



SOMA, SELF AND SOURCE

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1. SOMA AND ARMOUR

Everybody knows the distinction between ease and dis-ease. With ease we feel at home in the body, we are integrated, at one with ourselves, and not abstracted in inner conflict.

With dis-ease we are tense, withdrawn, full of unresolved emotional states, in struggle with ourselves or others, unhappy, neurotic, even to the point of making ourselves physically ill.

The physical body, beyond its genetic lineage, and its environmental intake, is a coded repository for all the emotions, thoughts, feelings, and values that we embody. Since it is difficult in daily life to separate these different fields of influence, the term "body-mind" has come into popular use. It expresses the unity of thought, feeling, and action. In German the word "leib" has this sense, in contrast to the purely physical "körper". In Greek the word "soma" means something closer to "form". The overlapping and interlinking form- fields of the body constitute our soma. In the New Testament the word soma is used by Paul to cover also the non-physical body, the body of light, or "resurrection body"

Soma thus seems close in meaning to soul; the word "soul" is a translation from the Greek "psyche". Human beings have pondered for millennia on the relationship between "body" and "mind". Of the various viewpoints proposed, that of a "psycho-somatic identity and antithesis" (Reich) captures best the marriage between physical form and fields of consciousness we can recognize as different levels of "mind". Experiences of clinical death underline the understanding that in certain circumstances this marriage is dissolved, and that fields of consciousness, can retain a distinct form when the body is dead. It might be more correct to see that the body is a distillation or concretisation of our soma, our form.

"Armour" is the term Wilhelm Reich used to describe the physiological and psychic crust of defenses that rebuild out of states of imbalance, loss of contact, and basic unhappiness. Armour implies a reduction of pulsation, and overtightening or overslackening of tissues, a dys-synchrony of thought, mood and deed. Many theories have been put forward by Reich and others as to the origins of the process of human armoring, the apparent turning of man against himself, of culture against nature, the creation of the inner desert in the emotional life which in turn creates the outer desert: the ecological nightmare with which we threaten the planet.

What is important here is not the origins of this deep process of “sequestration”, the building of rigid walls to seal off communication between the parts of the whole, but the clear distinction between two realms of experience: the realm of a healthy soma, rooted in natural process, graceful, and in rhythm with itself and others, and the armoured body, split off from a deeper sense of connection, enveloped in a shroud of neurotic defense formations, and clenched or resigned in a blocked or sluggish stream of life.

This basic distinction has been described by Reich in terms of primary and secondary expressions. Primary is original, undistorted, clear, well- functioning; secondary is restricted, confined, walled-off, confused, disturbed, and frequently destructive. Reich added a third category which he called tertiary, for the attempt to disguise this disturbed and pathological second layer and present a fake front.

Stanley Keleman has devoted his life work to the study of our formative process, and has described the deformations (or insults to form) which we develop during defective acculturation. He has talked of embodiment as the connectedness to the waves and rhythms of internal fluid movements moving through us, to the sea of protoplasm which constitutes the soul of the cell. Reich defined neurosis as the loss of the sparkle in the protoplasm; therapy therefore is the road to rekindle that sparkle.

2. NO MATTER, NEVER MIND

If the mind cannot be reduced to the brain, as prominent neuro-physiologists like Sir John Eccles have argued, then we live an uni-dual universe. Brain and mind can be coupled together (unity, and “identity”), but can also be distinguished (duality and antithesis). Much evidence points to the conclusion that whereas brain is a highly organized piece of nature which occupies a discrete region of space and time, protected by organ a skull cap of bone, mind is non-local, and functions beyond the four dimensional universe of space and time. The evidence for this is supplied by over a century of parapsychological and parapsychical research. It is also deeply supported by modern quantum physics which finds the same uniduality functioning at the roots of nature, in the complementarity of wave and particle. In the book QUANTUM SELF this relationship between the wave particle duality of the pre-atomic reality is developed for a model of the mind-brain relationship.

Quantum physics, probing the innermost secrets of matter, stumbles upon the irreducible fact that the properties of matter are indissolubly linked with the properties of consciousness. This is the so called “observer” problem of quantum interpretation, which remains like an unsolved koan after sixty years of physicists wrestling with the philosophical implications for their view of reality. These different solutions, all contradictory, of the quantum koan, are well summarized by Nick Herbert in his book on QUANTUM REALITY.

