SOUL BETRAYAL
SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS TRAUMA

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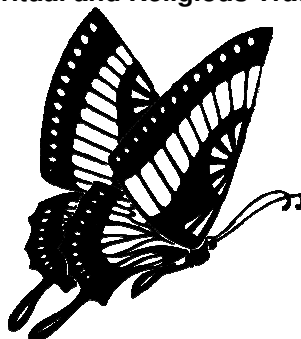
The butterfly in Western and Eastern imaginations has long symbolized personal transformation, spiritual metamorphosis, transformation of the soul, transcendence, movement through various life cycles, processes of personal change, and the world of the human soul

This monograph explores various theories that affect the clinical treatment of survivors of trauma, in this case the survivors of clergy sexual abuse. It is essentially an interactive literature review. I report on others' theoretical work within the context of my personal and professional lives and the questions about these matters which I have encountered during my life to date.

The core questions are these: (1) what do we know about the religious sequellae to clergy sexual abuse and (2) what do we know about the spiritual sequellae? Related questions are these: (1) what do we know about the religious sequellae to subsequent events of institutional betrayal and systemic or structural abuse and (2) what do we know about the spiritual sequellae.

In addition, this literature review examines several theoretical models for organizing such information into heuristic models that can drive empirical research.

Thus, this manuscript provides an introduction to the presence of religious and spiritual traumatic sequellae in the lives of (1) clergy sexual abuse survivors, (2) clergy sexual abuse survivors who have been re-victimized by incompetent, corrupt or malfeasant institutions, (3) victim advocates and helpers such as clinicians, attorneys, family members and friends who have been attacked by the institutional church as part of its attempts to deny clergy sexual abuse secrets by keeping them hidden,(4) the experience of vicarious trauma in the lives of those who bear witness to the presence of sexual abuse in the religious commons, and (5) the presence of communal religious or spiritual traumatic memory inside religious or spiritual communities in which abuse has happened and has become public information.

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Dedication

And the first question that the priest asked and the first question that the Levite asked was "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" But then the Good Samaritan came by and he reversed the question: "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?"

Martin Luther King, Jr. (April 3, 1968)
I've Been to the Mountain Top

For the whistle-blowers

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Epistemologies and Methodologies

People tell stories not just to work out their own changing identities, but also to guide others who will follow them…they seek not to provide a map that can guide others – each must provide his own – but rather to witness the experience of re-constructing one's own map.

Arthur W. Frank[1]

The essays in this first section can be considered as epistemological or methodological notes. They can also be understood as interrogatory notes – asking or noting the presence of questions rather than providing answers. In a certain sense these chapters are deeply and profoundly personal. My questions arise inside my own life experiences as an American, female, Mennonite, feminist, sexual violence student and victim-survivor advocate. They arise inside (1) my personal encounters with these troubling matters of trauma and its long-lasting physical, emotional, and social aftermaths in human lives, (2) my professional encounters with these troubling matters inside the lives of friends, clients and students, and (3) my personal encounters with morally and ethically compromised religious institutions.

In my encounters with the phenomenons of affinity sexual violence and domestic abuse, my inner spiritual-emotional life has been profoundly challenged and disrupted. In my encounters with institutional betrayal I have been deeply offended by the institutional fortress mentality of silence, back-stabbing hypocrisy, secrecy, denial, overt hostility to the truth and outright lying. Here too my spiritual-emotional life has likewise been interrupted, challenged and disrupted in major ways.

Recently two collegial friends of mine have commented to me that in my recent professional writing I am intuitively utilizing a research methodology called autoethnography.[2] It has been a while since I was a graduate student so I have been doing a bit of internet sleuthing to see what they are talking about. When I realized that autoethnography as an academic research method builds on the anthropological writing of Clifford Geertz, I felt as if I'd finally got my intellectual feet on solid ground. In1990 I'd utilized several of Geertz's books as a theoretical framework in my doctoral dissertation[3] without ever knowing there was a specific theoretical body of work (ethnography) intellectually connected to and derivative of his theoretical work and to the work of those who followed him.

Autoethnography as Method and Product

> *Autoethnography is a style of autobiographical writing and qualitative research that explores an individual's unique life experiences in relationship to social and cultural institutions.*

Dwayne Custer[4]

Custer notes that the autoethnographic research methodology and process not only enables researcher to come to terns with their own personal stash of pain, they can encounter and understand others in light of their own personal encounters with these issues. *They are exposed to the pain and anguish of other people who have experienced similar circumstances.*[5]

Diane Raab in an exploratory essay and literature review notes that autoethnography is a personal narrative that has some commonalities with autobiography and memoir. It is, according to Raab, an accessible qualitative research methodology because the reader comes into contact with the researcher's lived experiences and epiphanies.[6] In this method, researchers seek to describe and analyze personal experience as a way in which they can begin to understand cultural experiences.

The Need for Multiple Research Languages and Protocols

> *[In our research methodologies] we can know more than we can tell.*

Michael Polanyi[7]

One underlying premise of this monograph is that we need multiple personal and professional languages in order to effectively and efficaciously examine the religious and spiritual sequellae that have their roots in situations of clergy sex abuse crimes *and* in institutional hostility towards the victims of such crimes. I believe we need multiple professional disciplines and their unique languages of discourse to help us understand this densely constructed and often hidden tangle of personal and cultural experience.

Because of a cultural tendency towards secrecy and institutional self-protectiveness, we need many professional languages and many personal narratives of clergy sexual abuse and institutional maltreatment inside the religious commons. It is inside the lived-stories of our lives and in the lived-stories of others' lives that we will eventually come to (1) adequately diagnose and then to (2) understand the religious and spiritual pain of these stories.

A second premise is that we need to recognize that everyone touched by these conjoined[8] narratives of personal abuse and institutional malfeasance is personally changed by their encounters. Victims, survivors, and overcomers have direct personal experience. Victim and survivor helpers, advocates, and friends often have indirect personal experience.

Issues of experienced abuse and issues of traumatic memory begin to heal when truth is uncovered and spoken faithfully in the human commons. This is as true in our communal lives inside the religious commons as it is in the individual lives of survivors.

As helpers and advocates work with victims and survivors, it is a quite common experience for them to encounter the same kinds of communal disbelief and hostile institutional attacks that victims have previously experienced. In addition, as these stories of previous victimization emerge from secrecy, entire communities are polarized and subsequently traumatized by the presence of a sexual violation narrative inside the religious commons.

Both forms of violation: (1) primary victimization in the case of victims and survivors during their personal encounters with sexual violation and (2) secondary victimization in their encounter with hostile and defensive individuals and institutions form the experiential core of the religious and spiritual traumatic experience.

To rephrase that as a working hypothesis: Victimization by clergy and religious leaders who are sexual predators and subsequent experiences of institutional re-victimization form their victims' experiential core of spiritual and religious trauma. Consequently, they form the foundational core of the therapeutic and spiritual questions which must be asked

For helpers, friends, therapists, lawyers, or others advocates who work for healing and justice, their personal experience is often a reflected trauma which is known as traumatic counter-transference or compassion fatigue.[9] The experiences of compassion fatigue manifest in multiple ways but a primary experience is that the helper begins to carry the primary victim's story as if it were his or her own personal story. The victims' anger becomes the helper's or advocate's anger. The victims' paranoia becomes the helpers or advocates paranoia. The boundary line between self experience and the other's experience becomes blurred.

Lessons from the Wanderground

In Sally Miller Gearhart's 1979 utopian novel, *The Wanderground,* a group of women have created a safe space of women and for the animals they share their lives with. Violence against women is not present inside its borders, guns do not

fire, and animal traps won't close. Outside the boundaries of the Wanderground, however, violence - in all its forms - proliferates.

In one section of the book, the woman Alaka travels to the home of her friend Seja. She has made this journey from an outpost on the edges of the Wanderground. In her travels toward Seja's home the two women become linked in a form of psychic conversation known as channel-joining. Seja, without warning Alaka, tells her that hunters have intruded into the edges of the Wanderground and are able to use their weapons to kill there. The hunters are killing deer – mostly does. Alaka, overcome with pain and rage becomes dizzy and falls to the earth. Seja chides, *that's what you get for not shielding.*[10]

In the morning after Alaka's arrival she senses Seja's inner despair and replicates it within herself. Neither woman is shielded from the other's psychic processes. Alaka begins their conversation with bird-rumors that potent-violent men (rapists) again roam freely outside the borders of their city. Seja's response to this is to begin pacing: *I've told no-one, Alaka, I'd hoped it happened to her long ago-not recently or I'd hoped it was only a nightmare that she had made real in order to purge it, or something.*[11] She describes finding a woman named Margaret on the outskirts of the Wanderground. Margaret was clattering around in a full suit of medieval armor.

> *Two men. She was taken by two men. In the short hills far east of the city. Then they dressed her in the armor as a joke. Took it out of some museum and set her loose laughing and throwing rocks at her as she scrambled away from them through the brush. She didn't tell me any of this. She couldn't talk. Or mindstretch. But she opened to me and let me read her recalls.*[12]

As she becomes overpowered by nausea and vomiting, Alaka remember she has again forgotten to shield herself, allowing her own lower channels open. As Seja again experiences Margaret's terror and outrage, Alaka, too, begins to absorb, into her own self, the armored woman's experiences. She, who is a remember-guide in the community of women, is now *in the grip of an emotional turbulence so strong it racked her body.*[13]

Seja becomes overwhelmed by the inner force of the story she has remembered. She drops to the ground in a fetal position and begins screaming.

> *Seja had yielded entirely to the memory, yielded with no protection. She was clearly in full retrosense, tense in rigid paralysis…inside her head. Margaret's ugly drama was still raging; apparently even the remember rooms had not prepared Seja for this more visceral experience of rape.*[14]

Watching Seja, Alaka recognizes a familiar pattern, that of an uncontrollable rising anger. She has seen this in women in the remember rooms and reminds herself that *anger inevitably follows any recall of rape, particularly if the recall has been even slightly unguarded.*[15]

Alaka takes time to construct a personal shield, regaining self-control so she can move in the *familiar pattern of a remember-guide.*[16] The task of a remember-guide in the remember rooms is one of assisting women in a safe place and time to recall and remember the grotesque atrocities which once affected them. The Wanderground's community of women regularly traveled to the enclosed remembering rooms in order that memories of the hill's women's escape from violence would not be forgotten by the generations of women. Within the safety of these remember rooms, the women are guided by the memories and the knowing.

For Alaka, the memory shield of a remember-guide allows her to be the means of channeling memories of thousands of rapes, killings, and tortures without being destroyed in her own inner soft-self. She seeks to guide Seja so that she is not destructive in her hard-self to herself or others.

Even with the memory shield in place, Alaka senses the *unequivocal purity of the ragings she found within the other woman: a naked and unadulterated desire to kill.*[17] Seja had become, in Alaka's awareness, a woman warrior with a simple maxim to live by: the man who rapes must die.

In Gearhart's novel, the shielding metaphor is psychic and has no material representation such as Amerindian shields. The shielding arises from an inner gathering of resources by the remember-guide that enables her to bear the other's pain of remembering. In addition to this psychic shielding, this community of women has created remember rooms. By means of the remember rooms, the women create a communal ritual for remembering that strengthens their communal life together. Each woman's lived life experience is thus validated and becomes part of the community's history.

The process of shielding empowers the remember-guide's own self in order that she can, in turn, assist other women to empower themselves. Gearhart's novel intuits that in telling, hearing and remembering the stories of violation directed at women, there is a real potential for women – guide and story-teller alike – to fall victim to despair and, consequently, to lose their personal power. But by learning to shield the inner soft-self, that potential becomes quite different. Now, the potential becomes one of active listening, self-other healing and the strengthening of one's inner powers in order that one can continue to assist others.

With Gearhart's wisdom of the needs for shields in the presence of sexual violence narratives, we remember that stories about sexual violence are potentially wounding to compassionate women and men. They are potentially re-wounding to those who have known sexual violation as a personal experience.

The experience of actual rape wounds and scars its victim. Listening to others' stories of rape also has the potential to wound and scar those who bear witness to the survivor's story.

A common response of women, who hear an unexpected story about the sexual violation of children or about the rape adult women, is to feel pain in the solar plexus followed by rage. Often there may be hyperventilation as well. One common response in the listener may be an agitated physical response – a need to pace.

