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INTERVIEW

Between the Worlds—Healing Trauma, Body, and Soul

A Conversation with Donald Kalsched

HELEN MARLO



Donald Kalsched



Helen Marlo

To remember the other world in this world is to live in your true inheritance.

—David Whyte, from “What to Remember When Waking,”

The House of Belonging

I initially encountered Don’s work through his first book, *The Inner World of Trauma: Archetypal Defenses of the Personal Spirit*, and felt his Jungian psychoanalytic and spiritual lens provided a profound and enlivening contribution to the traumatology literature, adding a missing perspective

that fostered a deeper, more complete understanding of the subject. I met Don during seminars that were part of my analytic training. Later, we participated together in presenting at a benefit conference, *Transforming Trauma: Psychological and Spiritual Pathways to Healing*. The following interview occurred on October 4, 2012, via a long distance phone call to his home in Newfoundland. As I reflect upon some main ideas in this interview—relationality, ensoulment, beauty, and connection—I recall how our time was briefly interrupted by a local Newfoundlander who knocked on Don's door to sell him fresh vegetables. There was a poignancy and beauty at that moment in their exchange—its simplicity yet its depth; their shared, engaged, and embodied humanness; its receptive, nurturing, and nourishing feeling. My image of their exchange feels like it has become a synchronistic and symbolic expression of our exchange as well—fertile food for thought.

HELEN MARLO (HM): Congratulations on your new book, *Trauma and the Soul: A Psycho-Spiritual Approach to Human Development and Its Interruption*. What a fantastic book. Many of us have been eagerly awaiting its release.

DONALD KALSCHED (DK): Give me your candid opinion, how did you feel about it?

HM: I thought it was wonderful. I liked the explicit emphasis on spirituality and soul and its relationship with trauma. I had not anticipated, but was particularly pleased, that you acknowledged and, at times, challenged, some ideas in relational analysis, as well as the many contributions from neurobiology, attachment theory, and developmental psychology.

DK: I hope I fully acknowledged how much these areas of our field have proven foundational for an understanding of trauma—and for mine as well. It's just that if our understanding of the psyche is all “between” self and other, then the mysteries of the inner world can be neglected. In the book, I try to bring clinical examples where moments in the “between” space of transference spark moments in the “space” between ego and Self inwardly. We know this because we witness dreams that give expression to these relational moments. Psyche is alive in the relational space “between” self and other, but there's an “inner between,” so to speak, which is no less important and sometimes gives us a mythopoeic glimpse of the human soul. I hope this was clear.

HM: I felt that came through, and this emphasis is, I feel, a distinctive contribution from your work relative to other contemporary trauma books. As you point out, theories and research from neuroscience and developmental psychology, including attachment theory and infant observation, have been healing, yet they do not emphasize or explicitly address the spiritual dimension—something that is essential and powerful for many people. I can relate to you questioning how some of the relational and developmental approaches can foreclose space for the spiritual dimension, and it feels important and timely to question how far these approaches, alone, can take us ultimately.

Perhaps, on that note, we can begin our interview by opening up our space a little—and move away from explicitly discussing your book. I'd like to start with a more ordinary, personal question, although, perhaps, that is ultimately where spirit and soul often best reside. Can you share about yourself in a more personal way—not the archetypal Don, but the more personal Don? What you like, who you are, outside of being a Jungian psychoanalyst and psychologist?

DK: Sounds good to me. Well, I'm talking to you from Newfoundland, Canada, as I think you know. At this moment, I'm looking out at a seascape of incredible wild beauty, with waves crashing against 200 foot cliffs and seabirds riding the up-drafts and hovering over our grassy point. A lot of my personal life—shall we say the more “soulful” dimensions of my personal life—has been experienced in my relationship with nature and the out-of-doors—places like the natural world surrounding me right now. When my wife, Robin, and I stumbled upon this landscape back in 1999, we absolutely fell in love with it and decided we wanted to be here at least part of the year. We were very lucky to be able to buy and renovate an old house on a windy point here in Trinity East. It's on the edge of wilderness—both the sea and the land—and wilderness is very good for the soul. I referenced this in the book's introduction, if you remember.



Don catching fish in Newfoundland.

HM: Yes, I do. It was so evocative—I wished I could have interviewed you in person!

DK: That would have been nice! So let me give you a little background of my life outside the consulting room. Much has been in the out-of-doors. I grew up in Northern Wisconsin fishing and hunting with my dad and grandfather and making things in my father's woodworking shop. When Robin and I first met through the Jungian training program in New York—marrying in 1978—we bought eight acres of land in Ridgefield, Connecticut, dredged a pond, designed, and built a house. For some reason, I was obsessed with building the house out of the materials on the land—like a pioneer from 200 years ago. In this connection, I've always felt a deep kinship with Jung's Bollingen project—working on his own tower with raw materials and constructing a sacred space on this earth—a place in the sun to house himself and his books.

When Robin and I bought our land in Ridgefield, we couldn't afford an architect and builder, so I cleared the land of tall red oak trees and then turned them into lumber with a chainsaw-mill, making beams for the house's post-and-beam structure. First, we did a one-story foundation of stone—also from the land. I apprenticed myself to a Sufi stonemason in order to learn the skills. Building with stone and wood was what I did on weekends when I wasn't doing clinical work. The project took three years of weekends and vacations. Now thirty-five years later, I wonder where all that energy came from and marvel at the single-minded dedication—part of my Capricorn nature I guess. That's been a big part of our lives—my life: building houses, building boats, being active in the natural world as much as possible, and it's been a great therapy for me as a counter point to sitting so many hours a week with patients and exploring the inner world. I love the outer world.



Don living the “wild life”!

HM: It is grounding and healing to be an exterior designer when you're an interior designer all day long!

DK: Yes! And it's not only about making things. It's also about simply appreciating the extraordinary beauty of the natural world, available to all of us, if we have eyes to see it. I think I

was lucky to grow up in Wisconsin amidst the woods and lakes of the “North country,” so I did see it. Natural beauty was all around me. Living there gave me access to wilderness and the beauties of untamed nature. I think that’s important, and the mystical experiences I’ve had in nature partially inspired this book; I discovered that many of my patients had them too.

HM: It feels like you’re naming how soul is genuinely found, nondefensively, in the nonpersonal, and how soulful relationship may emerge from nonpersonal sources like nature or art or beauty or numinous experience. That seems critical in thinking about where and how relational approaches fit for healing trauma.

DK: Yes—that’s right. I am making those points. With many of my patients who had suffered unbearable experience in the interpersonal world of their families, there was an alternative world in nature that supplied them with a holding environment that was safe, conflict-free, and that offered them a sanctuary for a time when they desperately needed it. A distinguishing feature of these sanctuaries was Beauty. One patient, as a little boy, would climb his favorite tree at the end of an often trauma-filled day—just as the sun was setting and the crickets and wood thrushes began singing. The songs of those thrushes held him like no real person ever did—held him in Beauty, we might say. Another patient, as a young girl, befriended a pony that lived on the farm next door, and this beautiful pony became her intimate friend for a time when she was quite friendless in her family and in school. She could talk to the pony about anything and, in this way, kept herself connected to the world, albeit not to the human world.

When these stories surfaced in psychotherapy, a deep soulful quality often entered the consulting room, and this got my attention. Such memories of beautiful experiences in nature often mediated a poignant sadness in these patients, and I would find myself incredibly moved. Part of this was my patients’ emergent awareness of what they had missed by virtue of their family’s emotional abandonment—they were grieving—but part of it was reclaiming something sacred—something beautiful in those moments alone. These experiences meant the world to them—and to me in sharing them. They were *beautiful*. It wasn’t just that I was *identified* with my patients’ mystical experiences in nature—although that was part of it—but that we were both being healed by something larger—something like the return of the human soul to what I call the “space between the worlds”—right there in the consulting room!