It was a colleague of Einstein’s, the English Physicist David Bohm, who proposed a model of two distinct orders of nature, which he called explicate and implicate. He proposed a spectrum of density, in which material forms were unfolded from an implicate order in which their potential was enfolded. This means that his view of nature is that matter, as we can observe and measure it, is the manifestation of something more subtle which we can intuit, postulate, or even create mathematics around, but which is beyond the realm of the five physical senses and whatever instruments we can create to magnify or refine them.

At this Psychic Centre on the west coast of Jutland, the Irish meditation teacher, Bob Moore,

has for many years been running courses in inner development which sensitize the intuitive awareness of these subtle dimensions of being which moore and moore physicists are coming to recognize. Roger Penrose, the world famous cosmologist and astrophysicist recently supported the conclusions of the *Quantum Self*, by arguing that consciousness itself is a quantum process.

In a conversation with the Dalai Lama, David Bohm expressed his views in this way:

“AS you probe more deeply into matter, it appears to have more and more subtle properties... In my view the implications of physics seem to be that nature is so subtle that it could be alive or intelligent”.

Bohm developed his ideas further by expressing the uniduality of subtle and dense form, in the term “soma-significance”. The soma is shaped by the meanings we contact, by intentionality, values and qualities of being. In turn those very values are helped or hindered, advanced or retarded, by our somatic life-experience. There is a relationship and interplay between the outer ground or daily life-events in our field of action, the existential journey in a particular body in a particular century in a particular city, and the inner ground of personal myth, archetypal memory, vision dream, and the domain of a mythic reality, transcending space and time.

Jung distinguishes these two realms as the realm of the ego and the realm of the Self. Harmeed Ali refers to the man of the world, and the man of spirit. Stuart White, in a book which Jung was impressed by and discussed in his letters, describes the relationship between the “obstructed” universe of dense matter, the world as we know it, and the “unobstructed” universe which lies latent beyond all that is in manifestation

The biologist Rupert Sheldrake recently excited and angered the scientific community, with his hypothesis that the growth of form is governed not only by well known biochemical physical processes, but also by non-local morphic fields, carrying no detectable energy, but communicating pattern, design, and information. If this morphic hypothesis is correct, it provides support for the view of many world religions, that the subtle levels of being are organizing the dense, just as the wave contains the potentiality of the particle. The Brazilian psycho-physicist Hernani Andrade proposed some years before Sheldrake, a similar model which he called the “biological organizing matrix” which was a subtle informational field organizing and directing the formation of the physical body, which genetics alone has failed adequately to explain.

Biologists have distinguished “upward causation” where the lower organizes the higher from “downward causation” where the higher organizes the lower.

The uni-duality between these two orders of nature, which we are calling the subtle and the dense, appears also in the writings of Longchenpa, where he speaks of “this side” and “the other side”. We may be dealing with the two sides of the “luxon wall”, on one side the subliminal world that is studied by science, on the other side, the superluminal world of synchronizing and non-locality.

3. THE MATRIX OF ESSENCE AND WHOLENESS

In the preceding sections we have looked at two distinct and different polarities, the polarity between primary and secondary life expressions, and the polarity between subtle and dense orders of nature. Many confusions have been created by the failure to recognize the difference between these two very contrasted polarities. These confusions are of great importance in all forms of bio-spiritual work with people because many people interpret spirituality as how to

get away from or above the body, and many religions, in how they have come to be interpreted, have come to teach that the world is the trap.

We can help to untangle these confusions by creating a simple matrix, with two axes at right angles to each other. The vertical axis represents the spectrum of density, the horizontal axis represents the polarity between wholeness and fragmentation.