Many years ago, a friend called me long-distance at the office and without alerting me to protect myself, told me about a brutal attack and stranger rape experienced by a close mutual friend of ours. I was totally unprepared for this story. When my friend hung up, I said to my secretary, *I need to leave the building right now. I've had an unexpected phone call and I am very distressed. I am not certain when I will be back.* The campus minister, a woman, over hearing my conversation, asked me, *what is wrong, Ruth? Can I help?* I replied that I had no words to tell her what was wrong but I needed to get out of the building immediately so I could walk outside somewhere. If I didn't get outside my office right away, I was afraid I would begin screaming and swearing. She said, *I am coming with you.* I was so enraged that we walked more than a mile at a very fast pace. Every time she asked, *can you tell me what is wrong?* I had no words to describe my rage. She matched my pace – and mostly we did this rage and grief driven force-march in silence. After a long time, we arrived at my house. As we entered my living room, I began to cry – long dry sobs of grief and anger for my friend. Finally, I could tell the campus pastor what the content of my phone call had been. Finally, I could shield the story enough that she was not destroyed by the story as I had been. Only after the campus pastor left my living room did I begin to compose myself so that I could call my friend and hear her story from her – directly and without hesitation. By allowing my rage and uncontrolled grief to run its course and because of the campus minister's support, I could access my professional self and I could call my friend to offer her my love and my support. In this force-marched silent walking, I had created enough space for my soft self that I could listen to my friend's account and I could be present to her anger, her fear, and own paranoia. I could, therefore, be present to her immediate traumatic response. I could believe her without blaming her or without doubting her. I could be, in the best sense of that word, her friend. I made a series of phone calls that morning to make certain our mutual friends would support my just-raped friend. By the time I had called everyone, I realized that I had been the last person in this small group of my at-a-distance-friendship network to be notified and that this group of friends was already rallying around

the raped woman to support her. No longer living in this small town where my friends lived, I was grateful that I was included in this network of women. My victimized friend was believed and no one blamed her for what had happened to her. This small community of rape-aware feminist women simply gathered close to her – asking what she needed from each of them. As an extended community of friends, we began to walk with her – as she re-entered her ordinary life, now forever changed, but living.

One of the things I learned from this experience is that when I must call someone to tell them bad news, I warn them that I must tell them bad news. I encourage them to sit down. I encourage them to pay attention. Until I know they have heard me and are paying attention, I do not give them the bad news.

For example, in another situation, after a friend committed suicide. I knew a mutual friend of ours at a great distance from me would not hear this news except from me. When I called this individual I said, *Suzie* (not her name) I have very bad news to tell you. I know you often multi-task during our conversations. I need you to sit down and I need you to be fully present to me. I have very bad news and it will distress you. Only when she assured me that she was indeed sitting down and paying attention did I give her the bad news. Then, we could cry together over the untimely and totally unanticipated death of our brilliant and much loved friend.

We know that women therapists and women anti-rape activists who are prepared to hear and to be with women who tell personal rape stories do not respond with the same severity of physical distress. A rape story – heard by an unshielded woman – may actively wound its healer and activate self-other destructive rage. It may also elicit fear and terror. It may disrupt sleep patterns. It may create paranoia. These responses drain the listening woman's power and her ability to listen further or to provide the victimized woman with needed support. Yet, if the healing woman shields her inner soft-self, she can listen and not be destroyed. She can remain compassionate and concerned.

As we make our way through the chapters which follow, the reader is urged to shield and to protect the soft self in order to learn from the wisdom of the current century's sexual violence story-tellers – the researchers who study sexual violence and its sequellae in human lives.

The Helper's Encounters with Trauma

In addition, in their own personal encounters with corrupt institutions, whistleblowers, survivor advocates, and professional helpers may also experience a direct personal form of victimization which is beginning to be recognized as betrayal trauma[18] or institutional betrayal trauma.[19]

For helpers and advocates who encounter the direct hostility of predators or the sometimes direct and sometimes indirect animosity of corrupt institutions, a form of primary trauma in these individuals' personal or religious lives may in many ways either mirror or replicate the primary trauma of the victims of clergy and religious leader sexual abuse. The many forms of attack behavior directed at survivors and their helpers create additional trauma in ways similar to the experiences of sexual abuse victims who have subsequently have been shunned and re-victimized by their religious institutions for reporting the sexual abuse.

In the center of these many forms of victimization we find a metaphorical three dimensional hologram of the whole. It is our task as healers and helpers to study the hologram in order to understand its individual parts.

All individuals captured inside these malevolent narratives of personal violence and institutional or structural violence can be questioned for their information and wisdom. A wide variety of research methodologies can be used from the medical sciences, the neurobiological sciences, the social sciences, and the theological or philosophical traditions which underlie the sciences. Cross-sectional research is needed. Longitudinal or case study research is also needed. Survey research is needed. Historical and anthropological research methodologies also offer us cross-cultural resources for understanding. Not only questions of factual truth must be asked (for example, demographic research and therapeutic effectiveness research). Questions of meaning and interpretation must also be asked. Each of these types of methodologies and questions form the intersecting light beams of the abuse and violation hologram.

As I do this kind of personal-professional meditation on what we need to do next to break the back of sexual abuse as a cultural phenomenon and as a personally experienced reality in the lives of so very many children, teenagers and adults, it becomes clear that we need well-planned cross-disciplinary conversations. We also need conversations that are free-roaming and, in the same breath, so to speak, self-disciplined. We need conversations that are politically astute. We need to make a place for the always present inchoate and intuitive knowing. We need uncensored compassionate self-other interrogatory conversations – conversations of self-other sharing and examination. In addition, we need well-designed and well-implemented, so-called objective research.

As I have listened in on multiple conversations about these matters in the past ten years, I think so often of a calving iceberg. Parts of the larger iceberg break off and become visible as a microcosm of the larger iceberg which gave birth to them. Our task as scholars and activists is to understand these free-floating calved icebergs. But an even greater and more urgent task is to understand the parent iceberg – much of which is underwater and not immediately accessible to investigation.

It is also quite clear to me that we must begin with the stories of those individuals who have been entrapped or captured within the socio-cultural boundaries of this very noxious and toxic story – living inside an enchanted forest in which violence is the ideological coin of the cultural realm and clergy sexual violence is one of the ideological coins of the religious and denominational universes in which these crimes manifest and in which their perpetrators are protected.

In less metaphorical and abstract language, we must begin with the complex, intermingled narratives of violation. These lived stories and narratives contain the faith of the whole. The experts in these matters are those with direct personal encounters of a very close kind. They know what was done to them. They know what has been lost and what that loss has cost them.

A Procedural Note

A procedural note before moving on: I am not apologetic for my feminism. It is not that I desire to be shrill for I don't. It is not that I despise men for I don't. It is not that I hate my cradle denomination for I do not. But I do not feel the need to shield my analysis of these issues in neutral or pacifying tones. I feel no need to shape what I think into formal and impersonal academese because patriarchal men and their female acolytes will judge my words about sexual violence as shrill and man-hating. If we do not speak to and from the truth of our lived-lives, we cannot have honest conversations in the commons about these matters of life and death. Without truth-telling, there is no wisdom.

What we know about abusive patterns if intergenerational transmission is that these complex cultural forms of violence cannot be interrupted as long as everyone pretends they do not exist; as long as everyone believes politeness and well-mannered silence matters more than truth-telling.

In addition, I am quite tired of having my scholarship work regarding sexual violence inside Mennonite communities made invisible by the very patriarchal and authoritarian individuals who find my feminist voice unacceptable, shrill, and angry, vendetta slinging, and man-hating.[20] I am a very old woman in the last quarter of my life. I cannot afford to be patient about these serious issues in the lives of victimized men and women. I feel no personal need to be socially polite and complicit in hiding these stories. Consequently, I feel that in comparison with the losses experienced by the victims of violence and violation, I have very little left to lose by trying to communicate what I know, what I believe, what I think, and what I intuit.

This continuously evolving, multi-headed, and always present sexual violence monster continues to grow and thrive inside the boundaries of Christendom's religious and secular commons. To stop its plundering of our communities we must use all of our skills and all of our abilities and all of our life-accumulated wisdom. Those of us who have seen the monster first-hand have an obligation to

its victims to speak out and to make our protests known. To protect others, it is urgent that we speak the truth which we know; it is essential for us to share the wisdom we have accumulated in a lifetime of activism and support work.

The sexual violence narrative keeps replicating itself as individuals and entire communities seek to ignore its presence. This is like embracing and enabling the black plague. More lives are destroyed. More communities are shattered.

This monograph, therefore, is not a beginner's work for beginners, neophytes, or newcomers. It is an attempt to break open a new level of conversation for seasoned workers in the field of sexual violence trauma. It recognizes that an increasingly knowledgeable conversation about these matters of sexual violence and sexual violation began in the middle of the twentieth-century. It acknowledges what is already known. It recognizes the damages done by corrupt churches rampant with clericalism. Thus this current work recognizes that today's conversations about sexual and institutional violence are conversations in a moment of historical transition. Therefore, this work is an invitation to an ongoing conversation by those of us who have stared directly into the face of this evil only to be forever changed by what we have seen.

A Time of Transition

We know the problem exists. Our various denominations know it exists. The larger public also knows and increasingly believes it exists. We have adequate documentation of its existence. It is now time to deepen our analysis of ideological taproots, rootlets and root hairs. It is time to seek a deeper understanding of its manifested consequences in actual human lives. It now is time for some of us to scuba dive below the iceberg to see its structural foundations. When we do this, I am almost certain that we will encounter theological structures as well as socio-cultural ideological ones. I am almost certain that we will encounter ancient archetypes of good and evil hiding in the iceberg's nethermost crevices.

In this time of transition, I believe we must self-critically seek to understand and deconstruct the complexities of these sexual violence narratives. In a similar way we must study and deconstruct the institutional corruption narratives of our various faith traditions. As we do this work, we will likely encounter greater and greater complexity of knowing and intuition. We need to understand the complexity of any given narrative of betrayal violence narratives in order to be of more assistance to victimized individuals. Consequently, therefore, this is a monograph, written for well-seasoned and well-practiced helpers and victim advocates. I assume, therefore, that readers will have a foundation of intellectual knowledge as well as a well-integrated felt sense or tacit-knowing intuitive skills from their years of service as therapists, attorneys, witnesses, helpers, and whistle-blowers.

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Collaboration, Critique and Correction

I look to my peers and colleagues in this work of sexual violence advocacy for their experiential and, therefore, knowledgeable discussion, critique, and thoughtful correction of this work. As sexual violence activists we are to be found in all Christian denominations and while we have sometimes felt alone and isolated in our work, we have also known about each other's presence and work. We may never have met each other in person to compare notes, yet we keep learning from each other's work. In an ideal world, we would figure out how to meet in closed session discussions to learn from each other and to support each other's work. But I have learned in the past fifteen years of work, the world of sexual violence activism is rarely ideal. Yet, individuals continue to persist, to endure and, therefore, to inspire each other.

Inasmuch as we are in a time of transition – beginning to ask new questions and seeking to deconstruct new or previously unexplored aspects of the sexual violence trauma response – we must look for new models and new conceptual languages for organizing our knowledge. Our theory work must deepen. As we do this in-depth analysis, our work with others will also deepen. It will become more and more intuitive. We will begin to sense the religious and spiritual ravages of this story inside individual lives and inside the commons. Our growing sense of the complexity of this narrative will help us in our work with violated and abused individuals. Eventually, I believe the faith of the whole will become visible and we will be able to address root causes in a pre-emptive way rather than in a reactive manner. We will, therefore, begin to work preventively. We will begin to change culture.

Those of us who have done sexual violence advocacy work for the past thirty or forty years have accumulated entire plantations of wisdom and knowledge that we need to harvest in order to pass this wisdom forward into the next generation and the generations that follow theirs. If we ask the question of the seven generations effect of our work in this current moment, we will realize that an important part of activist work is teaching the young what we know so that they can stand on our shoulders and continue our work when we are no longer here.

Therefore we must, I think, anchor what we now know *and* perhaps more importantly explore what we individually and collectively don't know so that our experiential wisdom about these matters is not lost. I am aware that I am calling, therefore, for new levels of transparency among us and new levels of vulnerability with each other so that we can become fully visible to each other. We need to risk doing this in order that future generations of helpers, activists, and advocates can learn from us about the absolute necessity for victim advocates, whistle-blowers and prophets.

I think Henri Nouwen is correct, as rescuers of the wounded, most of us are wounded healers. We who sit in the gates of Jerusalem must learn to bind and

unbind and seek to heal our own wounds in such a manner that we never lose sight of the individuals who seek us out for our help.[21]

Section one is largely a methodological exploration of where we've been and where we are now in our understanding of these matters. It is a section in which I explore the potentials of autoethnography and thick description to provide us with some additional professional languages of scientific discourse. It is a section which attempts, therefore, to provide an intellectual frame for this monograph's content and explorations.