Plato, you know, had a lot to say about the “two worlds” that define human experience. For him, all real knowledge is re-collection and the experience of Beauty was no exception. According to Plato, when we glimpse the beautiful—like those thrush songs or my patient’s pony—we are “seeing through” the manifest content of our time- and space-bound vision to eternal or heavenly beauty with which the soul once communed—in that early, blessed time when the soul lived with the gods and had wings. According to Plato, a conscious experience of beauty here and now gives us a chance to regrow those wings and restore wholeness to the soul. We “see through” into another dimension of meaning (see *Phaedrus* 2005, ¶249d).

So in this description of sacred experiences in nature—mine and my patients—you can catch a glimpse of the story I’m trying to tell in *Trauma and the Soul*. Trauma in the interpersonal world sometimes opens a “space”—or drops us through an earthquake fault—into an archetypal world that’s already there to catch us, so to speak. Beauty is part of that. So is terror, as Rilke said in his

Duino Elegies. But that's another story. In any case, most psychoanalysts would be inclined to see my patients' experiences of beauty—wood thrushes and ponies—as defenses against the unbearable pain in their childhoods—ego defenses. I'm not satisfied with that, and Jung wouldn't have been either. Rather, I think a "space between the worlds" opens up and creative fantasy comes in to give a person something to live *for*. The mythopoeic psyche is constellated and the resulting "story" is nutriment for the soul. Saving the soul seems to be what such mythopoeic stories are about, and when the stories are recounted later in psychotherapy, the soul comes back into presence again. These are healing moments that transcend a rational *analysis* of where our childhood wounds come from.

I fear I've taken you off on a very long tangent! I think we were talking about the soulful beauties of the Newfoundland landscape, were we not?

HM: Yes, but well, beauty begets beauty, and I think this beautifully segues into core dimensions of your current book. Although, interestingly, I find myself thinking back to *The Inner World of Trauma*. I remember, in a seminar at the C. G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, that one of my wisest, best teachers, Dr. Chauncey Irvine, was excited about your book. I recall her saying how proud she was to be a Jungian because of it. There was something distinctive about it.

DK: I didn't know that; what a lovely affirmation.

HM: Yes, I still can see the look on her face. I think your book released so much feeling, and you articulated things that some of us felt or experienced personally and clinically but had not been able to articulate or put together. Talk about beauty!

DK: Well if that's what happened it would be beautiful—something coming to consciousness for the first time. I wonder what that was. Do you know? I'm sorry, I know this is an interview of me, but let me turn the question back to you for a moment. Do you remember what she felt? What had I articulated that she recognized so appreciatively? What was different?

HM: Good question—let me think about that.

DK: I'll tell you one thing that some clinicians have said about my earlier book—maybe it's what your teacher was talking about. Because it is all about the self-care system that comes to the rescue of what I call the imperishable personal spirit *by aggressively cutting it off from feeling*. It's possible that I have sort of, maybe, stretched a bridge across to the wider world of psychoanalysis, which is organized by an understanding of psychopathology resulting from *defenses against feelings* and especially attacks by what they call the tyrannical negative superego upon the ego. That's the whole field within which our colleagues in psychoanalysis work, and it's a pretty tried-and-true formulation—very useful when it comes to work with *resistances* and the *repetition compulsion*. Yet we don't find an explicit discussion of self-attacking defenses in Jung, nor of feelings as such, which tend to be discussed as one of the four typological functions. Jung comes close to the idea of defenses against feeling in his understanding of complexes, which, of course, are systems of defense if you really look at them. They're organized to bind certain affects, experiences, ideas, and images within a kind of matrix or coherent structure—the feeling-toned complex—so they serve a defensive function against feeling. But there's very little aggression in Jung's understanding of the

complex, and the self-directed aggression that we see in trauma is missing. In speaking about the self-care-system as a central trauma complex, perhaps I was developing those missing links and offering a bridge between Jungian thought and psychoanalytic thought?

HM: That is a good point. Now that you are saying this, I recall it was a seminar that she was teaching specifically on complexes, so this fits. Your work added a missing dimension to Jungian thought. Also, I was drawn to you talking about the crux of trauma being its impact on the inner world. Maybe that relates to this interface between worlds that we started with in this interview—the inner versus the outer world. More often, particularly in our diagnostic systems, the experience of trauma is conceptualized externally and is related to the outer situation, not by what goes on inside any of us. I think that was a piece that resonated with so many and that might have been part of her comment about being proud to be a Jungian—that Jungians have long championed and honored that dimension and not that it becomes all about external relationships or some outer external traumatic event but, rather, by what goes on inside the person.

DK: That makes sense. When outer trauma ends, it often doesn't extinguish because something inside is keeping the trauma alive—the self-care system. It seems to be designed to keep retraumatizing the psyche from within long after the outer trauma has gone. That is the kind of puzzle that I set myself to try to understand from a more symbolic perspective—not just making it a perversity or a death instinct or something like that.

HM: Yes, well, your dedication to understanding this process actually relates to a lovely quote from one of your students. He commented, “The inspiration Don provides for clinicians is to courageously attend to themselves in their being present to their client's difficult experiences. Don's vision of process makes creative room for both the severity and the fertility of shadow in ways that allow for profound and meaningful integration of some of the most daunting aspects of human experience and development.” I am curious, with his comment and my former teacher's comment about your work, what is it like to have such a profound impact on the Jungian community? With the kind of impact that you've had—I imagine it can be a mixed bag—what's that been like for you?

DK: Well, it's been enormously gratifying, and especially so because people like yourself and the student you quote are clinicians, working in the trenches with very wounded people. However, as you are aware, not everyone feels that way and a number of Jungian colleagues are quite negative about my work. Followers of James Hillman and archetypal psychology find my emphasis on trauma and defenses to be just another sort of “regression to ego psychology” as they would put it. Hillman himself had a real aversion to “trauma theories.” He would have said that trauma is simply a stimulus for the soul's development and that all these “trauma theories” are turning us into a bunch of victims who would like to be delivered from the human condition! At the last International Association for Analytical Psychology Congress in Montreal during a talk on “Defenses in Dreams.” I had a chance to offer a rejoinder to those allegations and to raise questions about some of Hillman's ideas myself—especially those in *The Soul's Code*. He was in the audience, but unfortunately I didn't have a chance to talk with

him to get his reactions, which I would have relished. Jim Hillman was never afraid to engage people who disagreed with him.

I've had intriguing dialogues with many Jungian colleagues over the years about my understanding of trauma and the frightening defenses it gives rise to, for example, at the Society of Analytical Psychology in London and among people in San Francisco and Los Angeles and others who are more informed by infant observation and attachment theory and object relations—generally the developmental school. They tend to be aware of the exquisite sensitivity between infant and mother and how derailments in early attachment can give rise to what Michael Fordham used to call “defences of the Self” (1974). We tend to speak the same language, although I've emphasized more the archetypal nature of early defenses. Others, who have more classical training or who are inclined toward an archetypal orientation, have been more critical of my formulations. For example, my idea of anti-individuation factors, the so-called archetypal defenses, in the personality discussed in *The Inner World* has been very controversial among some colleagues. They're much more inclined to see a wisdom behind the attacking energies in the psyche. Stan Marlon, for example, who has been a friend and colleague for many years, gives a very articulate and interesting criticism of my work in his book *The Black Sun*. What I call anti-individuation defenses, he prefers to see as an “effort” on the part of the superordinate Self to break down a false ego position and initiate transformation.