- Subtle orders of nature
- Dense orders of nature
- Primary Wholeness
- Secondary Fragmentation

It will be seen that there are many metaphors for the upper and lower sections of the vertical axis. Here are some examples:

Subtle	dense	(Quantum physics, Bohm, Buddhism)
Unobstructed	obstructed	(Stuart White, quoted by Jung)
Implicate	explicate	(Quantum physics, Bohm)
Morphic	energetic	(Formative biology of Rupert Sheldrake)
Downward-causation	Upward-causation	(Donald Campbell)
Innerground	Outer ground	(Biosynthesis)
"Heaven"	"Earth"	(Chinese acupuncture)
Essence	Existence	(Philosophy)
"Imaginary"	"Real"	(Complex relativity, Jean Charon)
Celestial	Terrestrial	(Sufism, Henry Corbin)
Purusha	Prakriti	(Hindu philosophy)
Consciousness	Space Time	(Neognostic physics)
Non-local	Local	(Bell's theorem)
Otherside	This-side	(Longchenpa)

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The second polarity can similarly be represented by a series of paired opposites:

Primary and secondary	(Reich, Longchenpa)
Essence and ego	(Sufism; Hameed Ali; Neognostic Christianity)
Development and Envelopment	(Biosynthesis)
Core and Character	(Core energetics)
Soma and Armour	
Vertical and Horizontal	(Neognostic psychology: Gary Zukav)
Lifestream and Trap	(Wilhelm Reich)
Meadow and Stage	(Wilhelm Reich: Cosmic Superimposition)
Wholeness and Fragmentation	(Holonomy: David Bohm)
Heaven on earth; Hell on earth	(Christianity)
Ocean Desert	(Planetary ecology, Wilhelm Reich)
Order Disorder	(Teleonomy, Thermodynamics)
Negentropic Entropic	(Herbert Guenther)

4. SOUL-MAKING AND ROLE-PLAY

When I was 17 I was very impressed by the poetry and philosophy of the English poet John Keats. It had a strong formative influence on me at a crucial stage of adolescence, before my contact with therapeutic process, or the work of Wilhelm Reich.

Keats describes the world as the “vale of soul-making”. He defines soul as the depth- centre of the person we shape between birth and death.

James Hillman, in forming his archetypal psychology, as a development out of the foundations created by Jung, similarly takes John Keats as one of the starting points for his use of the word “soul”.

Every term that one uses in describing the emotional, mental and transmental fields of the human being, is open to tremendous confusion, because the same word can be used in different traditions to indicate opposite experiences, or opposite words can be used by different writers, to convey the same meaning. It will be necessary to carefully define each such term, and to make clear in what sense it is used and not used.

The term soul is the English translation of the Greek word “psyche”, and the Latin word “anima”. Here are some sample meanings:

SOUL	a) Psyche
	b) the unconscious (personal, prepersonal, transpersonal)
	c) the superconscious
	d) the mind
	e) the immortal spirit
	f) consciousness in general
	g) consciousness in particular
	h) Anima mundi, the world soul
	i) the opposite of the body
	j) the life of the body
	h) a ghost
	i) depth, as in "soul musics", "soul murders"

I will be using the word in the sense of John Keats, the forming of a deep meaningful personal centre in the course of our life-journey. In this sense the soul cannot be separated from our somatic reality during our embodiment, and is close to the meaning of the term "personhood" in for example the writings of existential philosophers like Mounier, Tillich, Tournier and others, as well as Gabriel Marcel. But the term "persons" is also open to much confusion.

Person comes from Latin "personare", to sound through. In this sense when we speak fully from the depth of our experience, voice our inner feelings from the heart in communication with an other, we have "soul", we are present with our wholeness. Hameed Ali speaks of "personal essence" for this embodiment of our being in the world. "The soul" wrote Aristotle, "is the primary act of a physical body capable of life".

But the same word, personality, was associated with the Greek word for mask, "persona", that which concealed the face of the speaker, and from behind which he spoke in the role of the part which he acted in a drama. Persona, in Jung, is used to denote the mask which conceals the real person. Personality, in the work of Gurdjieff, is used as a synonym for the false behavior patterns which are developed as substitute contacts, in a way that is almost the same as Reich's use of the word "character" (from the Greek, to cast in a mould, to stereotype) meaning our fixed set of defense patterns, our psychic armouring.

Person and personality, defined in this way, are two poles on the spectrum of wholeness, since the person. is an organizing centre for wholeness, the soul of the system, the basic individuality, which cannot be divided; and personality is fragmented very easily into sub-personalities, which are like roles we can play to obscure our nature.

Life as the vale of soul-making is life as a journey of personal development, in which our inner

potentials and qualities can be increasingly actualized and realized, in spite of and sometimes by means of, the forces that act in the direction of blockage, distress, and fragmentation.

