too readily transferrable to a third generation of this family without any of them even being aware of how [and of how easily] it might happen. A generalised perspective might say, simply, ah well, maybe something genetic in such inherited traits - but Human Design shows the mechanics of the conditioning, as clearly as it shows those of the correct being. We can develop not-self traits not simply through our openness and what the mind does with that, but also through those things that are consistent in our nature but which are not operating correctly through strategy and authority. One simple sweeping statement will not do, just as one solution in all cases will not do.

We can also see how the mechanics of family penta bring in an element of choicelessness at a deeper level still, where the individual design is caught up in a process beyond even that of one-to-one relationship with the other.

How helpless we can be in a family context, when so much of what we know of our true nature can be swept aside by the overriding concerns and focus of this transc-auric form.

The small family scene described in this story impressed itself upon me so strongly that, suddenly, what had hitherto seemed like a very bizarre tale [Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland] was beginning to look entirely recognisable and even ‘normal’. The similarities were startling and, to me, unavoidable.

When I wrote this story I did not attempt to detail every aspect of the dynamics in play in this scene; they are a fluid thing in any case, as the individuals move between solo, paired and penta auric states, combining, separating and recombining continuously, like a living lava lamp! Attempts to break down the fluidity of the dynamics results, I have found, in what looks very like the stage directions for a play, interspersed with charts by way of illustration. I begin to see how we are very much small individual instruments in the greater orchestration of the movement of life, and how funny it is that our mind thinks it is “doing the doing” of anything at all!

The designs of the people in this story [with their individual and penta charts] are going to form part of a presentation and discussion in Leela & Dharmen Swann-Herbert’s Meetings at the Well Parenting Group, in the IHDS Reception Room of the JAMPlayer, on Wednesday, 3rd February 2010 at 1800 GMT.

Maybe you can join us? Would you like to? You are welcome.