I have seen this, too, in certain “healthier” cases, but as applied to severe cases of psychopathology (and not all pathology is a “god” as in “the Gods have become diseases”!), I tend to see this as a naively optimistic picture, as if the “Self always knows best.” I find it much more intriguing theoretically to imagine that perhaps the Self doesn't know best—especially after trauma. What if the Self's alignment with the individuation process is heavily dependent on human mediation of those archaic energies of love and hate, regression and vulnerability, that are part of every infancy and childhood. Often that human mediation isn't there in a child's life—or isn't there enough—and then a self-destructive process takes over that's a lot like auto-immune disease in the body. Bion called it “attacks against linking” (1959).

HM: Right.

DK: Anyway, I think some of the controversy about my work inside the Jungian world has taken shape along this developmental/classical or nature/nurture continuum. It's interesting because my own analytic experience has been in both camps. My first analyst was classically Jungian—one-sidedly so perhaps; my second was more relational but with a lot of attention to dreams; and my third was more a mixture of the two. As I look back over my history and professional life, I can definitely see how torn I've been between a relational, intersubjective, interpersonal, and developmental psychoanalysis, à la Winnicott, Guntrip, Fairbairn, and Ferenczi, on the one hand, and Jungian theory that focuses on the ego/Self relationship, on dreams, and on the unfolding of the personality from within, on the other. Neither seems adequate to me without the other. I think both of my books can be looked upon as my efforts to heal that division in myself and in the field generally. Maybe that explains my work's appeal to people who have suffered a similar stretch between those two worlds—the intrapsychic and the intersubjective.

HM: I can see how it would profoundly shape your perspective. And here you are straddling those two worlds again. How did your new book help with bridging that gap for you, do you think?

DK: The new book certainly is a continuation of the first book in the sense that I'm elaborating the ideas in the first book about trauma and defense in the direction of the more specifically spiritual dimensions that I've encountered in my work over the last ten years. I no sooner say those words than I have to confess my discomfort with the word "spiritual"—because of its "celestial," "ethereal," and religious connotations. Like Jung, I'm a psychologist, and I prefer not to make claims about the ontological reality of spiritual things. And yet, here I am writing a book whose title is *Trauma and the Soul: A Psycho-Spiritual Approach to Human Development and Its Interruption*. You see, I could just as easily have titled the book "An Archetypal Approach" or something of that nature. But I didn't. I think the reason I didn't is that I wanted to frame the book between two realities or "worlds" and not collapse them into one. I wanted to define a "space" for my discussion between the spiritual and material worlds, between the inner and outer worlds, between the divine and human worlds, between the ego's world and the world of the soul. Having defined this "space" then I could say that this is the intermediate area in which we are all most alive and, further, that we are all most alive in this space because *this is where the soul comes to presence*. If we want to live ensouled lives, then we will have to hold the tension between our spiritual and material realities. We will have to live our *dual destiny* all the way through to the finish without collapsing one world into the other, that is, offering a "spiritual" resolution on the one hand—a literal one like the Christian "belief" in the resurrection—or a "material" resolution on the other—like the notorious cynicism of some of our scientists who see human life as nothing but a handful of chemicals and a bunch of water coming together by accident. For Jung, the deeper truth of the Christian story was that its central figure, Jesus—part divine, part human—had the courage to live his dual destiny all the way through to his mortal end. Symbolically speaking, the resurrection is understood not as a literal *event* in history but as the mythopoeic "outcome" of a life so dedicated. Resurrection simply means new life!

In my new book, I tell quite a number of clinical stories of trauma survivors who have had spiritual or mystical experiences at crucial moments in their histories—experiences that often made all the difference in sustaining their hope and confidence in being able to live their lives. These experiences came to them at moments when they were "broken" by trauma. They came from another layer of psychological life "beyond" or "deeper" than the ego. That's the way it felt and we wouldn't want to question their experience. Jung called this deeper/higher layer the collective unconscious and said that it was organized in mythopoeic, archetypal images and affects that have been part of humanity's experience since time immemorial. *Mythopoeic images from the collective unconscious are experienced as spiritual*. And these images are not just benign angels and loving fairies that want the best for us; they are also malevolent demons and violent, murderous devils who would prefer to keep us in hell forever. I have one whole chapter in *Trauma and the Soul* exploring clinical depression against the backdrop of Dante's Inferno—the first book in his *Divine Comedy*. The penultimate devil to whom Dante is introduced at the bottom of hell is called "Dis"—from which we get "dissociation," "dismemberment," "disease," and "disaster," which means to become disconnected from your stars. So the spirituality I write about in the book is not

only celestial and heavenly. It is both light and dark, benign and malevolent—the two faces of God, if you will, and archetypal levels of libido versus aggression.

And my point is that this is the phenomenology of the inner world that shows up in dreams when our egos have been riven by trauma. We fall into the spirit—light and dark. *The only thing that can save us from this inflation and deflation is human mediation and tolerable suffering in relationship.* In other words, trauma plunges us into the spirit world—light and dark—and this world sustains us while it also makes us sick. Healing comes from a companioned (by the therapist) “dis-illusionment”—a slow suffering descent/ascent from “divinity” to humanity, and this is resisted because the traumatized ego becomes identified with the idealizing or diabolizing energies of spirit and doesn’t want to give them up. In the Bible, the word for this “emptying” oneself of one’s “divinity” is *kenosis*. It’s connected to what it means to descend into the body—to “incarnate.”

Believe it or not, Helen, this is a very long-winded answer to your question about how the new book helped me bridge the gap between classical and relational theories. I think the phenomenology of the inner world of trauma can only be understood from a classical Jungian position that understands the mythopoeic psyche and all of its “spiritual” or archetypal dimensions. The inner world of the trauma survivor is often mythic before it is personal. On the other hand, the phenomenology of the *healing process* depends much more, I think, on a relational/developmental/attachment perspective. Relationships, after all, are the great transformers of psychic energy, and only relationship *humanizes* and grounds archetypal affects and images, rendering them into a uniquely personal story.

In this second book, I’m trying to focus both on the *inner world* I explored previously but also on the question of what’s healing in the psychotherapy of trauma. I’ve tried to describe relational events between the patient and me, and give examples of how the unconscious responds to these events in dreams, which then become aids to further understanding and experience. In the first book, I really didn’t make clear what the therapeutic relational needs were, nor did I show how to repair the early wounds of trauma within the relational matrix of the transference.

HM: How did these relational factors become so important to you? Did it have anything to do with the more relational work you did in your later analyses?