The next term that creates great confusion in psycho-spiritual work is the term EGO.

Here are some meanings of the word ego:

"I", my sense of myself	(Freud, in German)
A psychic apparatus, part of the mind	(Freud, as translated)
A centre for selfishness	(popular speech)
Something to strengthen	(ego psychology)
Something to get rid off	(spiritual teaching)
The organizing centre for wholeness	(Blanck and Blanck)
The fundamental cause of fragmentation	(Neognostic psychology)
The self-image, or ego-image	(Buddhist psychology, Sufism)

How we make sense of these diverse and contradictory meanings?

In translational analysis a person is described as consisting of ego states. These ego states seem similar to sub-personalities, roles that we fall into. This sense is supported by Berne's use of the term "games" for the different defensive interactions that take place between people's ego states. Berne also developed the idea of scripts, the internalized messages which we act out that are far from the needs of the real self. In psychodrama a whole therapeutic modality is based on becoming conscious of the hidden role- plays.

Wilhelm Reich used the metaphor of the meadow and the stage for the polarity of primary and secondary drives. In the meadow, life functions naturally, everything is in balance. On the stage everything is artificial, enacted, a masked drama of unreality. We can view drama from two perspectives: life is turned into a play-act in which what is real is hidden behind what is performed. This is the meaning of Reich's "stage". Or we can view the drama as the opportunity to express essential qualities of the human predicament, which may be lost touch within the friction of daily life. Such was the function of Greek drama, with its primal myths with their power to induce cathartic release of buried feelings in the audience, an early aegean form of "therapeia". But we must look further into the complexities of the confusion around the term ego.

5. EGO AND NARCISSUS

Bruno Bettelheim has shown how the word "ego" entered psycho-dynamic literature as a translation of the German word "ich", meaning I. in place of a simple human word used by Freud, which everyone instantly recognizes, and can identify with, we have "ego" a psychic apparatus with some claim to objectivity.

Ego-psychology is devoted to strengthening the ego, meaning to supporting the development of a personal “I” based on secure relationships, because without the contact between the I and the thou, the I cannot develop maturely. Weak and strong egos are persons with weakly or strongly developed sense of their individuality and unity of organization. This means that a person with good ego development in the psychological sense has a strong sense of a personal I, an empirical I that knows his or her boundaries, and can function well in the real world, and the in the world of relationships. In my article, on “Death of the ego” I pointed to the distinction made by Krishnamurti between what he calls the “functional ego”, defined above, and the “status ego” which is to do with exaggerated self-importance and egotism in the me-first sense of competitive one-up-manship. Jung has used the term ego, in the functional sense, in contrast to what he calls the Self, which is an I in a deeper sense. This deeper sense of I will be dealt with in a later section of this paper.

In the process of developing the sense of I there is a process which Freud called “healthy narcissism”, which is the pride in one’s accomplishments, appearance, and existence, and is linked with the pleasure of being alive. It relates to all forms of self-caring, and self-nourishment. In Christianity we are asked to “love our neighbour as oneself”, In Buddhism the practice of compassion begins with compassion for oneself; without which compassion for others is not possible.

Secondary narcissism is a neurotic process of splitting the connection of one person to another, or of human beings from their environment. It involves all forms of conquest of man over nature, fuels much of human conflicts, nourishes nationalism, bigotry, war, and megalomania.

The spiritual traditions seek to reduce the grip of the ego, looking to free us from the trap of this egotism, of which characterological armour is but one expression.

Ken Wilber has a helpful discussion of different levels of narcissism, where he sees each growth stage as having a healthy I-development, and expansion of consciousness associated with it; and also a negative aspect where what is healthy at one stage can become perturbing at the next.

Some of the best examples of pathological narcissism are found in spiritual movements, often led by a charismatic and narcissistic leader (cf. “The Fall of the Light-bearer”, by David Boadella in *Self & Society*, London), where hierarchies of who is most developed can be created, with enormous amounts of egotism involved in competing with other’s over who has most transcended the ego. Jes Bertelsen has an important description of the dangers of this kind of inflation in his book on *Energy and Consciousness*, and Chogyam Trungpa devoted a whole book to his description of “Cutting through Spiritual Materialism”.