As a good friend of mine says it so well, A*delante, mis hermanos y mis hermans! Adelante!!*

Additional Resources

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Chapter One
A Personal Ethnography of a Soul's Journey

How much has been lost?
How much can be salvaged?

Matthew Fox[22]

I want to appropriate these two sentences by removing them from Matthew Fox's book of daily meditations. Fox is building upon Dominic Crossan's exegesis of the Jesus narrative in which the Gospels report that Jesus took, blessed, broke, and served bread to his most intimate friendship group. In this meditation Fox wonders how much we have lost by abstracting, theologizing about, and then ritualizing this meal of Jesus and his friends as the Church's center of the liturgical Mass. While that is an important question, it is not my question. Nor is it the question of this manuscript. Nevertheless, I want to lift and re-focus these words on something else – something that preoccupies me these days.

If, there is, as I think there is, a hologram or a cultural form or perhaps even an overarching archetype inside of which individuals lose faith – due to all kinds of personal and/or institutional abuse issues, then we must ask: how do we recognize, adequately name, and de-construct such an archetype in order to understand it; in order to gut its life/spirit-consuming and life/spirit-devastating powers?

When confronted with the religious or spiritual dilemmas which occur inside of our own personal lives in the wake of abuse and betrayal, in the wake of experienced trauma, we must ask ourselves: *what has been lost and what, if anything, can be salvaged*? What remains alive in us after the hurricane gales of experienced violence, of betrayal, and of lost trust have destroyed our sense of belonging to a particular god or to a particular god's people? What remains when trust in religious leaders or religious institutions is no longer possible? Is any aspect of our plundered sense of belonging to a god and that god's people salvageable? Living in trauma-induced and/or betrayal-induced exile from our own selves and from our own people, how do we build a new and sustainable life and community for ourselves and others? Is such a re-building even possible? Are we, perhaps, destined (by our experiences of trauma) to wander in isolation and exile as long as we live? Or, is there a way to regain a solid religious and spiritual footing for our lives so that we may heal our wounds and so that we can help others to heal their wounds?

Losing Faith

When we talk, for example, about *losing faith,* what is our notion of the faith which has been lost? United Church of Christ minster Robin Meyers distinguishes between faith as a series of intellectual beliefs and faith as radically

embodied trust. In this chapter and throughout this monograph, I am going to follow his intuitions here.

According to Meyers, when faith becomes a series of intellectual propositions to be believed or even to be lived by, the cognitive and emotional contents of such a faith becomes a negotiable bargain we make between ourselves and the divine. Propositional faith inevitably means that orthodoxy in belief begins to be the essential marker of individual and communal religious or spiritual lives. With doctrinal orthodoxy comes certitude.

Meyers is correct in my opinion when he declares that conflating faith and orthodox certitude is a dangerous oxymoron for Christian communities and individuals. Thus, in my voice now, the loss of certitude, i.e. the loss of a particular propositional belief or perhaps even an entire propositional belief system, cannot be - or at least should not be - conflated with the loss of faith.[23]

The loss of faith is, therefore, something different than the loss of an institutionally organized and culturally shaped belief system or creedal assertions. It is something else than attendance at religious services or church potlucks. To lose one's faith is, therefore, something different than losing one's personal cognitive agreement with a particular belief system.

In a similar manner, as we think about this question of soul murder and soul betrayal, it is essential that we also think about faith. What does the phrase *soul murder* or the phrase *soul betrayal* mean to a person with faith as a belief system, i.e. a person with inner certitude about propositional or doctrinal certitudes, i.e. doctrinal orthodoxy? How do we operationalize the concept of soul murder? What does death of the soul entail? How do we recognize such a phenomenon in embodied human lives? If the soul dies, what healing is possible?

Is *soul murder* a consequence of the experience of primary victimization by clergy sexual abusers and/or the secondary experience of institutional betrayal? Is *soul death* only one among many consequences of the Christian Church's quite dismal history of mismanaging its sexually abusive clergy? To put it another way: Is the death of the betrayed soul an experienced inner reality in which certitude in propositional beliefs as taught by the institutional church is no longer possible? Does soul death, therefore, equate with an extreme inner experience of cognitive dissonance? Does it equate with a profound shattering of one's assumptive world? Does it reflect existential alienation, estrangement and separation from all that we once found meaningful and life-sustaining? Is it perhaps an inability to find a place of inner rest or peace and to recognize joy?

Cognitive dissonance is that mental experience in which a previously-established set of cognitive beliefs and worldviews, a world of expectable or meaningful propositions, is called into question. In the situation of clergy sexual abuse, the

individual's socio-religious world view is called into question by sexual violence done by a previously trusted other. Or, perhaps more perniciously, is it is called into question by institutionalized religion's mismanagement of its clergy abusers?

Or, most likely, are deep and lasting soul wounds occasioned by both kinds of personal experience manifesting and interacting with each other?

Authors who write about assumptive worlds and their shattering in trauma define the assumptive world as the complex of personal assumptions about the world that we develop in childhood and carry with us through adult life. These assumptions are based on early life experiences and in general are not revised unless trauma interrupts a life. They provide humans with a sense of predictability, stability, reality, meaning and purpose. One author or teacher long forgotten talked about our belief that as we walk the earth will not open and swallow us. We may know about sinkholes in the physical world in an abstracted form but never having met a sinkhole personally, we can live in a state of belief that we personally will not be swallowed by a sinkhole as we walk from our front door to our car.[24] Everyday experience, therefore, tends to reinforce this belief in the stability of the earth to be trustworthy, i.e., not to swallow us. If and when we personally encounter and are threatened by or even swallowed up by a dangerous sinkhole, our sense of the earth's safety will need to change in light of our personal experience. If we survive such an encounter, such a swallowing up, it is vey likely we will become more wary as we move about our world. We will pay attention to earth's most subtle tremors in a new way. We may have lingering night terrors.

Another less abstract and perhaps more personal way of illustrating this is that my friends and professional colleagues who lived through and survived the Bakersfield (CA) earthquake of 1952; the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989 in the San Francisco area or the 1994 Northridge earthquake in the Los Angeles area all have told me that California's subsequent and much smaller earth tremors caused reoccurrences of fear and anxiety when they subsequently felt the earth move below their feet. The earth somehow or other felt less trustworthy and safe as earth's various underground faults readjusted themselves with regularity. Somehow or other they paid a different kind of attention to these tremors after living through a big quake than they did before. They had a different felt sense of the world after living through a big quake than they had before that experience.

In our discussions of soul murder, can we safely equate the loss of propositional faith with cognitive dissonance? Can we associate it with shattering of the assumptive world? Or is soul murder something else altogether? How similar is the felt-sense experience of soul murder or soul loss to earthquakes and sinkholes in the natural or physical world?

Defining faith as *radically embodied trust*[25] and as *an orientation to the mystery of love*[26] Meyers begins to help us clarify our question about what it means to lose faith. In a wonderful turn of phrase, Meyers claims that faith is a relentless posture of *leaning toward God.*[27] Loss of faith, therefore, must involve something like radical mistrust of the divine, a profound distrust of love, and a deliberate turning away from God and God's people – the beloved community on earth.

Meyers makes a considered but startling claim that the Christian community – a subversive community of individuals with many different propositional beliefs – will be marked by two factors. First there will be this radical individual and communal leaning towards God. Secondly there will be love of the other; forgiveness and reconciliation will be freely offered to any and all. He discards the historical notion that the Christian community will be marked by doctrinal creeds and uniform, enforced cognitive belief structures. It will be, therefore, not our beliefs that will save us but our actions on behalf of others. It will not be knowledge but service to those who need our help that marks us and our religious communities as truly informed Christians.

The subversive community will not be known for its hyper-assertive defense of propositional truths. Instead, the faithful community will be known by its collective and individual love of God as behaviorally manifested by its collective love for the weak, the powerless, and the oppressed. A person of faith will not be one who can defend theological dogma with precise theological languages. Instead, she will be the person offering compassionate help to those needing help. He, therefore, will recognize the human brokenness of the neighbor, seek to help, and, in this context, each will come to understand his or her own personal stash of brokenness.

The Death of Trust

When a valued or needed relationship is destroyed by a lie, an act of betrayal, or an act of violence – or by all three – trust dies. Meyers notes that there is no tried and true formula about how to restore trust in a relationship once trust has been destroyed.

Trust betrayed inside God's beloved community is, therefore, at the heart of this question of soul murder and soul loss. When trust is broken by (1) the ordained clergy's' acts of physical and sexual abuse, (2) by the religious institution's structural abuses as it mis-manages its abusive clergy, and/or (3) by the gathered community's overt or covert turning against the victims of abuse, individuals must make sense of these self and soul destructive betrayals. Not only individuals but entire communities suffer the aftermaths of religious trauma and spiritual trauma.

When we look at the situation in this way, the question of forgiveness assumes a central place. In this context of the religious or spiritual demand for forgiveness, how does a victimized survivor protect his or her body from additional acts of abusiveness? How does the survivor protect her or his soul from further betrayals and unchanging pervasive mistrust? How can the survivor remain a part of the community in which his or her violation took place, a community in which his violation was not seen as important; a community in which the actions of his abuser were not protested and curtailed?

How does an individual regain a sense of trust in other humans and God when she or he has been abused by and betrayed by individuals within her or his particular community of faith? Indeed is any reclamation of trust in others possible? Is there any faith left to be salvaged? Without faith, is healing possible? Is meaningful forgiveness possible? Does forgiveness necessitate or mandate reconciliation? These are complex questions. As Meyers notes, they are almost impossible to answer in the abstract.

Does it even make sense to add these issues into our discussion of the soul's betrayal and murder at the hands of those whose professional role should have been to help individual mature in their ability to lean towards God in trust?

It is my opinion that to engage in this middle zone conversation about identifying the religious and spiritual wounds of clergy sexual abuse and the religious and spiritual wounds of those whom the church has attacked is to engage in profound clinical questions about the nature, purpose and outcomes of such diagnoses. It is to raise questions about the texture and meaning of healing. It is to engage in even more profound theological conversations about the nature and calling of the religious community, the nature of faith, and the nature of human trust. It is also to engage in extremely distressing conversations about the nature of perpetrator and community accountability and its relationship to healing. It is to engage in equally distressing and counter-intuitive conversations regarding the need for mercy, compassion, forgiveness, restitution and restoration.

La Douleur de Voir Trop Clair
The Pain of Seeing Too Clearly[28]

> *For me to be a saint means to be myself. Therefore, the problem of sanctity and salvation is in the fact of finding out who I am and of discovering my true self.*

<div align="center">Thomas Merton[29]</div>

I do not know how to engage this set of questions in an abstracted form that sits above or apart from personal experience. I am no Seneca. I am no Socrates. I am no Aristotle. I am no Augustine. I am no Thomas Aquinas. I am no Martin Luther. I am no Menno Simons. I am no Paul Tillich. I am no Karl Barth. I am

no John Howard Yoder. I am no Hans Kung. I am no James Hillman. I am no David Tracy. I am no John Shelby Spong. I am no Gustavo Gutierrez. I am no Bishop Tutu. I am no Cornell West. I am no William Sloane Coffin. I am no James Fowler, I am no Robin Meyers.

I am a very ordinary human being who lives inside an aging female body. That female body lives inside a violent and patriarchal culture – a world-wide culture, in which personal attacks against women and their children are common and quite ordinary realities. These attacks come in many forms: physical assaults, economic oppression, and forbidden access to education or to certain professions, etc. In addition, I live within the narrative of my individual life as it has been lived and as it is being lived – a unique and personally shaped life in some ways and a culturally determined one in many others.

Like most women [perhaps all women] my life has been shaped by the violence and multiple betrayals of the patriarchy even as I have been spared its most noxious forms of obsessive violence in my personal life, family experiences, and extended community. In so very many ways, my life has been blessed and privileged. Nevertheless I have witnessed and experienced the iron glove of the patriarchy in some of its most personal and intimate forms.

The violence and violations experienced on a daily basis by women and their children elicits a primal, wordless and soundless cry of agony and protest that reaches into the far heavens as well as into the depths of the earth.