DK: Well, perhaps. But I think this new vector in my thinking is less a result of my analysis and more the result of needing to make my work more effective and relevant for my patients. I became less interested in archetypal amplifications and insights gained through interpretation and more interested in things going on in the immediacy of the moment—in the transference and in my patients’ struggles between feeling and defense against feeling—especially the defense of dissociation. And I discovered that the “royal road” to this more experiential, immediate affect-focused treatment was *attention to the body*. This should have been no surprise to me or anybody else because the body is, after all, where we hold our affects while the mind is the locus of thought, understanding, insight. Psychoanalysis was always a very mental business, an interpretive discipline oriented to understanding and insight. In the early Seventies, it was Kohut who began to talk about more “experience-near” interpretations and to focus on empathy and intersubjective *experience* between the analytic partners and on the unifying self as being motivated by its ideals, longings,

and concerns about self-esteem regulation, not only by the drives pushing it from behind. This felt wonderful to me and had many obvious links with Jung's ideas about the Self and the wholeness of experience and the *telos* of psychological process. As psychoanalysis began to appreciate the importance of early attachment experiences from Bowlby and moved slowly from a drive and defense model to a trauma paradigm with more awareness of dissociation and the exquisite vulnerability of children to emotional abuse and abandonment, including infant observation studies, everything was moving toward a more relational, empathic, and intersubjective way of working. Sandor Ferenczi and his *Clinical Diary* (1995) emerged as a seminal contribution that had been marginalized by Freud and his dogmatic orthodoxy. This set the stage for the relational focus of Stephen Mitchell and his colleagues in the New York University Postdoctoral Program. I had early contact in New York with some of these people outside the Jungian world—Sabert Basescu and Erwin Singer, for example—who were talking about relational analysis even though they weren't calling it that yet. And then in the last fifteen years, the relational emphasis has blossomed—witness the work of Manny Ghent, Jody Davies, Karen Maroda, Michael Eigen, Thomas Ogden, Philip Bromberg, and so on. Finally, to put the frosting on this cake, we have the contributions of Allan Schore, Dan Siegel, Pat Ogden, Peter Levine, and others demonstrating that the relational approach actually works on a neurological and body level. All these influences outside the Jungian field had a profound effect on the way I thought about my work and the risks I was willing to take in the consulting room. Another approach I've gotten interested in lately is Patricia Coughlin's "Individual Short Term Dynamic Psychotherapy" (ISTDP), where the focus is on trauma, affect tolerance, and defense all heightened by an intrapsychic focus in the immediacy of the here and now. Very useful.

HM: These influences are noted in your book when you discuss relational approaches, and how contributions from bodywork, attachment theory, neuroscience, and ISTDP have enhanced psychoanalytic work. Jung's earliest writings express some of these values now promulgated in contemporary psychoanalysis, such as the importance of affect, dissociation, and an attuned human relationship, aspects of therapy that Jung named early on. Some of Jung's earliest writings, for example, in *The Practice of Psychotherapy*, sound very relational (1966, CW 16). It seems to me that those of us who accent and work in the ways you describe are practicing in ways that are, actually, quite faithful to early Jungian thought, which resonates in many ways with contemporary relational thought. Yet, this quality of relationality is often at odds with some images of Jungian work. I wonder if you have any thoughts about that?

DK: Well let's pick up your interesting comment about Jung's relationality in terms of the way he worked with people. I think he was just by nature much warmer than Freud, related and a more spontaneous affect-connected individual, who really needed that in his relationships with people. When Jung left the early psychoanalytic organization with its regular conferences, for example, he was missed for his animated talk and his "booming laughter." Jung was not one who enjoyed sitting back and being silent and letting himself be projected onto. He famously said that both people are transformed by the therapy relationship—like a chemical reaction. I've always felt Jung's relationality in his writing, especially in his early cases. For example, his famous case of the "Moon-Lady" and the story about him singing a lullaby to a frightened, uptight female patient and how

healing that was for her.¹ What courage that took! What a “right brain to right brain” communication! I think that dovetails with what the relational people are doing and saying now.

On the other hand, as the years went by and Jung became more involved with theory and less with clinical work, I think he became less tolerant of the relational needs of his patients, especially the regressive needs they might have had in the transference. He tended to refer those patients to his female colleagues. He was more interested in the dream and fantasy material that were brought to him by his more brilliant, talented, and well-put-together patients like Pauli, for example. In his later life, I don’t think he was very tolerant of the kinds of feeling experience that we know we have to work with if we’re going to make a difference with our early-trauma patients.

HM: Yes, if we look at the capacity for actively being with regression as one expression of relationality, in practice, Jung did not seem to practice what he clearly advocated. In *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung discussed the necessity and value of regression, yet it seems he could not really stay there, in a sustained way, with people, and this intolerance or indifference to regression was, sadly, adopted by some Jungians (Jung 1912/1967, CW 5).

DK: I think that’s right. You can see Jung becoming disconnected from the developmental/relational aspects of his work as he needed to differentiate himself from the psychoanalytic colleagues who had made his “spiritual” interests such a laughing-stock. Freud literally called him crazy, and everyone withdrew from him after the publication of his *Wandlungen*. It drove Jung inward, and we now know from *The Red Book* that in his inner life he found the key to his own unique life and contribution. He found a new psycho-spiritual foundation from which to start again—the sacred core of his personality and the “holy way” that unfolded in his active imagination. However, as rich as this was, it also alienated him from his previous colleagues in psychoanalysis. It cut off his dialogue with them. It’s a shame, and I think it’s something we’re still trying to recover from. My book is one small effort in that direction. I try to honor the incredible richness Jung found and made available to us from the inner world, while, at the same time, showing his traumatic withdrawal and resulting unrelatedness to the interpersonal world of his professional colleagues.

HM: That’s an interesting point because sometimes Jungians get projections that they are deep or heady or spiritual people, but not necessarily related or embodied. Unfortunately, sometimes the projection has some truth, although that, of course, can be true of any stereotype—there are certainly classical Freudians who were very related long before relational psychoanalysis became so popular!

DK: Yes, exactly! Just as many Jungians are now deeply engaged with contemporary neuroscience and relational psychoanalysis with all its discoveries in infant observation, attachment theory, and so forth.

HM: In addition to addressing relational psychoanalysis, you talk about the new trauma paradigm of psychoanalysis. I wondered about your thoughts regarding its strengths, its limitations, and its influence on us as clinicians?

DK: I think I’ll dodge that question in its larger implications and refer you to my book. But there’s one aspect of your question that occurs to me now and it’s how contemporary neuroscience has

become part of the new trauma paradigm. Allan Schore, for example, has meticulously documented that early trauma is registered in the right hemisphere of the brain because that's the hemisphere that's "on line" in the first eighteen months of life. This is tremendously important because a "left brain" focus in therapy on rational, linear thought and "insight" won't reach the right hemisphere where early trauma is encoded. Whereas a feeling-centered, embodied, relational intervention will. Schore says that such interventions have a chance to actually "sculpt" the brain and reestablish connections that were never made in early life. That's obviously healing, and the nice thing about it is that it "proves" on a neurological level what we Jungians have known all along—that work with the imagination and dreams and relationally is the way to go.

But there's a possible down side to all this emphasis on the brain and that has to do with the materialist, reductionist tendency of modern science. There's no soul in it. In my book, I try to bring this out by saying that "yes, it's true that there is early attachment evidence showing us that relational events have a profound effect on the actual myelination of the right hemisphere and the sculpting of the brain, but such events also have an effect on the sculpting of the soul." In other words, on the development of what Erich Neumann in *The Origins and History of Consciousness* and Edward Edinger in *Ego and Archetype* called the ego-self axis—that inner connection between the glowing source of our spontaneity and the ego, struggling to make its way in the world. I mean every relational event is important in shaping the connection between the ego and the Self. That's not something that's just inborn, I don't think.

