

Diving Deeper

by Karen Hebert

I was buzzing with energy leaving Carol Caronis's talk on archetypes in July. Her insight, knowledge, and humor around this complex topic touched me. The archetypes of Teacher, Artist, Healer, and Divine Child came in and through her. I was touched by the humility with which she shared her knowledge. This humble curiosity present in both the presenters and members of the Jung Society in Atlanta has been one of the consistent things that has drawn me back to the meetings. Intellectuals? Certainly. We are the nerds our adolescent selves feared we would become. But more than intellectuals, we are seekers and wanderers. The I Ching describes the Wanderer as being "strangers in a strange land, wanderers in a vast and unknowable universe, obliged to act accordingly." There is a comfort and knowing in this group, like I've somehow found my way home. James Hollis called us "a community of exiles." This, too, resonated. Because, somehow, on the road to our personal individual differentiation, our paths have intersected, and we have had the chance to walk with each other.

One of the teachers I have found on the path is Wayne Dyer. Not long ago, I heard a talk in which he shared a revelation he had after reading Tolstoy's book, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. In the book, at the end of his life, Ivan regretfully ponders, "What if my whole life has been wrong?"¹ Dyer reflected upon this question and wrote a note to himself: "Don't die with your music still in you." The immediate thought that came to me upon hearing these words pertained to graduate school. This was validated when Dyer then said, "That music that you hear inside of you urging you to take risks and follow your dreams is your intuitive connection to the purpose in your heart since birth."² I felt this personally and believe this message was pointing me to the next step on my journey, to pursue my Ph.D. in Depth Psychology at Pacifica Graduate University.

I had postponed this endeavor because of the tremendous financial commitment that would be required in obtaining yet another degree. I also questioned my motives. How much of this is my ego seeking pomp and circumstance, and how much of this is my soul seeking to answer a call? I have heard it said that if you want to get back in touch with your soul's calling, consider what, as a child, you "wanted to be when you grow up." I wanted to be a teacher. I have always loved school and thrived in the environment that it created. The dialogue and exchange of ideas creates a fertile environment for me where I can learn and grow. In *The Art of Inquiry*, Coppin wrote about the mixed blessing of a soul's calling, describing it as being "like good news and bad news." He went on to affirm that it "ought to evoke some strong ambivalence. It might feel like a challenge you dread and at the same

time one you have longed for."³ As I got still and created space to ponder the potential of going back to school, I came to know that if I reached the end of my life having not pursued this dream, I will have died with the music still in me.

Compared to many of my fellows at the Jung Society, I am still a novice in the studies surrounding Carl Jung. I was introduced to his work while obtaining my master's degree in 2010. His theory was introduced in the line with several others. Initially, I was confused by the new vocabulary of his ideas including the collective, Self, complex, and shadow. However, as I started doing work as a therapist, I saw how the traditional forms of therapy lacked the depth and language I needed to do the work with my clients. As I began to study Jung's work, I found the missing therapeutic framework and language I had been seeking.

Soul to psychology is like wetness to ocean. You cannot separate the two—it's inherent in its very nature. The word "psychology" comes from the ancient Greek root "psyche," which means soul. The very nature of psychology is that it has to do with soul, which invites spiritual understanding. Benner writes, "Spirituality is as basic to humanity as embodiment. Created of dust and the breath of God, we cannot escape from either. Our spirituality cannot be divorced from any aspect of our life; it infuses and permeates all aspects of our being. Our work, our play, our sexuality, our prayers, our humor, our passion, and our aggression all are part of our spiritual life, this being a relationship with God that allows us to find our true identity, our meaning, and our life."⁴

I obtained my Bachelor degree in Philosophy at Wake Forest University. Though I did not have the words for it then, I am no longer surprised that while I had initially been interested in psychology as a major, I turned away from this when I saw the narrow view of science. I was disheartened to see they were dissecting psyche as though it were a frog in a lab to be cut apart and examined. In his introduction to *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, Jung commented on "the Western way of hiding one's heart under the cloak of so-called scientific understanding."⁵ After having this revelation in college, then reading James Hillman *Re-Visioning Psychology* several years later, I was comforted that I was not the first to question the exclusive use of the scientific method to study psychology. Hillman writes, "Psychology is its own worst enemy, for it is easily caught in its tools, its psychological methods and insights."⁶ I walked over to the other side of campus, to the philosophy department, where they seemed to have a greater appreciation for the nature of soul and the method through which one approaches so fine a topic. Rather than coming at the soul with reductionist experiments, we explored it with theory, myth, and conversation. While philosophy certainly has a shadow side as well, I found it to be more accommodating than the approach traditional psychology has taken.

Psychology without depth, without acknowledgement of the collective, shadow, and unconscious is like going to the beach to only sit on the shore. There's a big, wide ocean out there. But you have to engage, jump in, and risk discomfort to experience it. I have always loved the visuals that come from imagining a baptism. Though we have cleaned it up a great deal in church to only include sprinkling a few drops of holy water on the head, baptism was originally a much messier process. It initially meant being dunked in the river, getting soaked from

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head to toe. Jung's understanding of psychology invites us to jump in the river, and let the make-up and mascara run down our face. While exciting, this feels vulnerable as it leaves the ego exposed. Carl Jung said it simply, "The experience of the self is always a defeat for the ego."⁷ To me, the study of Depth Psychology feels like an anointing, a baptism into deeper waters.