The Personal is Political

> The [church's institutional] *evil is within. Evil does no live from without. Evil lives from within.*

> Robert Hoatson[30]

My institutional religious life has been shaped by a Mennonite maternal identity and to a much lesser degree by a paternal Lutheran one. However my parents thought about their respective religious identities and however they made agreements between themselves, each of their children was raised inside the socio-cultural and religious boundaries of the Lancaster Conference Old Mennonite Church. But within the contours of these pre-existing agreements, I was also exposed to my dad's church. The only times we sat together and worshiped together as a family was inside the walls of the local Lutheran Church. As my parents' youngest child, I loved those relatively rare occasions because I was seated between my parents and I could hear my dad's soft monotone bass voice and my mom's much more assertive soaring soprano voice as we sang together – the only times I ever heard my dad sing. The music of the pipe organ and an almost professional choir simply fed my heart. I loved the colored light of the stained glass windows and looked at them to amuse myself during the

sermons which I was too young to understand. Mostly, I loved being seated as a three-some, a family, in church. I felt secure as I blended my childish voice with my parent's voices. I belonged. I knew who I was. These were my people.

Their God was my God. Their friends were my friends. Their community was my community. Their creeds became my creeds and their prayers, my prayers.

The Mennonite Church of my childhood separated the genders. Men sat on the right; women sat on the left. When my dad came with us to church, I regularly violated the rule and well into late adolescence I would sit with him. This, my mother refused to do – so the family was always separated in Mennonite worship on lines of an arbitrary and cultural or ethnic gender-based seating rule.

Even at my baptism in the Mennonite Church, my parents sat separately in the pews as they witnessed this religious rite of passage for their third child, their only daughter. Neither of my grown-up brothers was present. As I look back on that event, I realize that I was more bonded to my baptismal class of friends than I ever was to the institutional church. Perhaps more importantly, I never internally yielded to the implicit demands of that baptism that I become conformed to the Mennonite Church and its cultural teachings. I knew that my dad was a Christian. I knew the Episcopal priests who lived next door to my family were Christians. Thus, I intuited the Christian community was wider than any one denomination. I knew firsthand and up close, as well, that not all denominations, indeed not all Christians, agreed about Christian cultural rules regarding acceptable and non-acceptable behavior.[31] I often thought then, *when I become a grown-up, I am not going to be a Mennonite.*

Yet, I have been a member, on and off, of the Mennonite Church since that baptismal event at age eleven.[32] Today, however, I no longer practice a recognizable form of cultural Mennonite life. In short, like many of my Jewish friends, I have an ethnic and a religious identity but I have no shared or continuous worship experience with my people. I am, therefore, an ethnic Mennonite *who does not practice*. The consequence is that, in essence, I no longer have a religious or spiritual family. I no longer belong to this community. My people's people are no longer my people. Yo soy una extranjera. I live in religious and spiritual exile.

While there are often muted echoes inside my living body vis-à-vis what I once believed and what I once practiced, the sexual abuse issue and the issue of institutional betrayal of survivors and their advocates inside of Christendom has forced me to re-think what it is that I believe and what it is that sustains my spirituality. The inner self's demand for propositional beliefs to live by and to structure my life by has been destroyed and buried. All that remains is its occasional nagging voice from my childhood encounters with fear-based preaching on hell. As an adult I now recognize that this preaching and teaching was an attempt by men and women in positions of power over me to control my

emerging spirituality and my emerging sexuality. As therapists over the years slowly helped me to deconstruct this aberrant form of Christian theology, I gradually learned (1) not to believe it and (2) not to fear it.

As a twenty year old, a teacher, in whom I confided my growing spiritual angst and anger at the parental and religious rules which literally ruled me, asked me one question that I still remember with appreciation: *Are you still financially dependent on your parents?* To my affirmative answer, he replied, *as long as you are financially dependent on your parents, you will likely need to live by their values and rules. As soon as you are no longer in such a dependency situation, you can begin to create or uncover your own values and rules for your life. You have another year of such dependency. Think what you will but don't jeopardize your education and your future by open rebellion.*

Over the years since then I have often recognized the immense wisdom of his counsel. I did not need to insist that the inner and deeply intuitive voice of my rebellion be shouted into the religious commons with a megaphone. I also did not need to reject my emerging stash of personal wisdom. I could simply begin to construct my own inner life based on the foundation which my family and expanding communities of reference had provided. Just by living and relating to others, I both could and would uncover the life-sustaining values which eventually began to guide my activities in the world of others.[33]

Eventually, my clinical training provided me with an alternative world view that has sustained my activism. I was provided with an alternative hermeneutic to explore what I believed and what I didn't believe. I was provided with an alternative community.

That which remains from my childhood's religious experiences is an ethnic identity and an extended ethnic set of personal friends. Most of my closest life-long friends are former Mennonites. We eat the ethnic foods and we share the informal gossip of former insiders. There are many things between us that never need to be spoken because we already know and understand these unspoken realities. Indeed, we have individually and collectively abstracted the values of our childhood church and have welded together new forms of spirituality as rudders for our individual and collective lives. We are not clones of each other but there is a certain socio-cultural understanding that undergirds our close and enduring friendship ties. We do not need, therefore, to explain ourselves to each other.

The paradox is always present. For thirty years of my professional life I was an employee of a Mennonite Church undergraduate college and a participating member of several successive Mennonite congregations. When employed by the Mennonite church, I lived by the expectations and rules of the church – even if I personally disagreed with those expectations and rules; even if the rules seemed totally arbitrary and irrelevant to my life as a single professional woman. The

church was paying my salary. I felt as if I owed it my personal respect and loyalty. To my own amazement and to the amusement of several of my closest friends, I even became a lay preacher inside the denomination's walls.

Now living in full retirement, I can no longer tolerate being part of any Mennonite or, indeed, any other Christian community. I cannot with integrity say the Christian creeds; I cannot with integrity sing the hymns; I cannot tolerate listening to the abstracted irrelevant propositional banality of most sermons. Consequently, I am in permanent exile from my people; I have become estranged from my ethnic cradle family of faith and culture. When I occasionally visit a church, the felt-sense of my body is a strong desire to crawl out of my skin and leave the skin behind me as I exit the sanctuary screaming obscenities.

One precipitating factor for my exile is that I no longer believe the specific [and exclusivistic] propositional language Mennonites use to describe who belongs and who doesn't belong to the people of God. I disagree with the community's doctrinally preached praxis of separation from the world at large. I disagree with the entire idea that any human being, for any reason whatsoever, can be separated from the love of God. I disagree with the whole idea of inherited sin. I disagree with the very notion of an "us versus them" "or insider versus outsider" inside the socio-cultural margins of a "singularly-saved" community.

I am not alone in my protests and disbelief. I am part of a large and growing Mennonite Diaspora.

James Taylor's words can perhaps start this conversation: *There's a feeling like the clenching of a fist: There's a hunger in the center of the chest: There is a passage through the darkness and the mist. And though the body sleeps; the heart will never rest.*[34]

All I can do is to bear witness. In the course of a lifetime, I have intentionally discarded or repeatedly lost propositional faith in my church's most dogmatic truths. I have, it seems to me now, lived always with more intellectual doubts than religious certainties. It easier for me to say what I no longer believe than it is to say with security what I do believe. I am more of a searcher than I am a finder and keeper. And my mind disagrees with many politicized and community-polarizing Mennonite words these days. My mind, therefore, disagrees with much of the Mennonite Church's institutional praxis regarding inclusion and exclusion from membership; inclusion and exclusion from the Lord's Supper; inclusion and exclusion from friendship.

Nevertheless, as an aging woman, I sense that my very bones are Mennonite in their marrow. I have never renounced my baptism as some former Mennonites have done. Sometimes I think to myself, *I will be buried a Mennonite.* Many of the values taught to me in childhood and adolescence still echo within.

Consequently, I keep seeking to open authentic and life-healing passages for myself through the darkness and the mist.

When the Teacher is Ready, the Student Emerges[35]

Somewhere in the late 1990's a Canadian student's term paper included a vignette about a former Roman Catholic nun and Canadian university professor, Dr. Mary Malone. According to my student's paper, Malone reported a personal epiphany. In the middle of the Mass she realized that she could no longer say the Christian creeds. As I read the student's paper, I was stunned that another religious woman (from another Christian denomination) had a personal experience that in so many ways mirrored my own inner personal experience.

In February, 1995, Malone was on an academic sabbatical in Ireland. Her epiphany happened at that time. Here in Malone's own words:

> *I could not say the (Christian) creed that morning. I can't pray and I can't worship. That's the bottom line* [*Toronto Star* Interview]. *It's not an authority issue. It's not a pope issue. I'm starving spiritually. I cannot pray and worship anymore* [*Catholic Register Interview*]. *Journeying is the very basis of spiritual life and there has to be more than one way to get there* [Rennison College's St. Bede Lecture]. After the lecture she was interviewed and she continued her commentary: *I know for sure that I've realized as a teacher my style has always been to open up horizons. I've been doing that for thirty to forty years, and I realized that I had been silencing myself for the sake of others. I can't postpone my journey anymore* [*University of Waterloo Gazette*]. Regarding her previous Christian experience, she commented: *After fifty seven years, those things don't just drop away. You don't just suddenly abandon ways of thinking and being* [Rennison College St. Bede's Lecture].[36]

When I read the student's paper in my grading space, I began to cry. Malone could no longer say the creeds or participate in the Mass – the center of her institutional religious experience and the experiential core of her spirituality. By analogy, the student at age twenty-something was already sensing or intuiting her own inabilities to participate in Mennonite affirmations or confessions of faith; her own growing unwillingness to attend and participate in Mennonite worship services.

In my mid-to-late fifties at the time of this event, my own crisis in faith and spirituality had already happened in the context of a seminary continuing education course several years earlier. Taught by Professor Brain Wren, the course's topic was how to design and implement liturgy inside Protestant contexts. Wren's philosophy was that we could not, or perhaps better said, should not, study worship without worship experiences as part of the classroom content and process.

In one of these classroom worship experiences, as we sang the hymns, tears ran down my cheeks. I was not alone. An Episcopal priest-in-training also stood and sang in tears. In this group of twenty or thirty classmates, two of us sang through our tears. No one appeared to notice and no one asked us about or commented on our unusual classroom behavior. The priest-in-training and I, however, shared our tear-filled stories over coffee the next day. In that sharing, we became friends.

In the middle of a well-known hymn, I had thought to myself, *I can never sing these words again.* There was overwhelming grief – as if a part of me was dying right there in the classroom. After this class session ended I spent much of that evening standing on a deserted seminary campus lawn, staring across East Bay at the Golden Gate Bridge. As I watched the sparkling lights of San Francisco in the distance, I wept and in my tears that night something died and something was born.

This was the opening moment and the definitive entry doorway into a prolonged dark night of the soul. No longer able to believe, therefore unable to affirm, the hymn's words, I simply could not sing them with personal integrity. I was unwilling to keep contaminating my inner Self by lying in a public forum of spiritual singing. I was also unwilling to live in rage inside a community that did not practice what it preached and what its hymns proclaimed.

In the background of those tears and that crisis was the historical fact that just the year before I had been viciously attacked in my place of employment by a powerful man from my congregation. He had an ordained position of power in the denomination and was an impressive and ambitious figure inside the Mennonite educational establishment.

Without talking to me, he sent a malicious letter to my place of employment suggesting that I was an inappropriate and unfit church employee. Never had he talked with me about his concerns; never had he talked at all with me in a direct fashion even though I saw him regularly inside the congregation where we both held membership. We both lived and worked in the same community. We were not strangers to each other. Smiling to my face, it suddenly and transparently became clear to me, he was snarling, teeth-bared, behind my back.

I only learned of this letter because a mid-level administrator of my institution broke rank and shared it with me. S/he said, *several of us in the president's office think you need to know about this letter.* The timing of the letter was the eve of my tenure decision. It was an open, albeit underhanded, attempt to get me fired. Given a photocopy of his letter, I shared it with other college faculty friends – also untenured - who worshiped in the same congregation as this man and I did. I shared it with the lay chair of the congregation's board of elders. The political decision was made collectively that I would be very unwise to confront the letter's sender. A major open confrontation with the church's educational hierarchy and

the denomination's institutional power brokers was not wise or politically astute in light of my impending tenure application.

When the faculty tenure committee voted, I was unanimously recommended for tenure. Consequently, I no longer needed to worry about this man's hostility towards me in terms of economic security. I was not, however, prepared to worship in the same room with him. I completely stopped attending services as did several other college faculty families and friends who were now aware of what he had tried to do to me.

This was a congregation in which I had done lay preaching several times a year. I always enjoyed the opportunity of working with/wrestling with the liturgical church's pre-selected lectionary of texts for a given Sunday – something which was not common among Mennonites but which my particular congregation often heard utilized by its ordained minister. This was a congregation in which I had made friends. My personal decision to preach from the lectionary texts (while unusual for a Mennonite congregation) was not the source of my problem.