HM: Your point about the down side reminds me of when I was doing psychoneuroimmunology research. There was such excitement over finding concrete, biological findings, namely, immunological changes that could be measured—something mysterious and invisible on the inside—was concretized and made visible through this research. I think that was part of the allure! But how enduring and how meaningful these changes were to one's life was much harder to substantiate. There seems to be a parallel with some neuroscience and brain research. Some studies are more clearly substantial and meaningful. Researchers, for example, recently found that children who received more love and early nurturance had a significantly bigger hippocampus than children who had not received as much love and early nurturance (Luby et al. 2012). That's quite an important finding and its implications are clinically relevant—perhaps our modern way of corroborating Harlow's seminal, early attachment research decades ago. However, with the current neuroscience research, where you can measure many things from neuroimaging, findings can be erroneously reified and misapplied. The terms "brain porn" and "brain porn addiction" have even surfaced to describe the cultural phenomena whereby people exaggerate, misapply, and overly apply findings from neuroscience. Although staying abreast of discoveries in neuroscience is critical, and it can be worthwhile to prove things scientifically that many of us, as clinicians, have known experientially for years, I feel there can be a strange way that the transformative power of the heart and soul in this work gets overshadowed or even lost with this mindset. I'm reminded of your point about therapy sculpting souls as well as brains—and that has an enduring human, spiritual, and clinical truth.

DK: Thank you. And, I do think it carries an enduring truth that unfortunately we can't pin down very well. With our patients we can see images in the unconscious that point to a central archetype

or sense of wholeness or healing or reconciliation or whatever the patient may describe as a soulful moment, and we'll feel it that way too. When that happens, if we were both to hook up to a PET scan, probably it would show a certain lighting up of areas in the brain but what does that demonstrate? That we can re-create numinous experience by stimulating the hypothalamus? That's what the scientists want us to think. But such correlations don't mean we understand the mysteries of the inner world any better.

HM: Exactly! I could not agree with you more. For some people, understanding that this part of the brain lights up, can substitute for, or replace, a soulful understanding of what it means phenomenologically, subjectively, intrapsychically, interpersonally, and spiritually.

DK: Right! The issue is the imagination—that's the whole thing, that's what we're after. Hillman was eloquent about that—of trying to find what they actualize—that intermediate shimmering reality that we call the imagination. Trauma survivors can't access the imagination, or, if they do, it's always a dark imagination—a foreboding paranoid fear of what the future holds. All these techniques: expressive arts, art therapy, EMDR, somatics, dream work, metaphor, story, they're all designed to stimulate that intermediate space of imagination and provide a matrix in which the soul can live again.

I think the psyche and the imagination love it when we pay attention to the link between whether we call it the right and left hemispheres or the link between the body and the mind or psyche and soma—however we describe it. Some of these techniques, like EMDR, for example, have to do with hemisphere connections. People have powerful experiences as a result of this kind of bilateral stimulation so I don't think they are incompatible. I think they're very compatible.

HM: Yes, all these approaches that can help in healing trauma ranging from the expressive arts and art therapy to EMDR and hypnosis to somatic work, can be powerful and offer something distinctive. Some depth-oriented practitioners eschew such ways of working, perhaps feeling they are reductive or disruptive to the relational field. Maybe it's felt as antithetical to soulful engagement. Perhaps this is where analysts and depth-oriented practitioners have something to offer in how these techniques can be integrated into psychotherapy in order to foster greater wholeness and healing. I've worked with many practitioners who say prescriptively, for example, "She has trauma so refer her for EMDR," without any understanding of the person, and no understanding about building a symbolic or developmentally or relationally attuned connection and container.

DK: That's a huge problem. As you say, the developmentally or relationally intact connection or the symbolic container is not there as a holding environment when people just execute the techniques that they apply. Or, if there is a container, there is not enough attunement to the developmental and relational process.

HM: Yes, well, in the spirit of containing, I wonder if we can return to another issue in your book, in your chapter, "Innocence, Its Loss and Recovery: Reflections on Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*," which was moving to read (Kalsched 2013). What did you hope to convey?

DK: In that chapter, I'm trying to resurrect an aspect of human experience that psychoanalysis has not dealt with much—innocence—the innocent part of us that no longer has access to experience.

The psychoanalyst James Grotstein once said, “Innocence is the central element in a person’s spiritual life!” (1984, 213). I believe that’s true, and so innocence and the spirit are intimately linked. I got interested in this because some of my trauma-surviving patients remembered a pretraumatic child-like innocence in themselves that had been lost. By “lost” they meant lost to their ongoing experience. It turned out that this lost innocence hadn’t “gone away.” Rather, it had retired to the unconscious where it was being defended by dissociative defenses. Those defenses’ apparent “intention” was to keep this innocent part out of the suffering associated with unbearable experience. That’s what the self-care system does. In other words, untransformed innocence is split off somewhere in the unconscious, on another planet, like the Little Prince, and has to find its way down into this world to suffer and experience life. The only way this is possible is to have reality mediated by another person. In the story that person happens to be the stranded pilot.

In Chapter 3 of the book I use another literary image to show how innocence is encapsulated in “another world”—the world of hell as depicted in Dante’s *Inferno*. In that story, we get a mythopoeic image of the great “defender” himself, Dis, who is a kind of personification of the defensive process. As Dante’s guide Virgil guides him down into hell, there’s a place where the innocents are held in captivity. It’s called limbo. That’s where unbaptized infants are kept—or righteous patriarchs who lived before Christ’s coming. In this image, childhood innocence is kept out of the deepest tortures of violence that comes from the monster in the depths by being trapped in this “outer layer” of hell. It’s not tortured there by fire or demons, but it suffers a permanent kind of exile from experience in this world—experience that would allow it to develop as the center of a person.

HM: What a powerful allegory for how trauma affects any of us! Are you saying then that, in a sense, there’s this beginning we all have, that is important, this archetypal beginning, at birth, this innocence, and that as we encounter the world, as life happens to us, we have challenges to that innocence, and the parent needs to mediate that loss of innocence—and what matters is how the innocence is tended to—if the loss is tended to soulfully?

DK: That’s exactly right. Innocence must yield to experience but that can’t happen too fast or too precipitously. Otherwise we have trauma. Kohut’s word for it was a necessary but “phase appropriate” disillusionment. Without this mediation, innocence tends to take on archetypal proportions. It tends to become what the Freudians call “infantile grandiosity.” That’s a real problem because unless innocence accrues experience, it stays infantile and entitled, and then it gets paired with a protector-persecutor defense, and then you get this wicked combination of tyrannical infantilism—a victim-perpetrator dynamic, where any manner of violence is justified in the name of innocence. I talk in the book about “malignant innocence.” A classic example in our victim-obsessed culture is those fanatic “right to lifers” who kill abortion doctors in order to protect innocent life. These people have split innocence and perpetration, identified with innocence and goodness, and projected the “evil” perpetrator. They can no longer see the innocence in the perpetrators, nor their own perpetration of violence. They are too “innocent.”

HM: Yes, those who are so unconsciously wounded themselves, who gravitate toward, and become tragically gripped by, this archetypal image of innocence, which can manifest, for example, in the archetype of the divine child?

DK: Well, yes, the divine child is the mythological representation of childhood innocence, let's say, in its untransformed archetypal form. There's a core of the personality that we all bring into this world that slowly meets up with the hard edges of reality, of the Real, as James Grotstein says. If reality is presented too precipitously, or traumatically, we become "Orphans of the Real," like the Little Prince, and we can't metabolize our experience and suffer ourselves into reality. How does a child come to understand death, for example? These things are impossible without a good story, and sensitive parents accomplish this by helping the child into the matrix supplied by metaphor, art, and creative stories. That's where the soul gets "made." Usually these mythopoeic stories involving two worlds become the matrix that allows an understanding to occur and the story becomes the mediation. That story has to be told by a person the child loves and feels secure with, and it takes many iterations. One of my patients, a very sensitive little girl at the age of four or five, found out about the holocaust and never got over it. No one helped her with a meaningful "psychodrama."