If we use the term “I” to refer to the healthy forms of self-expansion, and the term ego to refer to the pathological narcissism of activity which involves progressive devaluation of others, then we can see that essence and ego form a polarity on the matrix given above. Essence corresponds to the unflawed state described by Longchenpa, which includes a healthy development of the personal I: and “ego” corresponds to the flawed state where our contact is reduced, restricted, and leads to increasing degrees of isolations, alienation, or substitute contacts masquerading as real communication. We become enveloped in the ego like a shroud. It forms what Longchenpa aptly calls a “stronghold of fictitious being”.

6. SELF AND SHADOW

Many world religions, such as Hinduism and Christianity, teach the immortality of the spirit. What does it mean to be immortal? Mortality is the death of the body, the breakdown of the explicate order nature, the end of the empirical existence of a particular time-and-space-frame. Immortality means beyond destruction. What is not destroyed when the dense level of being is extinguished, is the subtle level of which it is an expression. The implicate order continues. Morphic fields need not end with physical death.

We have reserved the word soul for the expression and manifestation of our depth in the context of a particular life. What can we call this depth in itself, this depth which is indestructible? Christianity uses the word “spirits”, which means “breath”, the element of air which is invisible. Hinduism uses the term “atman” which means breath also, but has come to mean the Self. Patanjali uses the term “the Seer”, he who is conscious not only of the world but of the contents of the mind, the Witness who sees from an enlightened perspective. In Sufism there is the term essence, for the reality behind our existence, and Hameed Ali uses the term “the essential self” to designate the identity we have behind the flux of manifestation.

But first let us clarify the confusions around the meaning of the word “self”.

a) I, me, myself	(The commonsense meaning)
b) Self status ego	(as in “I am selfish”)
c) Lower self	(emotional impulses that are negative to others) (Pierrakos)
d) Middle self	(used in Huna, the adult consciousness)
e) Lower self	(used in Huna, the body and its energies)
f) Higher self	(centre of conscience)
g) True self	(Winnicott: coming from the heart)
h) False self	(Winnicott: defensive personality)
i) Real self	(either = True Self, or Higher Self)
j) Greater self	(Durkheim: transcendent Being)
k) Empirical self	(The functional ego)
l) Essential self	(Depth of our being)
m) The Self	(Transpersonal archetype, Jung)
n) The Self	(Hinduism: God, Atman = Brahman)

With the use of the capital S, I will use the Self to indicate our fundamental essence, the greater I who transcends our personal individuality. Ramana Maharshi, the Indian mystic, introduced what became known in the West as the Enlightenment Intensive, a powerful form of

group experience, where people are exposed to the layers of answers they give to the question “Who am I”. If one answers this question by saying who one is not, the sense of a deeper identity begins to emerge. In psychosynthesis this is called the process of disidentification. I am not to be identified with the name in my passport, I am more than that. I am more than my body, which is a channel for expressing my qualities.

I am more than my emotions which can cloud my reason. I am more than my reason that can obscure my light.

Buddhism taught the doctrine of “anatta”, no self. But who is the self that is not, that dies, that is perishable? And if there is a Self that continues, is it “mine”? Can I claim possession of this Self, like I own my car, or even my body, or is this “I” that I am not only my “I”, which separates me from you, but also that “I” that exists, when we are in such a deep relationship that we share an “I” in common.

This Self that I am, which is my essence, which is the seed, the flower and the fruit of my qualities, is also the Self that you have which is the seed, the flower and the fruit of your qualities. The combination of qualities may distinguish us, but the qualities themselves will unite us. We can think of qualities as colours of light. The quality part of the aura or energy-field which can be seen by psychics as a radiance enclosing each person, has different blendings of colours. Each blend can be unique, but the basic colour spectrum is given, and all is formed from one light. In what sense is it meaningful to claim the essential qualities, which are everybody’s potential, as mine?

R.D. Laing wrote a poem in his collection *KNOTS*, which contains the lines:

What is mine is not me
What is me is not mine
What is not me is mine

What is not mine is meLaing’s epigraphs are Western Koans, confronting the intellect with the impossibility of comprehending rationally when certain levels of depth of penetration into the mystery of reality are reached. Quantum physics reaches a similar Koan like state in its attempts to grasp the involvement between observer and reality, between seer and seen. The Zen concept of no mind (wu shin) is not of emptiness, but of the richest possible fullness of presence. Perhaps in order to discover our deepest identity we need to lose our usual identities, a paradox comparable with the message of Jesus to his disciples: he who would save his life must lose it.