This particular man, the letter writer, went on to have a very successful career inside Mennonite agencies of higher education. I never trusted him again. I never spoke to him again. I made certain that our paths would never again cross in person.

It took the congregation several years to officially notice my absence from worship. Changes in ministry occurred. Changes in the congregation's board of elders occurred. But during these years no one asked me where I was on Sunday morning. I concluded it was professionally and politically safer to totally absent myself from congregational worship than to attend services where I could be stabbed in the back by people who did not like me or what I professionally stood for. I decided for matters of personal integrity and professional security that I would simply move into the shadows of self-protective silence.

It is very difficult for me to think about those exceedingly painful years without concluding that it was my sexual violence advocacy work for the Mennonite Church's victims of John Howard Yoder that led to this man's hostile, mean-spirited backstabbing attempt to get me fired. He was not an only. Other male Mennonite power brokers also criticized me to the college's president and academic dean for my sexual violence advocacy work. In one moment of pure irony, I eventually learned that one of these institutionally powerful accusatory men became known years later in his congregation and ordination-credentialing conference as a sexual abuser.

The way to build a successful academic career inside Mennonite religious studies in Mennonite colleges and seminaries was to teach Yoder's work without critique. I was, as far as I could tell, the lone exception to this position inside Mennonite undergraduate religious studies/peace studies faculties because I simply did not teach Yoder.

In my current analysis of the above vignette, the letter writer was ambitiously building a career and one way to build that career was to attack my integrity and attempt to get rid of me. Whether he initiated this hostile letter on his own or was carrying out the explicit or implicit wishes of his denominationally important employment supervisor, I have never been able to ascertain. Both hypotheses are tenable ones, given the state of institutional Mennonite politics at the time. His attempt to throw me under the bus failed, in part, because I knew about it. It failed in part because of collegial friendships and professional loyalties. Perhaps it failed because many of my student's supported me in their classroom course evaluations. Or, maybe it was just divine providence or blind luck that protected me.

Only my teaching faculty colleagues and supportive college mid-level administrators stood in the way of this man's naked, power-grabbing attempt to destroy me and my teaching career. Only by being clandestinely given a copy of his letter attacking me was I able to politically defend myself against it as I prepared my tenure file for consideration by the faculty, the college dean, and the board of trustees. Knowing the specificity of his stated objections to me, I could frame my application to meet those objections without once raising a warning flag. I could, therefore, act preemptively before my tenure decision rather than respond defensively after it.

There are two more bits of data to be included in this narrative. The year in which he sought to have me fired was the very same year I was preaching and lecturing on sexual and domestic violence issues inside a wide variety of American Mennonite and other-than Mennonite churches from Winnipeg and Toronto to Guatemala City; from Los Angeles and Phoenix to Boston and Lancaster. In any given month during the school year, I was on the road or in the air 2 or 3 weekends. At the request of the larger interdenominational Mennonite Central Committee and the international Mennonite Church in Central America, I was serving the church. And yet, in the midst of performing this requested service, I was also being maliciously attacked as an undesirable by another employee of the church.

This year was also a year in which my sister-in-law was dying and I was helping my brother to provide care for her one or two weekends a quarter – giving him an opportunity to do things he needed to do to keep the family ship afloat – and also cooking and freezing meals which could be thawed as needed. On one of those weekends, I looked at a humongous load of undone laundry and told my brother he now needed to take out the family's laundry because she could no longer do

it. I spent much of that weekend washing and ironing my brother's business shirts.

My church, therefore, did not help me with my anticipatory grief at her impending death – a devastating grief because during the years of their marriage, she had become my much-loved sister. Nor, did it help me mourn after her death as I sought to be present to my nephews and brother in a new way.

Several years later after these events took place I read my student's paper with tears flowing down my cheeks. Reading about Mary Malone's spiritual journey, I thought about my own religious journey as a Mennonite woman – a woman who was repeatedly and maliciously attacked for my professional work on behalf of sexually-victimized individuals in a wide variety of Mennonite Church academic and congregational settings.

Malone's experience with the creeds was eerily similar to my earlier experience with Mennonite hymnody. In the middle of religious worship services – away from our homes, we encountered Spirit and our true Selves. The core of our inherited spiritual experience and intellectual belief structures had already been shattered and dismantled by our lived experiences inside our respective Christian communities. If the Mass is the center of experienced Catholic spirituality; then a capella hymnody must surely be the center of experienced Mennonite spirituality. For Malone, the center had not held just as for me it was no longer holding.[37] Like Malone, I abruptly stopped attending institutionalized religious services.

It was no longer a question of intellectual disbelief – or propositional doubt – it was an inner sense that my spiritual life was being asphyxiated by hypocritical, authoritarian, and religiously rigidified communal patterns of relationships, worship and belief – patterns that I could no longer pretend were my own. In addition, I now felt personally and economically unsafe inside weekly congregational worship gatherings. My paranoia about being secretively stabbed in the back interfered with my church friendships. I no longer trusted my congregation or its gathered people. My sense of mistrust was pervasive and it spread rapidly. I began to trust no ordained minister and no denominational executive to have integrity when it came to my life and my academic career. I intuited that Mennonite cultural structures of belief and praxis were intellectually inadequate to address my or the community's questions about sexual violence inside the context of God and God's people. I concluded that Mennonite Church administrative personnel and organizational structures which enabled and tolerated this kind of in-house secretive and openly malicious religious abuse were also likely to be actively abusive and destructive to my personal and professional well-being. As actual or potential abusers, they were, therefore, actively destructive to my inner sense of my personal spiritual life. In essence, therefore, I experienced them as religiously and spiritually abusive, as lacking in basic integrity. The Mennonite Church, I finally decided, was corrupt to its core. Power was more important than the virtues which its ministers preached. Control

was more important than community. Purity of doctrinal teachings and ideological correctness were more important that compassionate friendship and egalitarian relationships. Trust betrayed was more common that trust kept.

Eventually, I could no longer tolerate the hypocrisy of friendliness to my face as I waited for the knife in the back. I could not align the church's teachings about nonviolence and active peace-making with my lived experiences of passive-aggressive interpersonal hostility. When every word I spoke needed to be filtered through my paranoia about being betrayed, I knew trust had died. These people were, therefore, no longer my people. Without my really noticing it, the divorce had already happened in my heart.

I had loved my church; I had loved my people. I had loved its tradition of unaccompanied hymn singing. I had believed in nonviolent compassionate love as the marker of God's people. I sought to teach my students with compassionate integrity. I had sought ways to serve my church's people.

Now living inside one of the politically and culturally over-heated heartlands of Mennonite life, I no longer felt at home. The institutional church had become a highly dysfunctional and toxic family of faith for me. The entire ethnic community in which I lived and worked became claustrophobic. I was estranged; I was in exile from my people; and I was desolate. I had no spiritual home. I was, in essence, silenced. My inner spirit was in disarray. My soul was wounded. My personal voice was broken.

After my oldest brother's funeral and burial in 2004, an ordained Mennonite minister said to me as we stood talking on the steps outside his house, *inside these huge Mennonite communities our cultural hypocritical shit stinks.* She followed this comment by noting that Mennonites who live outside the cultural and ethnic communities do many good deeds in the world – motivated by their faith and Christian-informed non-violent pacifism. Living outside their ethnic community, they were no longer regulated by or participants in its many forms of passive-aggressive community violence and relational shunning. Living outside, they were protected from the always swirling cesspools of community gossip and interpersonal passive-aggressive hostility. They were spared the inevitable competition to be first in God's kingdom by having the most power and control inside the institutional church.

For many of us – those of us who lived inside the large ethnic centers of Mennonite culture, a certain kind of hostile, judgmental socio-cultural-religious ethos of maliciousness towards others was omnipresent. This was particularly true in situations where propositional beliefs and purity codes were being challenged. This was particularly true in the incestuous warfare of powerful clans seeking to control the destiny of the church's theology and its future. There was a culturally-enforced code of belief and behavior that was seen as essential and

those of us who deviated from that code, its clichés, and demanded patterns of belief and behavior were attacked as spiritually incorrect.

As a single, successful, feminist professional woman, I did not and would not yield to the community's patriarchal demands for my submissiveness to authoritarian, and often incompetent, male rule. In addition, I was not willing to indoctrinate students to outworn and tattered belief systems. I felt education needed to be education rather than indoctrination. I sought, therefore, to open the mysteries and make them less arbitrarily mysterious for students.

During the remainder of my professional career inside Mennonite higher education, I patched together what I could patch together of my spirituality. For nearly fifteen years, I avoided church attendance unless I was doing lay preaching or someone was being buried. I sought, however, to find common ground with a wide variety of Mennonite and formerly Mennonite individuals who were motivated by their Christian idealism and/or their Mennonite-informed pacifism. It was no accident that many of us were cynical about the institutional church which employed us. Likewise it is no accident that, now in retirement, many of us do not participate in Mennonite communal life and religious services.

For the first time, I found my religious identity inside the cyber-world. I was not alone in my sense of disaffiliation with and distrust of Mennonite institutions. There were other Mennonites in exile. A small group of us including one of my early adult college professors and some of my former students met almost daily inside what I have begun to call the cyber-church. We shared the stories of our lives and we insisted that personal and institutional betrayal was unacceptable. What we said to each other, therefore, was sacred and holy because it was (1) honest and (2) shared in trust. In times of intense grief and in times of joy, we were present to each other. When we disagreed with each other, our written speech was filled sometimes with very dark humor and cynicism as well as with compassion and civility. Inside this form of cyber-church, no one was keeping track of the days of absence or the days of cynicism. No one insisted on propositional faith as the requirement for belonging. Who ever showed up on a given morning for conversation was included. Sometimes people took leaves of absence and then decided to return. Sometimes people left for good. But my life was deeply enriched during these most difficult professional years by the reality of this group of Mennonite and formerly Mennonite professionals who, like me, were living in exile from the institutional Mennonite Church. Inside the shelter of this group, I felt both at home and institutionally protected as people shared what they knew about institutional politics *and more importantly* who they were.

In the middle of this devastating interior spiritual storm, I found a rather leaky boat [or perhaps created a rather shabby raft] but it held me. That boat was the teachings of the great Christian and other-than-Christian mystics. In particular, I turned to the writings of Sam Keen,[38] Huston Smith,[39] Mark Nepo,[40] Thich Nhat Hanh,[41] Henri Nouwen[42], and Matthew Fox.[43] Wherever possible, I attended

book-readings, conferences, lectures and seminars which they did in a wide variety of locations. I returned to my first professional career as a healer and sought multiple new certifications in the healing arts. Once a week I began to walk a labyrinth on the grounds of a nearby Methodist retreat center – seeking to quiet my inner noise and hear the voice of Spirit I practiced my version of contemplative meditation. Believing a lot of the stuff preached to me about prayer to be utter nonsense, nevertheless, I prayed.

In the middle of this personal storm, at the conclusion of an academic sabbatical, I very quietly joined the Methodist Church. I had attended services during that year in a welcoming and inclusive university town congregation. For the first time in years I willingly and voluntarily participated in a world communion Sunday Eucharist. For the first time in years, I lowered my spiritual defenses sufficiently to make personal friends inside a congregation at worship. For the first time in years, I trusted an ordained minister.

Near the end of his life, an academic mentor and friend, the Rev. Dr. Howard Clinebell (1922-2005) spent an evening with me at his home in Santa Barbara. During our conversation, he talked about his personal spiritual journey, his doubts in propositional spirituality, and where he was in his belief systems as an old man. Looking out over the Pacific Ocean at the Channel Islands in the distance, we talked easily and comfortably with each other. As he talked about his own life journey with me, it was as if I was receiving pastoral care from him; a spiritual transfusion. I think we both knew he was dying and that we would never talk face-to-face with each other again. For almost four hours we sat on the outdoor deck of his home, watching the planets and stars, as he talked about his life and as he shared with me his old age wisdom about personal faith, long-held doubts, and the long-distance nature of the spiritual journey. That evening I was a witness to his life in its wholeness and its complexity. I heard his intellectual doubts and his spiritual questions. I witnessed his great comfort with spiritual ambiguity, disbelief, and doubt. He became a prophetic witness to the growing list of propositional faith statements that I, like he, no longer believed. There was no pretense of having answers, no faked piety, no hiding of the inner self from the other's view. There was no sense of judgment by the beloved teacher towards his former student and her spiritual pain. Instead, there was openness and acceptance. There was a real sense of personal trust in our respective truth-telling with each other. Who we each were in our lifetimes at that moment in our collegial and personal friendship was what it was. In the years since then, I have come to consider that night of conversation a moment of true grace. I left his home the next morning knowing I was not crazy. I left knowing I was not an evil person. I left knowing God or the gods had not abandoned me. I left believing I was a valued friend. I left reassured.