HM: That speaks to the power, the psychic reality of what you are saying. Funny, I had to smile at the synchronicity—when I saw that you included *The Little Prince*, I recalled that when working at the Palo Alto Veterans Administration Hospital, I used parts of *The Little Prince* to illustrate my work with a profoundly traumatized patient!

DK: Wow!

HM: Yes, well, I think it really speaks to the relevancy of these ideas that you are fleshing out for trauma work. This story really tells a story of trauma.

DK: The great stories always speak to these fundamental aspects of the human condition, and we need them to metabolize trauma.

HM: I was moved by this chapter and became curious about Saint-Exupéry's history. As you may be aware, his father died shortly before his fourth birthday, and then tragically his brother, François, Saint-Exupéry's closest confidante, died of rheumatic fever at fifteen. We can easily imagine how this would shatter and violate his innocence and how he could retreat into developing into a Little Prince.

DK: I think those are very relevant to this story and maybe have to do with the fate of a young, vulnerable, animated, and imaginative little person in his interior world. Maybe he had to retire a part of himself to another planet in order to survive.

HM: What you are saying brings up another topic I was really curious about and wanted to get your insight into. You say in your book, "It has been said that there are no atheists in foxholes. There are also few, if any atheists among trauma survivors—at least not the ones whose experience I report in the following pages" (Kalsched 2013, 23). I was really struggling with that sentence. It stayed with me. I really want to believe that in my heart! I think it speaks to your point about your patient never getting over the holocaust. What I am curious about is that I have met a few trauma atheists or trauma survivors who are atheists. Maybe they are the people who do not stay in our work, if they ever show up for the work at all. I was curious about your thoughts on the people who never do get over it, what could you say about that?

DK: When I reread that sentence about no atheists in foxholes I wondered about it too. Your point's well taken. Not all trauma survivors have a positive or life-saving experience of the numinous. I guess what I was trying to emphasize is that most of the people I've worked with personally and whose cases are presented in the book, have, indeed, found a kind of mystical connection to nonordinary reality, and that has meant a great deal to them. The inner world is very real to them and becomes a sacred space where experiences of the ineffable occur. Then, of course, there are those hard-bitten cynics who have had terrible life-rupturing trauma and, for reasons that we don't quite understand, have no access to the inner world whatsoever—except perhaps to a persecutory highly negative inner world. They may become hardened and cynical in their attitudes and atheistic in that sense. They cling to a very reductionistic, materialistic orientation and think that their New Age brothers and sisters, the ones I'm talking about, are just naïve airheads. It's possible that unmediated trauma *tends* in the direction of breeding cynics and hardened people. That's what defenses do.

HM: Yes. Do you have a sense of what turns one down that path versus those who do undertake the work you describe?

DK: I really don't understand it either; it's a mystery, but I would think that the people I'm describing are people who have had some kind of a secure attachment early on, and some kind of safety or place in the world where they felt that their true selves got glimpsed, or that they were loved or that they felt loved, and they continue to hope for something better in their lives and they're seekers for that reason. A lot of them end up in psychotherapy because they've known something good or whole and they want to recover it. Whereas I think the hard-bitten cynics or Philistines often don't come to therapy. They're probably running hedge funds or something!

HM: If that is what happens, now I really wonder why some of us take that path and some of us don't! Let's look at the opposite, which relates to your chapter about Jung. We, of course, value and believe in analysis. But, if we look honestly at our work, I think most, if not all of us, know within ourselves, our patients, and people who are in analysis and spiritual practices for years that there can be profound limits to development and transformation, despite being in the work. Most disheartening to me are the limitations in relatedness and spiritual development. In thinking about your chapter on Jung, when you talk about his personality and development, some criticisms and shortcomings that you note here are still levied at Jungians today, and I wonder what that may suggest about our work. For example, you talk about his heightened inner preoccupations. I'm thinking how that would be at the expense of what, developmentally, we may now call "attunement," or, spiritually, what leaders such as, say, Martin Buber, would call the "I-Thou relationship," or would be at odds with the process-relational philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead? You address these relational issues when you cover Winnicott's analysis of Jung.

DK: Had you been aware of Winnicott's critique of Jung before you read this?

HM: Just the basic information. I have not read as thoughtful an analysis of Winnicott's views on Jung as yours. I mean—no one seems to challenge Winnicott. He is, well, so loveable—so accessible and profoundly influential. Although I felt Winnicott was off in his views on Jung, and I did not

understand why, it was easy to overlook, given the value of his work. I was curious about you devoting so much time in your book to it?

DK: Well, it's been a stone in my shoe for a long time! It's upset me because I've had a love affair with both Jung and Winnicott and so to have one calling the other a childhood schizophrenic has been a real challenge. I'm convinced that the inner (mythopoeic) world of the imagination *and* the interpersonal world of imaginal process between self and other (play) are two sides of the soul's reality "between the worlds." As I see it, each is the reverse face of the other. Or, to refer to the image I use in the book of an Inuit carving called the "Storyteller" with one eye closed, looking in, and one eye open, looking out—we need both inner and outer vision for a really adequate story of the human condition. It seemed to me Winnicott was collapsing these two worlds into one and discrediting Jung's inner vision—judging his childhood preoccupations against some "normal" object-relational ideal. Granted, Jung's inner vision was made necessary, partly by traumatic circumstances in early life. But so what? Jung's vision was beautiful, universal, profound, and supplied him with an alternate world that vouchsafed his innocence and the essential self that allowed him to go on without emotional support from his "objects." It was from this mythopoeic inner landscape that he drew the basic elements of his creative contribution. And what a contribution he made—to many fields of endeavor—far beyond his profession as a psychiatrist.

The other thing that surprised me was that quite a number of Jungian commentators adopted Winnicott's pathologizing object-relational family drama explanation of Jung's struggles and difficulties. I found this very peculiar—another version of collapsing the creative tension between the worlds. These writers are not wrong in pointing out the difficulties that Jung faced developmentally, as I say in the earlier part of that chapter. Jung did have relational trauma in his background, and Winnicott is technically correct in focusing on that but . . . Well, it's like the limitations of an exclusively relational viewpoint that you and I were talking about earlier. If you don't include the inner world with its access to numinous contents from the collective layer of the unconscious, and you don't allow that these contents might become important to a child for healthy reasons as well as unhealthy ones—if you don't include that as part of the reality of the human condition, then you really can't understand Jung. Your tendency then is to reduce and interpret everything that has to do with the wild fantasies that he had as a boy and the obsessive thoughts and the imaginal world that he disappeared into. You interpret all that as a defense against injuries in object relations and that begs the question for me and leaves half of the story untold, which is why I think much of the psychoanalytic world has consciously or unconsciously adopted Winnicott's attitude toward Jung and what he's shown us about the inner world. I'm taking that on, directly—partly because Winnicott has been so important to my own work but partly because I think he leaves us with a half-truth about Jung and a half-truth about ourselves—about the psyche!

HM: I understand better, now, why you chose to devote that much time to it in your book. It was placed in the part of the book where you're talking about trauma and the soul—almost as if you were inviting us to think about how Jung was retraumatized through his rupture with Freud and the psychoanalytic movement, losing his soul in the process, and then you're also suggesting that a one-sidedness in our theory threatens our soul professionally as well. Is that right?