What is excluded from light remains in shadow. The shadow is the dark twin who forgets the light. The shadow creates the illusion there is no Self, there is only the ego. We are born out of darkness, we die in darkness, there is only the passage from void to void. The shadow is the voice of despair, the cloud on the heart, the fear and the trembling at the edge of existence, of which Kierkegaard spoke. This shadow as Jung recognized, will not go away. We cannot ignore it, forget it, or deny it. Light without shadow is artificial light. What creates the shadow is the blockage to the light. Everything that stands between our essence and its expression in daily life, is the shadow. We live much of our lives in eclipse. But the shadow needs to be seen, it is hungry for light. When what lies in shadow is illuminated, a subtle alchemy takes place, fear can be transmuted into excitement, furious rage into creative work, the dark night of despair into the subtle perfume of hope. There is something more. The shadow can point the way: it is a

finger pointing at the blockage that we need to remove, a finger pointing beyond the blockage to the light which the blockage obscures. Look at the direction of the shadow and you can locate the position of the sun, look at the length of the shadow and you can tell the time of day.

Krishnamurti said: to solve a problem, stop trying to change it: sit down in the middle and really look at it. Give it light. A Tibetan buddhist, Chime Rinpoche, takes for his meditation subject, nothing more central than the antagonisms of daily life.

7. THE SOURCE AND THE SPLIT

For the whole history of humanity man has struggled to comprehend his origins, whether by going inwards in the manner of religion and meditations or by looking outwards in the manner of science. These two opposite routes are in this century. converging. The conclusion of the Indian teachers at the time of the Upanishads, was that Atman is Brahman, the Self is God, the Seer is the Creator. And of Brahman, the Upanishads say: "In the inner world Brahman is consciousness, in the outer world Brahman is space".

This is an image of a fundamental Source beyond the duality of mind and matter, an origin from which both are generated. As science has probed with telescopes, and electron microscopes into the mysteries of the sub-atomic and the ultra-galactic, from quarks to quasars, a number of scientists have independently developed surprisingly similar perspectives. Fred Hoyle, the English astronomer who discovered the process of carbon formation in stars, postulated a "Creation Field" as the original source from which the Universe sprang. In later writings he spoke of an "Intelligent universe", and clearly attributes to this Creation Field a kind of cosmic consciousness. David Bohm, the renowned quantum physicist, talks of the Holomovement, a field of reality which encompasses both matter and mind, the seen and the seer, and speaks of this as a fundamental Ground of Being for all that exists, a kind of Superimplicate order. Jean Charon, the French cosmologist, who followed Einstein by developing the equations of a complex relativity embracing both "real" (i.e. dense) and so-called "imaginary" (meaning subtle) universes of reality, designated the Uniduality behind both, with the number for unity, one, which he called simply "Etre", Being. Physicists search for the Unified Field of Nature, and it seems clearer that they will be unable to find this as long as they split of consciousness from their calculations. Gödel theorem teaches us that every system will be incomplete because it cannot include itself.

This source, however we envision or intuit it, (and before the distortions, brought in by the degenerations of religions, of the contact with original Oneness), gives us a sense of what Wholeness is. The apex of the vertical axis on the matrix of essence, gives us an image for the origin point of the horizontal axis. Wholeness is found at the roots of the subatomic structure of matter. We split that wholeness at our peril, and create a Hiroshima, or a Chernobyl. That wholeness is found in the fifteen thousand million light year diameter visible universe, all of which some astronomers are suggesting is necessary to make one planet containing life possible. Two electrons fire in opposite directions across the cosmos, are instantaneously connected, non- locally, in ways we cannot, without sub-koan minds, understand. This wholeness is found in the balance that is possible between mind and matter, culture and nature, one human being and another. David Waddell has shown how the split between foetus and womb, infant and mother, is the prototype split, between Jew and Arab, west and east, north and south.