I was touched by Jeanne Schul's talk on Embodied Dreamwork in May. As she spoke of the archetypal dream she had with Walrus, she told of the fruition of this dream in her work at Pacifica. Again, another signpost. Dr. Schul shared her dream with us:

"I am a walrus, and I am basking in the sun on this rocky precipice. But the sea is calling to me, and I know it's frigid. But still I come. And I look down the rocks over which I glide, and I see my human hands caressing each stone on my descent. The sea is unknown to me. It calls me with the allure of self-knowledge. Each rock is a piece of myself that I honor through the caress of my hand as I descend down, down into the deep. I am without fear. I go without question. I am discovering a calling. I am compelled to answer."⁸

How synchronistic that just a few weeks later, I traveled to Pacifica to attend Dr. Steve Aizenstat's introductory lecture on Dream Tending, the very course where Dr. Schul went onto complete the full certification. In the auditorium where the workshop took place were banners with pictures and quotes by the preeminent Jungian scholars of our age. To the left of where I sat was a banner with a picture of James Hillman in black and white gently looking down with these words below, "The call may have been more like gentle pushings in the stream in which you drifted unknowingly to a particular spot on the bank. Looking back, you see that fate had a hand in it."⁹ I sometimes wish that we could cue music in our lives like soundtracks that play

in movies at pivotal moments. But perhaps that was what Dyer meant when he talked about the music inside of us. Maybe that soundtrack is in us, and when we hear it play, that's a signal that we're on the path.

The program I will be starting at Pacifica this fall specializes in Integrative Therapy and Healing Practices. Isn't that a great title? I included the recommended reading list for anyone who might be interested. In the program, I will explore the art and science of psychology. I, along with those in my cohort, will engage in two and a half years of coursework taking classes such as Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Healing, Archetypal Psychology, and Relational Psychology: Working with Narcissism, Borderline States, and Addictions. After doing my coursework, I will then go on to do my dissertation. I have not decided on the topic of my dissertation. I have ideas, but only inklings. I find comfort in Cop-

pin's words, "It may be helpful to remember that the way of the psyche is labyrinthine rather than linear. Getting lost is part of the journey."¹⁰ This not knowing is a chance to continue to go deeper. I get to trust the journey that is unfolding.

I look forward to continuing to walk with the Jung Society of Atlanta as I go on my journey of pursuing my PhD.

NOTES:

- ¹ Tolsoy, L. (1886). *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. Retrieved from: <https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/t/tolstoy/leo/t65d/index.html>
- ² Dr. Wayne W. Dyer (2012, November 1). Facebook [Timeline]. Retrieved July 2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/drwaynedyer/posts/10151222258691030>
- ³ Coppin, J. (2005). *The Art of Inquiry: A Depth Psychological Perspective*. New York, NY: Spring Publications, p. 118.
- ⁴ Benner, D. (1998). *Care of Souls: Revisioning Christian Nurture and Counsel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998, p. 107.
- ⁵ Wilhelm, R. (Translator) Jung, C.G. (Commentary) (1962). *The Secret of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, p. 81.
- ⁶ Hillman, J. (1975). *Re-Visioning Psychology*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial, p. 145.
- ⁷ Jung, C.G. *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, C.W., Vol 14, par. 778.
- ⁸ Schul, J. (2016, May 21). "Embodied Dreamwork." Lecture presented at the C.G. Jung Society of Atlanta at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Atlanta.
- ⁹ Hillman, J. (1996). *The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling*. New York, NY: Warner Books Edition, p. 3.
- ¹⁰ Coppin, J. (2005). *The Art of Inquiry: A Depth Psychological Perspective*. New York, NY: Spring Publications, p. 117.

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Reading List

- Addiction to Perfection: The Still Unravished Bride*,
Marion Woodman
- The Art of Inquiry: A Depth Psychological Perspective*,
Joseph Cannon and Elizabeth Nelson
- Cosmos and Psyche: Intimations on a New Worldview*,
Richard Tarnas
- Dreams*, Marie-Louise Von Franz
- Dreaming Tending: Awakening to the Healing Power of
Dreams*, Stephen Aizenstat
- Ego and Archetype*, Edward Edinger
- The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell
- Inner Work: Using Dreams and Active Imagination for
Personal Growth*, Robert Johnson
- The Soul in Anguish: Psychotherapeutic Approaches to
Suffering*, Lionel Corbett
- The Dream and the Underworld*, James Hillman
- Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, C.G. Jung
- Psyche and the Sacred: Spirituality Beyond Religion*,
Lionel Corbett
- The Red Book*, C.G. Jung
- Re-Visioning Psychology*, James Hillman
- The Sacred Cauldron: Psychotherapy as a Spiritual Prac-
tice*, Lionel Corbett
- The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling*,
James Hillman
- Synchronicity: Nature and Psyche in an Interconnected
Universe*, Joseph Cambray
- Trauma and the Soul: A Psycho-spiritual Approach to
Human Development and its Interruption*, Donald
Kalsched
- Towards Psychologies of Liberation*, Mary Watkins and
Helene Shulman
- Wisdom of the Psyche: Depth Psychology after Neurosci-
ence*, Ginette Paris