But, after retirement, in the middle of writing the Yoder case study for *The Elephants in God's Living Room,*[44] everything fell apart again. My anger at my denominational institutional church for its lies, for its refusal to listen appropriately to victimized women, and for its prolonged cover-up of Yoder's behaviors and its professional mismanagement of Yoder's vast network of institutional connections was devastating to my inner spiritual journey. It was devastating to my sense of trust in the wisdom of the Mennonite Church as a discerning community. Seeing up close what some authors have called *Yoderolatry* and bearing witness to the inept and corrupt institutional management of his abusive behavior, the pious instructional words of the institutional church became totally meaningless to me.

This time around I could no longer tolerate my church's Yoder-constructed ideological position on pacifism – the one thing, in addition to it's a capella music, that I had clung to as part of my personal religious or spiritual identity. While my cradle church's pacifism was a world-wide witness with regard to the violence of warfare, there was almost no teaching about the presence of domestic and sexual violence inside the Mennonite community of faith. As a clinician I knew there was a high prevalence of domestic violence, sexual abuse, rape, battering, etc. Too many women and their maturing children, inside the Mennonite house of faith, to put it quite bluntly, were not safe. It was as simple and as complex as that.[45]

Stripped bare now were the two remaining markers of my adult Mennonite identity: my love of Mennonite a capella hymn singing and my strong belief in Christian non-violent pacifism as interpreted to me by my Mennonite elders. I was, therefore, in the unenviable position of active unbelief and estrangement from my people. I had lost faith in all certitudes. All that remained was a strong interior sense of what I could no longer, and therefore, did not believe. It was as if an inner door had slammed shut. Once more I was bereft.

I continued, however, the spiritual practice of gratitude which I'd begun on an academic sabbatical in 1995. Gratitude was the glue that held my inner spiritual world together. I continued to walk the labyrinth – now at a local urban Episcopal Church. I continued to read Amerindian spiritual-healing teachings and re-encountered the teachings and spiritual practices of several great Amerindian shamanic healers: Fools Crow, Rolling Thunder, Medicine Eagle, Sun Bear, and Black Elk. I blended Amerindian medicine wheel teachings with Christian labyrinth teachings. One day during my quiet meditation period, I "heard" the words; *the medicine wheel is now living inside you.* By implication, I also knew that the labyrinth was also now living inside me. Regular spiritual practice (even without propositional beliefs) was beginning to re-shape, perhaps even repair, my inner spirituality. I eventually joined another cyber-church, this time a predominantly Roman Catholic group of people who shared similar values with me about the sexual abuse crisis in Christian communities.

During the years of researching and writing the Yoder manuscript, some of my Mennonite and formerly Mennonite friends and colleagues supported me in non-judgmental affirmations that the work I was doing was essential to the spiritual health of the greater Mennonite Church. By exposing the moral rot of the religious institution system, they said, I was providing active support for those victimized by Yoder and by the church. Perhaps, I sometimes thought and sometimes hoped, there was a pathway to the healing of the Mennonite Church – a pathway of truth-telling, full accountability, and reconciliation.

I had no illusions, however, that my previous faith and trust in my ethnic community of gathered people could be restored. I had experienced and witnessed too much abusiveness to return. I had been the target of too much malicious gossip and back-stabbing. I had seen too much power-grabbing and power-holding. I had witnessed as some of my colleagues were institutionally fired for all of the wrong reasons. I actively grieved their absence from campus. In addition, I had witnessed way too much authoritarianism. I had seen way too much hypocrisy. The institutional church, as I knew it and as I had experienced it, was not the beloved community of God's people. It was an ideological war zone.

Not a formally trained biblical scholar, I returned to my informal studies of the prophetic trajectory inside Jewish and Christian scriptures. I actively hunted resources inside and outside of Christianity to understand the teachings of the human man Jesus. Slowly I began to understand that over two millennia Christianity and its historical teachings had become weaponized. Ideological and propositional purity now mattered more than compassionate service to others. Ideas mattered more than actions. Propositional beliefs now mattered more than a vital living faith. Orthodoxy mattered more than orthopraxy. Words had replaced deeds as the markers of an acceptable communal faith.

I was unwilling to participate in further weaponization. I was also unwilling to continue to be the church's institutional victim.

Once again seeking to find my way into and from this spiritual void, I turned to the world's great religious literature – most particularly the world's mystics and its social reformers. Once again, I looked to the great contemporary spiritual teachers of meditation. I read or re-read the biographies or autobiographies of great pacifists and non-pacifists who struggled with questions of violence and evil; with questions of healing; with questions of personal wholeness – Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Gustavo Gutierrez, Dom Helder Camara, Barbara Deming, Pema Chodron, James Hillman, Jean Shinoda Bolen, Gandhi, Elie Wiesel, Emmett Miller, Marty Rossman, Desmond Tutu, Mary Catherine Bateson, Phillip Hallie, Abraham Herschel, William Sloane Coffin, Bernie Glassman, Jean Achterberg, Angeles Arrien, Rami Shapiro, Hank Wesselman, Thomas Merton, Bishop Desmond Tutu, Thomas Bancaya, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Dalai Lama. I bought a new copy of Will Oursler's book, *The Road to Faith.* I turned once more to the clinical wisdom of my first profession – re-reading the great historical and

contemporary healers. I was seeking a way to ground my personal spirituality in ways which did not further devastate my inner life or victimize my outer life. I was seeking a path that avoided demonization of others and the sterilization of my interior spiritual world.

In 1995-1996 with physician-healer-therapist Emmett Miller's encouragement, I had begun a practice of disciplined meditation – seeking the quiet place of non-ideological inner unity. At the same time I began a daily spiritual practice of gratitude. During those years of very intense body/mind therapy, I began the search for a deep and inner abiding home of joy.

Thus, in 2007 and 2008, I did what I have always done in times of a personal or spiritual crisis. I began to read – seeking a way forward, a way with integrity and a way with hope. I began to look for spiritual mentors and elders – men and women ahead of me on the path to spiritual integrity and personal honor. This time around I went looking to see how other victim-survivors and their advocates proceeded to keep faith. I looked to see how other chroniclers of the human spiritual path were setting out cairn markers.

Somewhere along the line, I found Richard Sipe's call for *radical honesty* as one marker of genuine spirituality and it was as if a deep inner sigh penetrated the intense anger, fear, darkness of soul, i.e., recalcitrant unbelief, which I was experiencing. Radical honesty was something that made sense to me. His was not a call for magical thinking and belief in fairy tales. Rather, his was a call for deep truth as healer. I did not have to be a true believer in propositional certainty to practice it. Like Meyer's urgent leaning towards God, Sipe's concept of radical honesty allowed for – indeed mandated – a kind of inner integrity and inner truth-telling about one's own self.

Father Thomas Doyle's insistence that the religious institution, its buildings, and its organizational structures, is not the church; that the church is better understood as an amorphous mass of individual believers who are the church. Stating in essence that the people of God are the church rather than the ruling systems which purport to be the church, Doyle rescues the Jesus path as demonstrating a maturing, authentic adult spirituality. I have refined that a bit for myself. The people who seek to walk the Jesus path or the Way: these are the people of God in a Christian voice. There are other people who faithfully seek to follow other faith traditions and other spiritual voices and they too are the people of God.

It was, I intuited, in truth-telling (about our individual and collective lives) that we, the religiously and spiritually wounded ones, could collectively create a path out of the enchanted forests and toxic swamps of religious leader sexual abuse and institutional religion's moral and ethical moral rot. It was, I intuited, in moments of urgent leaning and radical truth-telling that the beloved community could once

more be reborn. It was in radical truthfulness that the betrayed soul could breathe free once more.

Slowly and almost imperceptibly I began to find or create a passage for my spirituality through the darkness and the mists that James Taylor wrote about so many years ago in *Shed a Little Light.*[46] I began to unclench my fists. I began to re-open my heart chakra.

A Collective Groaning of Spirit

> *We are at ground zero and the old order is collapsing all around us. The new order has not yet emerged.* [Quoting Dr. Martin Luther King] *the arc of the universe is long but it bends towards justice.*

> Thomas Fox[47]

What I found as I read was stunning. There were vast numbers of us (clergy sexual violence victims, religious institution abuse of power victims, victims of the church's ideological purity code decisions to exclude sexual minorities from membership and from the Eucharistic table, institutional whistleblowers, and victim advocates) in spiritual exile from our denominational and/or ethnic cradle faith communities. I was not alone. There were others like me. Some were Mennonite but many were from other denominations and faith traditions.

Encountering early in my retirement the Catholic sexual abuse crisis I began reading a wide variety of Catholic authors, I began to understand the realities and complexities of institutional clericalism (and its deadly effect on religious faith in those targeted by church leaders for attack and removal). I began to intuit the spiritual devastation of individuals and entire communities as one consequence of these forms of abuse. I began an inner process of re-examining and re-evaluating some elements or aspects of my religious experience inside Mennonite communities. I began to see them and to understand them as emotionally, spiritually, and religiously abusive.

Years before I had helped to supervise a graduate student's doctoral dissertation based on the APA DSM-IV-r diagnosis of spiritual and religious problems. Now, I began to re-read this background literature online for myself – now applying it to these post-abuse issues in survivors' lives and in the lives of those who helped them. Always in the background of this reading was the question of my own interior spiritual life and my public religious identity. It was always a bi-furcated reading. I was seeking clinically to understand this reality inside the lived experience of others who had been victimized by their churches. But I was also seeking to understand my own inner experience as well. I was hunting meaningful language to understand and then to express that which on the surface appeared indescribable and unspeakable.

Some of Father Thomas Doyle's personal comments in speeches and in written publications helped me see this desolated, toxic spiritual and religious wasteland through his eyes.[48] I read my way through Richard Sipe's web pages and several of his books for the same reason.[49] I began to look for first-person accounts in print and read 10 or 15 books. I looked at clinical literature, most especially the emerging work of Bessel van der Kolk and Judith Herman of Harvard's trauma research programs. I reflected on my conference encounters with Peter Levine and his research and teaching team. I picked up his new book and read it.[50] These were wise elders and contemporaries – each one of them ahead of me on the path – setting out cairns for others to follow.

As I read, it seemed to me that those of us who were (1) abuse survivors, (2) victim-survivor advocates, (3) victim-survivor attorneys, or (4) victim-survivor therapists in some way or another had more in common with each other than might be apparent on the surface. Our denominational experiences and their concomitant propositional and theological differences were there but our encounters with hostile and corrupt religions institutions were very similar. Our disquieting personal encounters with the moral and spiritual rot of our religious institutions were very similar. Our encounters with evil purporting piously to be the good, were excruciatingly similar. Our professional languages were different but our experiences with and our understanding of the trauma experienced by sexual violence survivors was very similar. Another way to say this is to say that while our religious or spiritual histories and our professional or career histories were very different, we were, in the present moment of our lives, experiencing very similar socio-cultural-religious-institutional responses to our work on behalf of our various churches' sexual abuse victims. There was, I began to see, a structure to our common experiences. There was, therefore, an archetype of reasonable and trustworthy unbelief. There was wisdom embedded within all of our individual experiences and reflections upon those experiences.

In attempting to rescue their personal spiritual lives some attorneys, survivor advocates, whistleblowers and therapists sought refuge in other denominations than their cradle faith community; others sought refuge in the emerging cyber-church movement; some sought refuge in the meditation and contemplative prayer practices of various world religions: while still others sought refuge in helping others. Some quietly walked out the back door of their cradle faith religious institutions without looking back. Some retreated into agnosticism. Others abandoned all religious beliefs. Some worked in therapy to resolve these complex personal issues. Finally, some sought help and a beloved community inside twelve-step programs.

Despite our unique personal responses and our varied faith traditions, it seems to me in some strange way, that we are all walking side-by-side in order to correct our various traditions, to help victimized individuals, and to construct and then to continuously re-construct a personal spirituality of deep compassion for others, a spirituality that could sustain our activism and just perhaps allow us to create an

alternative community for ourselves. In all of our individual and collective searching for personal integrity and inner sanity, we were seeking ways to undergird our lives of service and activism in ways that supported the soul rather than destroyed it.

As I read about the various solutions others had found for themselves inside their own uniquely personal dark night of the soul, I began to sense that many of us were traveling the same path through a very dangerous, difficult, unmarked and steep mountainous saddle. As we walked this torturous mountainous path, sometimes stumbling, sometimes falling down, sometimes tripping over our own feet, sometimes encountering dangerous snakes, sometimes quietly watched by hidden wolves, wild cats, and bears, sometimes immobilized by our doubts and lost in our personal insecurities, we were bushwhacking open a path for future generations.