But the human tendency to split is so deeply engrained that the moment the geopolitical

splitting between west and east begins to be overcome, by the dissolving of the iron curtain due to the vision of wholeness and one home translated from an ideal into some tangible reality, a new form of splitting begins (the rise of nationalism and internal conflicts within a previously “united” country, or group of countries).

The opposite of the Source is the Split, the crack in the cosmic egg, the illusion of disconnection, since in reality even the disconnected are still part of the whole. This Basic Split is a cosmic version of what Michael Balint calls the Basic Fault, or what Longchenpa calls the Flaw. It brings about forgetting of our Source, the loss of contact with Wholeness. In Buddhism it is described as loss of Being, in Sufism as loss Essence, in Christianity as the Fall from Grace. But Being cannot be lost, only our contact with it. The black hole of despair can be experienced differently, may be a white hole of emergence into a different state of consciousness, as I tried to hint at in my chapter “In the Womb, the Tomb and the Spirit”. Essence cannot be lost. It is indestructible. Edmund Husserl speaking of the Transcendent Self expressed that this would remain in existence even if the whole universe was destroyed.

Grace is a quality we can lose contact with, or keep contact with - it may not depend on the outer conditions. Nelson Mandela emerged after 27 years of brutal imprisonment without bitterness in his heart. A girl dying in a concentration camp wrote: “Each day I look at the three outside and feel a trust in life”.

8. INSPIRATION AND EXPIRATION

Birth ends with the first breath in, death begins with the last breath out. Life is a balance between anabolism and catabolism, taking in nourishment, and breaking down refuse. This image of nourishment, and excretion is true beyond the physical. We need to metabolize our experiences, to digest them, and drink the juice from them, while eliminating the emotional and psychic residues that are no longer useful.

Therapy is frequently a path to give up old patterns, to let go of tensions, to express buried feelings, to let go of false identifications. Healing can be looked on as how to contact sources of nourishment, physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Moving out the old detritus is of limited use unless we can open channels to bring in fresh air, inspiration, new hope, more light. Bringing in good nourishment can be a difficult process if the organism is clogged with blockages and unable to assimilate. Therapy and healing are the catabolism and anabolism of personal change; they need each other, like out-breath and in-breath.

That is their polarity, their duality. Develop only one pole and there will be problems. Spiritual work seeking to develop the higher centres of awareness while ignoring or repressing the lower quickly becomes an unstable pyramid that collapses into a heap of sand. Therapeutic work that concentrates on breaking down defences and opening the pain of the past, only, can end up leaving us as walking wounded.

Beyond their duality, lies the unity. Therapy comes from a Greek root meaning: to care for. Healing comes from the same root as “whole”. To care for someone is to help them to discover their wholeness, which is health. To be whole is to caring, about oneself, one’s neighbour, and one’s planet.

The path of development is the path out of our envelopment. There are many traps on the way. We can be seduced by manipulative therapists who want to coerce us to change in a direction that is predefined. We can be captivated by an exotic meditation system that ends up

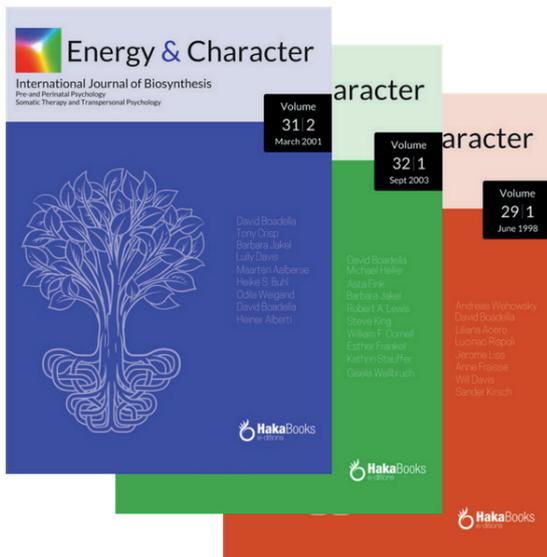
isolating us in a common of unearthliness. A true path is one that helps us to bring our light to the earth, to experience the light of the earth, the spirituality of the body, and the embodiedness of the spirit. Then our passage through the vale of soul-making will be with feet on the ground. The soma we grow on the way will remember the source of its self, and actions in the world will be shaped more and more from the heart.

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