DK: Yes. I try to show the reality of Jung's early relational trauma—all his mistrust of his mother and fear as a boy—his unconscious suicidal urges, his terrible shame in school, his dissociation—the whole nine yards. That was very real. That early trauma all came back, was rekindled in his break with Freud and in the despair and depression that followed. We see the connections now in *The Red Book*, where Jung describes having lost his soul to the “spirit of the times” and how he returns to the mysteries and inwardness of his childhood experiences despite all their pain and sadness. In this process he re-finds the child in himself, the divine child who had been lost in all of his exciting discoveries and successes in creating the psychoanalytic movement with Freud and the rest of his colleagues.

HM: That's interesting. Jung finding his divine child is so significant. When this is linked to his early relational trauma and loss, it is spoken about relative to what you have already mentioned—the standard—and fitting—object-relational ideas that Winnicott names. However, the influence of birth trauma and birth experiences within the family, namely, Jung's birth story, is rarely, if ever, even referenced. Jung's mother gave birth to two stillborn daughters and then gave birth to a son who died after five days, less than two years before Jung was born. So, in the span of only five years, Emilie Jung gave birth to four children and only one lived. Jung was an only child for nine years until his mother gave birth to a daughter. I am, admittedly, more attuned to this part of Jung's history since it relates to my own professional, clinical interests. These interests, however, have developed from witnessing how these influences can powerfully shape development, and how frequently they are neglected in clinical practice.

DK: That's a good point.

HM: It's a fascinating, huge, and tragic piece of Jung's early history, and it's interesting that Winnicott, a pediatrician-psychoanalyst, someone who has written poignantly about the influence of birth trauma and birth experiences, wouldn't conjecture or imagine this could be part of Jung's story in analyzing Jung. Talk about ghosts in the nursery!

DK: Do you have an intuition or intuition about how those birth experiences affected him or his mother's relationship to him or his relationship to his mother?

HM: I wonder if these experiences cultivated a profound connection to and appreciation for the soul and the spirit world, for better and for worse. I imagine it shaped his ideas on “rebirth,” particularly through the mother's body, and contributed to Jung's views about individuation being a lifelong process, as well as his emphasis on the importance of wholeness. It seems to me that Jung experienced, more intimately than many of us ever have to know, just how closely birth can be linked to death. Some people feel like those are the times that the most unadulterated soul is present.

I also imagine this could be related to Jung's ambivalent relationship to regression. He explicates in *Symbols of Transformation* that regression is vitally important, necessary, a gateway to individuation. Jung articulated the value of even going to the prenatal level in analysis, which we could imagine could have a profound meaning for him, given his developmental experiences. However, it is often said that he could hold, contain, and be with regressed states in people in a very sustained or related way and, perhaps, by extension, within himself then, coloring his

relationships, development, and theories. I wonder if, despite his brilliant insights about these issues, and clear belief in their developmental importance, the events in Jung's family surrounding birth were quite traumatic for him, creating a kind of birth complex, which remained untouched and which foreclosed working through the regressed places that this kind of complex can leave behind. To use a contemporary framework or metaphor, it seems as if Jung's left-brain registered it, but his right brain did not!

DK: That's quite interesting. I have not heard it put in that way before.

HM: Well, this could also contribute to what we were talking about regarding Jung's insights about the birth of the divine child? I can imagine how Jung's birth could, understandably, be experienced that way. I am thinking of his mother giving birth to two dead girls, and then actually having a baby boy, Paul, who dies after only five days of life, and then Jung is born less than two years later. Evidently, Jung's mother wanted to name Carl, "Paul," after his deceased brother, and Jung's father objected. It seems like the presence—and absence—and the spirit of their dead babies could have been omnipresent, and imagine what that would do, especially to a mother. It could have been profound, a very powerful energy in the family. I can't imagine what sort of state the family would be in. Maybe there developed a feeling of "life and death importance" to holding on to the inner because the outer is dead and gone? And, yet, they would have to contend with how it lives on in powerful ways, internally—which embodies the essence of trauma as you have demonstrated. I can envision how this could relate to Jung's draw toward the archetypal world and away from an embodied, personal, relational world.

DK: Certainly it would explain why Jung's mother was so "haunted." And it's funny how that piece of the history of the Jung family disappeared from my consciousness and so many others in the field. It is not spoken about. That's a very interesting observation. There's all the stuff on replacement children that would fit his story.

HM: Yes, very fitting. It is a very neglected area. But, getting back to your other point about the historical importance of this rupture between Jung and Winnicott?

DK: I feel Winnicott's treatment of Jung contributes to misperceptions about Jung and Jungian ideas and prevents other analysts from seeing the beauty of Jungian ideas.

HM: The beauty! Yes. Can you say what you find beautiful about Jungian ideas? What have been some of the ways Jung and Jungian ideas have influenced you most deeply?

DK: Let me respond to that question by repeating the story I told earlier in this interview about beauty from Plato's perspective in the *Phaedrus*. It's relevant to my experience of Jung. When we find something beautiful, Plato says, we are "seeing through" the manifest content of our time-and space-bound vision to eternal or heavenly beauty with which the soul once communed—in that early blessed time when the soul lived with the gods and had wings. So an experience of beauty quickens the soul, giving it a chance to "regrow those wings"—a chance to recover its own wholeness "between the worlds." That's where the psyche—the soul—"lives" and I had never understood this until I read Jung's introductory essay to *Psychology and Alchemy* many years ago when I was a graduate student in the Modern Library volume on Jung's basic writings. You might

say that I saw through to something eternal in this encounter with Jung's mind, and my soul had a chance to regrow its wings. On that occasion, I had been struggling with the question "Jesus Christ, myth or reality?" and Jung showed me a different way to imagine the truth or falsity of that story. He suggested that it might be "true" in a different sense than I had imagined—not true literally, but *psychologically* true. I suddenly had a glimpse of what he means by the "reality of the psyche" and its mythopoeic expressions in the intermediate space between reality and fantasy—neither one nor the other but always both. With Jung, I always feel suspended "between the worlds," and this, to me, is beautiful and exciting, shot through with meaning, and good for my soul and its wings. It can also be frustrating because it means living with unknowing, with mystery, and not collapsing the tension between these two worlds in one direction or the other, either in a material or a spiritual direction. That's what defenses do. They let us out of the psyche and into right or wrong. They let us out of the playful companioning of a dream and into interpretation. They let us out of the mysterious beauty and tension of the erotic transference and into enactment. They let us out of a symbolic field and into a literal one. And this can happen in either direction. There are reducing defenses that reduce everything to known atomized material. There are elevating defenses that elevate and expand everything into literal "spiritual truths." In either case, we distance ourselves from our essential humanity and hence from each other.

HM: How so?

DK: Well, in the introduction to *Trauma and the Soul*, I say that my orientation or approach in the book emphasizes that the spiritual world is real but that it can be put in the service of defense, right? The point being that spirituality or an emphasis on or identification with spiritual realities and spiritual values can itself be a defense against unknowing, for example, against mystery, against the struggle to understand, say, in a community of others who are struggling to understand. As soon as you have an answer, in my experience, the most interesting vital questions slip out the back door and appear somewhere else. That's been the plight of the Christian church, which inevitably goes from being a community of seekers to a community of believers. The same is true of Jungian communities. Things congeal around the right way to train or the right way to conduct analysis. The tension between the worlds collapses and the spirit leaves. I'm always more comfortable with people who have spiritual longings, immortal longings, as Shakespeare said, but who don't have the answers, who are struggling and searching, and whose spirituality also makes room for the fact that some of the deepest places that we can go are with each other—into the mystery at the center of each other.

HM: That is soul.