We were, I began to think, not alone at all. If, as the great mystics and the world's sacred scriptures seemed to say, God was always present in human moments of compassionate service to others, we the bushwhackers and hikers on this sacred mountain saddle were not alone – even when we felt most abused and abandoned by our cradle faith communities.[51]

There was, I began to intuit, an alternative, as yet un-named spiritual community – a community of compassionate and informed searchers and helpers. Wee came from many religious denominations and from no denomination at all. While we carried our ethnic and historical religious identities as part of our socio-cultural-religious genetic heritages, we no longer imagined these identities to be the only faithful and compassionate path on the sacred mountain. We were, I came to believe, not alone at all. As we worked and turned our lives over to an informed and compassionate service to others, the divine presence hovered over us.

Our individual personalities were not coerced into some corseted or pandering institutional religiosity or the arrogantly prostituted intellectual demands of propositional faith. Instead, as I studied, I saw the prophetic impulse and the compassionate impulse merge and re-merge in a wide range of various personalities. No one insisted that only he or she had the full truth of the sexual abuse phenomenon. In fact, there were more confessions of not understanding these kinds of persisting abuse than there were certainties. Everyone was a seeker and no one pretended to know absolute truth; no one, therefore was a door-keeper to orthodoxy or a door-keeper to belonging. Those who chose to show up for the doing of this work ipso facto belonged.

Healing and rescuing work inside the enchanted forests and toxic wastelands of sexual abuse and clericalism meant the healers and rescuers needed to stay present to the is-ness of each moment. To be helpful to others, today's prophets and healers could not stay fixated on the past. Nor could they only catastrophize about the future.

To be helpful today, each healer and each advocate and each lawyer needed to stay present to today's needs and demands. Each one needed, therefore, to pay attention and to seek the wisdom which was embedded inside their work itself – whether or not they recognized it as wisdom. In my personal sense of these matters, whistleblowers, survivor helpers and victim advocates not only sought the wisdom of their clients' stories and souls; they sought for healing wisdom inside their own life's stories and their own body's souls. Recognizing that everyone touched by these vicious and deeply malicious narratives of clergy sexual abuse and corrupted clericalism was a person touched by evil, healers and advocates sought to care for themselves as well as provide supportive care to others. Those who did not learn this lesson of self-other care were soon immobilized and ineffective healers and helpers.

Everyone traveling on the sacred mountain of rescuing and healing, therefore, needed to take care of his or her soul; form working communities of support; and learn that self-reliance was probably a magical-thinking concept. Each needed simultaneously to become a seeker of spiritual or soul truth and a seeker of factual truth. Everyone needed to do soul work in order to do the work of healing and rescuing and the difficult work of speaking truth to the powers.[52] In the doing of this work, soon some of us began to intuit that our works of listening and rescuing was soul work. We were, I knew as a nurse, not the body-soul's healers yet healing flowed into and through our work on behalf of others. I became convinced that the Great Healer was present in our honest efforts to be present to the pain of others even when we didn't or couldn't recognize that presence.

I returned to some of Emmett Miller's teachings. Every healer, no matter how skilled, no matter how dedicated, needed time-out to rejuvenate their inner resources.[53] Deep mental and physical relaxation of the body's stress systems was essential to the body's physical and mental health. Play and joy-filled laughter were a necessary spiritual practice for prophets and healers. Time-out spaces with people who loved us were essential. Our avocations – whatever they are – nurture us and provide us with an essential internal balance. Clog-dancing, making art, doing complicated jig-saw puzzles, furniture-crafting, cooking, hiking in the woods, doing stand-up comedy routines for our friends, swimming laps, or growing flowers: each and all of these could help us maintain an inner sense of well-being and emotional balance.

While our work in the enchanted forest and toxic wastelands of our corrupted churches and their hidden and protected stashes of abusive clergy was grim and sometimes dangerous work, we, ourselves, needed to avoid becoming grim and dangerous. Passionate about our work with victimized others; we needed to learn compassion for our selves as well as for others and for each other. We needed, I came to believe, to unblock our emotionality. We needed the freedom to laugh and to cry. We needed the freedom of being overcome with compassion. We needed to manage appropriate anger and cynicism. We needed time to grieve for our own losses as well as the losses of others. We needed to give ourselves time and internal permission to heal our own wounds.

Speaking personally, I needed to learn to work from a calm center of non-judgmental, centered and focused compassion rather than from the self-other destructive emotions of negativity, cynicism, anger, rage, and fury.

I continue to intuit that there is a new community of religious seekers emerging. This community is not found inside religious institutions. It is not found in buildings, programs, protocols, and policies. Rather, it is found on the raping and killing fields of our culture. One of its markers is a belief that the people of God are an orthopraxis community; a community of healers. Another marker is that people cross denominational and or religious institution lines to find and to help each other. Another marker is individuals' willingness to extend a helping hand in the face of multiple systems of abuse and oppression – secular as well as religious. And, a final marker is this emerging community's willingness to apply complex analytical thinking to the issues of sexual, physical, religious, and structural violence inside organized religion and its many institutions.

There is, therefore, a prophetic edge to this emergent community of whistle-blowers, sexual violence scholars, survivors, and victim advocates. Many of us privately confess to each other that we can no longer tolerate the social justice passivity towards socially victimized people inside our various denominations. Many of us object to regressive denominational policies regarding the isms – racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, etc. We are no longer willing to tolerate moral and ethical corruption presented as institutional self-protective wisdom. In many different and uniquely personal ways we behaviorally declare our unwillingness to be complicit in the deliberate and malicious wounding of human beings by religious systems and institutions. We refuse to be intimidated. We refuse to be co-opted. We refuse to be contained. We refuse to be controlled. We refuse, therefore, to be silenced.

Were we, the walkers on this particular sacred mountain, I have often wondered in recent weeks, a twenty-first century manifestation of that which Dietrich Bonhoeffer announced in the twentieth century – *religionless Christianity?*[54] A radical leaning towards God and an equally radical honesty of soul: maybe these are emerging as the new markers of a re-born faith, a renewed praxis. Perhaps, I allowed myself to hope, one day they can become the markers of a re-born community as well.

Mystical Reading

By an *accident* I have come to call mystical reading, I recently became aware of the books of a United Church of Christ minister Robin Meyers. I was browsing the internet when I literally stumbled across a lecture series (The Lyman Beecher Lectures) he gave at Yale.[55] After listening to the three lectures online, I purchased the first book. In the months since then, I have purchased and read two more of his books.

Finally, I had a contemporary Christian voice in the commons that spoke to my many inner questions about the composition of a faithful institutional religious community in the face of social injustice – in this manuscript the sexual abuse of minors by religious leaders. By listening to and pondering Meyer's on-line lectures and printed books, I have begun, one more time, to re-construct an inner spiritual and religious belief gyroscope and rudder system.[56] The ancient gospels of Christian faith teach us about the Jesus way and his call to create an alternative community – one of egalitarian compassion, healing, and inclusivity. There is something about this call to form vital, alternative communities of compassionate, healing praxis that still stirs something urgent deep within my being.

Unlike Meyers, who is an ordained minister and guides an actual congregation of his denominational church in their communal spiritual lives, I am still unwilling to return to congregational membership in any form. This is a self-protective act. I am unwilling, by virtue of my personal lived experiences of betrayal and interpersonal hostility, to believe that institutionalized religious life is essential to the faithful spiritual path. I remain, therefore, in religious and spiritual exile.

The Question of Spiritual Estrangement

If anyone causes any of these little ones, these little ones of any age, who believe in me to lose faith, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Jesus of Nazareth
Matthew 18:6

This monograph begins, therefore, inside my personally entangled experiences of religious and spiritual estrangement. I am aware of a deep longing to maintain personal and spiritual integrity in the face of a religious institution that is no longer and never again can be home or family to me. My new spiritual and religious family is too busy hiking the dangerous mountainous saddle of sexual abuse. We are too busy deconstructing the nasty realities of institutional betrayal. We are too busy seeking to find and help the man, the woman, or the child who has been sexually assaulted by soul-thieves and left by the side of the road to die.[57]

I begin to write, therefore, with a set of very simple hypotheses.

➢ The spiritual and religious sequellae of churches' and denominational forms of institutional abusiveness can be exhumed, enumerated and examined through the personal encounters and experiences of individuals who have been sexually abused by corrupt religious leaders or spiritual teachers such as ordained priests, ministers and gurus. Thus, there is an individual element to these kinds of sequellae. One direct or indirect cost of being sexually assaulted by a religious leader is often the loss of faith. A secondary cost is the loss of one's community or family of faith.

➢ In addition, these sequellae can be exhumed, enumerated and examined through the experiences of whistle-blowing individuals and victim advocates, those men and women who have been attacked by the institutional church for seeking to expose abusive priests, ministers or gurus and for seeking to protect vulnerable individuals. Thus, there is a communal element to these kinds of sequellae. The cost of being attacked and then abandoned by one's institutional church for seeking to help others is also often the loss of faith. Once again, the secondary cost is the loss of one's community or family of faith.

➢ Finally, friends, victim helpers and advocates who have never been directly victimized by abusive clergy or gurus carry a hologram of these sequellae in their own experiences of their religious heritage. The hologram contains two aspects of this issue. First, there is the horror of knowing the specifics of the sexual abuse acts which have been

perpetrated on vulnerable children, adolescents and adults of all gender identities. Secondly, there is the experience of moral and spiritual indignation and outrage, a deep and abiding sense of disgust upon learning about or being directly confronted by corrupted institutional personnel or human resource managers of sexual abusers. The cost of bearing witness to the factual truth of evil's presence is often the cost of losing faith. Here too we see the secondary cost of losing one's community or family of faith.

The Road Map Ahead

Religions throughout history have worn both salvific and demonic faces. The challenge if we interact with religions of the world is to distinguish between the two faces.

William D. Lindsey[58]

As a result of writing these introductory notes I now hypothesize:

➢ One way to know about the religious and spiritual damages of clergy and religious leader sexual abuse is to listen closely to the stories of victimized individuals – paying close attention to the metaphors which they use to speak about their anger, pain, estrangement, alienation, despair, grief, etc.

➢ We can also do this in situations where abused individuals have encountered a negligent or actively hostile institutional church – listening closely to the metaphors and stories people choose to share.

➢ Those of us who are advocates, support persons, family members and friends, therapists and whistle-blowers can, in addition, begin to harvest our own stories – looking for their experienced and embodied wisdom about these painful topics. I have tried to model that kind of narrative work above.

➢ While survivors carry their own individual stories, some of us who seek to help others literally carry hundreds of stories and some of us literally carry thousands of stories. I hypothesize that our wisdom about the religious and spiritual sequellae of sexual abuse and the abuse of clericalism is fed by two sources. First, we carry the wisdom of our clients' narratives of clergy and religious institution abuse. Secondly we carry the wisdom of our own personal encounters with an abusive, hostile and corrupted church.

If we begin to collect our individual and collective wisdom (based upon our life stories) into a coherent collective narrative, we can begin to create a lexicon of human responses to the related but separate phenomenons of (1) a corrupt

clergy which sexually abuses children, teens, and vulnerable adults and (2) a morally or ethically corrupted religious institution which presides over this abuse by providing protective cover for abusive clergy by protecting them; by keeping them in positions of ministry long after their personal behaviors have revealed them to be sexual predators.

In Conclusion

States of sin are always incapable of critiquing themselves which is largely why they are sin to begin with. Evil depends on disguise and tries to look like virtue to survive.

Richard Rohr[59]

In conclusion, therefore I strongly believe that we need to begin to talk face-t-face – in a planned and orderly fashion - among ourselves as healers, clinicians, therapists, theologians, lawyers, pastoral counselors, canon lawyers, activist members of the clergy and religious, advocates, and friends of victimized individuals. In addition, we need to convene a set of well-planned, professional consultations on these topics of religious and spiritual wounds – of soul murder. These conversations should be directed towards the creation of a reliable taxonomy of religious and spiritual sequellae so that social science and clinical researchers can begin to do creative demographic studies about incidence or prevalence. We need to begin to develop a reference repertoire of basic clinical or spiritual or religious or even theological concepts that can help us to unpack the personally devastating spiritual and religious wounds experienced by many, perhaps most, survivors of clergy sexual abuse and institutional personnel management abuses.

In particular, if in public addresses we are going to utilize the words *Soul Murder* to define the clinical aftermath of clergy sexual violations and institutional violations we have a clinical and theological obligation to adequately define or operationalize this phrase. As much as possible we should abandon the practice of using code words that have inconclusive meanings and potentially damaging effects on abuse survivors in the religious commons.