DK: Yes. The soul comes to presence in our deepest contact with other people in the I-Thou places if we're able to realize them and hold them. It's hard to hold them. For example, some of my patients have come in very identified with the New Age. Perhaps they're astrologists or psychics or shamanic practitioners or followers of an Indian guru—they've organized their whole lives around a spiritual discipline. Their lives in relationships or the practical realities of living may be a mess, but they're organized around some version of the spirit and their self-esteem rises or falls with that focus. When they start psychotherapy, I often imagine them as having erected scaffolding around

the somewhat shaky building of their embodied ego—scaffolding that holds them together while they rebuild a grounded capacity for relatedness. In the process of therapy, they may slowly come down off that scaffold and start to experience their affects and their grief in the context of a compassionate relationship. Then maybe eventually that spiritual scaffold becomes less important as a structure and gets integrated in a larger whole.

HM: What about the other side then, when it's not a scaffolding, or exoskeleton, holding them up? In your opinion, what does someone who has a mature connection to soul, a mature spiritual life, a developed self, what does that look like to you?

DK: Well, such a person to me would make room for, and cultivate, deep and honest relationships with others and have time for creative solitude and interiority as well. In other words, a true compassionate curiosity about what lies within and what greets us without. I think both are those transitional spaces, those places where we have access to the mystery of otherness, and a relationship with it, both the inner otherness and outer otherness, and that's essentially what spirituality is, right, relating to the great otherness and mystery of life.

HM: That's lovely! We are fortunate when we can have these experiences, personally, and when we can foster this kind of connection into others' lives through our work. Your vignettes reminded me of those mysterious connections in our life and work that affirm the psychic reality of these kinds of uncanny connections. I was thinking of a patient whose parent died during our work. To this day, unbeknownst to my patient, their parent left me a voicemail saying something to the effect of, "Please take over and take care of my child," followed by, "I am dying" . . . and then "I'm so glad you were born." The voicemail had a haunting quality. Lo and behold, this parent who called me requesting that I take care of their child, who expressed being glad I was born since they were dying, died on my birthday, unbeknownst to my patient still to this day!

DK: Wow, while the parent was still alive, the parent contacted you and said, "Please take care of my child and I'm so glad you're alive?"

HM: Yes, an unusual message, of course, to receive. I can integrate it, to some degree, internally, but there is always mystery. Then, there is the external—do you introduce that into the clinical field or not?

DK: Well, if you were going to tell a story of your work with that person, you wouldn't leave out that detail, would you?

HM: Well, no, I cannot leave that out of this person's story—at least the one I hold inside me—regarding the reality of our work together. It speaks to what you're saying, this ineffable, mysterious otherness—a spiritual dimension that affected me deeply in the work.

DK: Yes. That's the most important detail about that story. If you were going to write that story for a group of psychoanalysts, you might leave it out because you'd be afraid it would be too mystical or too airy-fairy or something.

HM: Yes, somehow either you are exaggerating or, alternatively, it can be understood reductively or explained by rational laws of probability.

DK: What a loss. Do you see how frightened we are of mystery?

HM: Yes, and it perpetuates a field-wide misunderstanding and foreclosure from understanding this kind of material.

DK: As I said, these stories are all anecdotal so they don't reach the standard of statistical analysis, but they're still the most interesting stories on the planet.

HM: I know what you mean!

DK: So why would we be shy about telling them?

HM: Exactly. They're timeless in their wisdom but can't be captured or comprehended by statistics.

DK: Yes, I think they touch that irrational place in the soul where we're most deeply alive. That's why we have to keep telling them. We need each other to tell these stories. I appreciate your relating that one. It's a beautiful story.

HM: I appreciate you naming the need to tell stories and our need for one another in this process. The art, science, and spirituality of this exchange is essential—and, perhaps, is another dimension that distinguishes analysis from other forms of psychotherapy—it values storytelling. It may include, but goes far beyond, techniques.

DK: Always, yes.

HM: So, in closing, I am wondering if you have any hopes for what message people will get out of your book—what story do you want people to hear and tell from reading *Trauma and the Soul*?

DK: We've certainly touched on different aspects of it. Certainly, I would hope that people would, through the case examples and the theory, gain a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the foundational importance of the soul in the healing of trauma and in the healing of the world. John O'Donohue once said that "each one of us has made a huge discovery that we have never gotten over. This is the discovery of the world" (1999, 21). I think that's true, and the trauma survivors who have been patients of mine have not entered a friendly world or one that found them beautiful or accommodated their needs because the parents were either physically and emotionally brutal or AWOL when they grew up. Their experience of the world has been overwhelming in the bad sense. As a result, they have partially disappeared and are not fully alive. Yet the lost and orphaned parts of them can be recovered and restored to the psychosomatic partnership. This means finding and tending and actualizing the soul spark that's part of every life and learning how to do that in the face of defenses that have lost confidence in the possibilities of life and love and have become resistances to life and to true intimacy with others. It turns out that therapy for the wounded psyche lies in that "space" where the soul is most alive—in a mythopoeic matrix that supports the life of that mystery we call the human soul. We are born of spirit as well as flesh. That's the essential thing that I'm trying to bring out. It's not usual to have a psychoanalyst write a book that says that the important stuff goes on between two worlds, the spiritual world and the material world, but that is essentially what I'm saying. I'm saying you can't understand life without

that. You can't understand Jung without that. You can't understand primitive cultures without that. And you can't understand healing without that. Trying to find a way into the space "between the worlds" may seem like a peculiar way to frame a book on trauma, but I like that I'm doing it and I think it has heuristic value. So, that's a beginning toward an answer to your question.

HM: That's quite a beginning for, admittedly, a very big question. You speak of unfriendly worlds and worlds that were far from beautiful—I feel your book is an opening into a friendly, beautiful world which lights that spark to guide us along the path of being with the inescapable pain and suffering in the world perpetuated by adversity and trauma. I found it carried a hopeful and soulful message for all of us as human beings as well as clinically, for our patients, and for the profession.

DK: I'm so glad you felt that way. I really am. Thank you for your interest and your reaching out for this interview.

ENDNOTE

1. Jung describes the "moon-lady" case in two places—in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1989, 129–30) and in "Schizophrenia" (1958/1960, CW 3, ¶571). The story about the lullaby is apocryphal but Jung's openness and spontaneity in sessions is well documented in Chapter 26 in *Jung, A Biography* by Deirdre Bair (2003).

NOTE

References to *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* are cited in the text as CW, volume number, and paragraph number. *The Collected Works* are published in English by Routledge (UK) and Princeton University Press (USA).

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ABSTRACT

Donald Kalsched, Jungian psychoanalyst, is interviewed about his new book, *Trauma and the Soul: A Psycho-Spiritual Approach to Human Development and Its Interruption*. He discusses how this book builds on seminal ideas from his first book, *The Inner World of Trauma*, by expanding on spiritual issues, addressing the tension between mythopoetic and developmental themes, and addressing contemporary approaches to trauma treatment including the roles of relational analysis, neuroscience, and attachment theory. Germane themes include an exploration of trauma, spirituality, and the soul; contemporary trauma treatments; innocence; beauty; mystery; and Winnicott’s analysis of Jung and his childhood. The theme of “two worlds,” and its relationship to psychoanalysis and trauma, is addressed.

KEY WORDS

affect, attachment, beauty, body, brain, developmental, EMDR, expressive arts, infant observation, ISTDP, Kalsched, mystery, neuroscience, psychoanalysis, psycho-spiritual, relational, Saint-Exupéry, Schore, somatic, soul, spiritual, trauma