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Chapter Two
Knowing that Which We Cannot Speak

A Survivor of Clergy Abuse Speaks

So enormously disappointed in human kind. Their choice to deny: live in fear, abandon the most innocent whose childlike eyes seek our refuge. In their helplessness, you choose to look away, turn your back on such screaming pain. A thousand years and still you choose to hurt. This history forever embraced, accepted, fear. Is there no one to stand tall with me free of attachments or agendas? Is there one, single, voice that can listen to my cries, my soft child cries? As I keep reaching, will I ever be touched by love? Must I keep standing here – alone, feeling only my own bravery? In this stillness of my loneliness. I am so angry at your cowardice, the ultimate betrayal in your distortion of my God – My God how you tried to take away my very breath. There exists no greater sorrow-my life source, my existence, my harboring soul, than to use what held me together-My God.

I choose to stand tall
I choose to not allow you, priest, to slowly and deliberately decimate me, God's child
I choose to embrace my rage at all of you
I choose silence
How could you not see, how could you not hear all the many cries of us, your children?

WHERE IS YOUR RAGE?

You chose your silence to partner with evil.
I stood alone. Only God can touch my depth of pain. Love was all I craved on this lonely path. I simply need to be seen!
My deserved rage hides my deep hurt. Words are futile. They carry no meaning, they just exist
Betrayal speaks in the pained dwelling of my silent scream.

Victoria Cubberley[60]

Introductory Comments

Betrayal speaks in the pained dwelling of my silent scream.

As I have been reading about the phenomenon of institutional corruption in the religious commons – especially at that crossroads in the toxic, enchanted forest of ordained clergy sexual abuse and institutional betrayal – I have come to the opinion that we are now at a transition point in our awareness of these issues as multi-dimensional, multi-systemic, multi-ideological, and, indeed, multi-theological. Where clergy or religious leader sexual abuse intersects with a morally corrupt religious institution, most particularly in the practices of institutionalized clericalism, we find a millennia-long pattern of protecting the religious institution at the cost of acknowledging and healing the wounds of such violence. We find dogged persistence in evil-doing rather than genuine repentance. We find past-tense apologies such as *mistakes were made.* We find meaningless lament services which do not change praxis. We find institutional and personal accommodation rather than accountability. In short, we find words rather than deeds.

Beginning in the 1970's and 1980's issues of corrupt clergy and religious leaders began to emerge into view from the mists of history *and* from the secretive self-protective practices of institutions such as congregations, seminaries, religious orders, and denominations. Nearly fifty years later, these kinds of issues continue to emerge. What is different in 2016 is that the world-wide Christian Church, led by its survivor-witnesses, is slowly rousing from its moral and ethical stupor – holding clergy and church leaders accountable for their moral failures and non-actions.

We now know that both kinds of abuse (sexual abuse and institutional betrayal abuse) are present inside religious and spiritual teaching organizations of many different faiths and institutions. We know, therefore, that the calcified organizational archetype is to protect the institution at all costs. We know this archetype includes protecting sexual abuse perpetrators *and* institutional betrayal perpetrators. We know that, in seeking to protect themselves, organizational managers attack victims seeking to vilify them, demean them, demonize them, denounce them, intimidate them, and silence them by denying the truthfulness of their lived life experiences.

In addition, we also know that institutions and their managers seek to protect themselves against whistle blowers inside and outside the organization. Here, too, institutions go into an attack mode by seeking to destroy the credibility of victim advocates, victim therapists, and other whistle-blowing bystanders. They do this by economic reprisals, character assassinations, and by spreading false rumors about the motivations of whistle-blowers, calling them anti-church or vendetta slingers. .

Medical and psychological sciences have made major strides in understanding the medical, the psychiatric, the social, the emotional and the cognitive aftermaths of trauma experiences in the lived life of victimized individuals. While there is some awareness of the religious and the spiritual sequellae of abuse inside religious and spiritual organizations, very little empirical research has been done to create and information base and subsequently to organize a taxonomy of sequellae. These are the necessary steps in order for us to develop reliable diagnostic and treatment methodologies.

In a similar manner trauma researchers have made major understandings of the realities of traumatic counter-transference or compassion fatigue in the lives of whistle-blowers, first responders, therapists, and refugee camp workers. While I think there is an intuitive awareness of clergy sexual abuse advocates and helpers of the need to take care of the internal psychic boundaries between themselves and those they help, very little has been written about the spiritual and religious consequences of their advocacy work *in their own individual religious and spiritual lives.*

I have argued in several previous manuscripts that it would be profitable in the study of trauma for whistle-blowers, advocates, attorneys, therapists, and first responders to form sustaining communities of support for each other as one way of managing compassion fatigue and traumatic counter-transference.[61] This model is somewhat based on theoretical and clinical work done at Harvard and Cambridge Hospital by various trauma researchers.[62]

In this monograph I begin to note that as important as our works of advocacy are, there is an important dimension to our work we have collectively have neglected – that is the work of theory building – which is essentially the work of documenting what we know and leaving cairns for future generations to learn from. I believe that we ought to be holding one or two day by invitation only advocate and helper retreats a year so we can begin to collect information about these issues of spiritual and religious wounds and sequellae which are emerging into our individual and collective awareness.

One way to frame such an issue is to focus on the spiritual and religious sequellae for victimized individuals in situations of clergy sexual abuses. A second is to focus on these sequellae in situations of institutional mismanagement of clergy sexual abusers, i.e., clericalism. A third (and perhaps more informative way to approach such an issue) is to focus on the spiritual and religious sequellae for the informed witnesses to such abuses: the victim advocates, the whistle-blowers, the therapists; the lawyers; the canon lawyers, etc. A fourth set of issues are lodged inside the church's attacks on whistle-blowers and advocates as they seek to support victims and to call for an end to corrupt practices of individuals and institutions. In short, we have four areas or loci of concern, four kinds of interpersonal situations in which religious and

spiritual sequellae can emerge as troublesome realities in the lives of ourselves and others.

> ➤ The survivors of clergy sexual abuse who experienced sexual violence first hand.
> ➤ The survivors of clergy sexual abuse who were subsequently betrayed, ignored, attacked, or in other ways institutionally abused by church managers and bureaucrats and by church insurance lawyers. This, too, is a first hand experience.
> ➤ Those who listen to the stories of clergy sexual abuse – therapists, lawyers, police officers, etc. This is second-hand knowledge – gained from careful listening to the survivors of victimization. The issue here is compassion fatigue or a secondary counter-transference phenomenon.
> ➤ The whistle-blowers who have been betrayed, ignored, and situationally attacked by corrupt church managers and bureaucrats, church lawyers, or church insurance policy lawyers in efforts to discredit their individual and collective witness against clergy sexual abuse. This is first-hand knowing.

In this monograph, therefore, I want to talk about the epistemology of knowing. By its nature it will be an introduction rather than an exhaustive treatment of the complex issues raised by these topics. One of my assumptions as I begin is that human knowledge and human knowing is never free of the related issues of ideology, culture, and various political dimensions of power. Human knowing therefore is always rooted inside the human body and inside human cultures.

What we know by personal experience is one kind of knowing. What we learn by listening to others is another kind of knowing. Finally, what we learn by verbal or other symbol abstractions is yet another kind. Often unrecognized is the body's own systemic knowing – its felt-sense intuitive knowing. Each kind of knowing, in my opinion, informs us in our awareness of issues, our decision-making and our relations to others.

The complexity of the human brain and the human body/mind and its ability ot learn and abstract basic principles means I don't have to jump off of a skyscraper to ascertain whether or not death will result from this action. I can learn by observation and by the collated wisdom of others. If needed, I can study mathematical formulas about gravity and discern that such jumping-off-skyscraper behaviors are both unwise and unsafe.

To be a bit more relevant to our topic: I can learn about post-traumatic stress disorder by (1) experiencing it for myself, (2) directly witnessing it in the lives of others who tell me about their experiences, (3) by doing primary research, for example, brain imaging, and (4) by reading textbooks and consulting with experts in this field of knowledge. Each method of knowing and learning will teach me some unique features of PTSD and each will reinforce other ways of knowing.

Religiosity and Spirituality

Our bodies are wise in ways which are hardly ever acknowledged by our culture. Our bodies carry knowledge about how we are living our lives, about what we need to be more fully ourselves, about what we value and believe, about what has hurt us emotionally and how to heal it, Our bodies know which people bring out the best in us, and which do not. Our bodies know the right next steps to bring us to more fulfilling and rewarding lives.

Ann Weiser Cornell[63]

Religious knowing and spiritual knowing are two separate kinds of human knowing. Religious knowing is rooted in institutional practices and theoretical formulations of doctrine and dogma. In short, being a religious person means that one is in some way or another connected with institutionalized forms of spirituality. Spiritual knowing, on the other hand, is more related to the inner life of the human soul. That which is spiritual in a human life is much more personal and much more intuitive than that which is religious. I believe, therefore, that it is possible to be religious without being spiritual and that it is possible to be spiritual without being religious. In general, however, religiosity and spirituality are mutually reinforcing and interpenetrating realities in human life.

But, that said, if we are going to begin to create a taxonomy of religious sequellae and/or a taxonomy of spiritual sequellae to clergy sexual abuse inside religious institutions and religiously-oriented organizations, we need to be clear about the language we are using and our methodological presuppositions. For example, a man who was raped by a priest in his childhood may be unable to tolerate being inside of a church building. His religious life and his communal social life are, therefore, deeply affected. Major changes have occurred in his ongoing institutional religious life. Perhaps he can not participate in the ceremonial life of his cradle church because he cannot tolerate being in proximity to religious rites and ceremonies. Maybe he cannot tolerate being near a priest. These all represent religious changes in his life.

If there is an accompanying sense of great loneliness, a great longing to be included, or a sense of personal alienation from (or even a deep intuition of being rendered unacceptable to divine love) then he has begun to touch the spiritual residue of (or sequellae of) his earlier abuse. If he finds himself totally estranged from his former self and from all abilities to trust himself or others, this too represents a spiritual consequence. If he believes himself to be unacceptable to the sacred or to the numinous, this too is a spiritual consequence.

Taxonomies of Religious and Spiritual Sequellae to Abuse

A taxonomy of religious abuse sequellae should be able to organize what we know about religious consequences of abuse in much the same manner that the

medical community has organized the body's symptoms of PTSD into recognizable, therefore, diagnosable categories. In a similar manner, a taxonomy of spiritual sequellae should help us to organize what we know and what we don't know about these troublesome consequences to sexual abuse done inside God's houses of religious practice and inside God's communities of religious propositional beliefs and practice.

It is my opinion that our sense of ourselves as religious beings is largely an inherited sense – reinforced by family and culture. Those of us with cradle faith communities likely have never known a week or a month without some form of religious practice. Our religious identity in childhood and in adolescence was, therefore, most likely a mirror image of our parents' and our community's religious identity and belief.

Our personal sense of the spiritual in our lives, our encounters with divinity, has been inevitably been shaped by the religious teachings we have encountered and will continue to encounter in our daily lives. It is quite likely, I think, that we come into the world as spiritual beings and then, as we are socialized to human culture, our spirituality becomes shaped by the religious institutions and the religious dogma which we encounter as we matured. Thus, if I am born into a Roman Catholic family, it is likely that my experience of my personal spirituality will be shaped by a sacramental type of individual spirituality. If I am born into a Hindu family, I and my spirituality will be shaped by a theology with many forms or aspects of divinity which would be completely foreign to a Roman Catholic individual and community'.

If, as a believing Roman Catholic child, I am abused by a priest or nun, my religious world and my spiritual world will be affected. As an adult I may no longer believe the propositional truths I was taught by priests and nuns. I see this as a religious consequence of abuse. If, however, in my state of post-abuse alienated disbelief, I find myself wordlessly longing for the rituals, sounds, and smells of worship as guide to my encounter with the divine. I may find myself longing for God. Or, I may find that I am homesick for my people. Estrangement from God and estrangement from God's people: these, to me, seem to be spiritual aftermaths rather than religious ones.

How I name the inner realities of my spiritual world, therefore, have been and are continuing to be shaped by the religious, therefore, institutionalized experiences of my life to date. While I may seized by spontaneous experiences of my spirituality – such as being overwhelmed by wordless awe at seeing a beautiful sunset over ocean waves – nevertheless how I explain such spontaneous experiences to myself and to others will be shaped by the religious language I have been given by my culture.

Dominican priest Father Thomas Doyle writes:

The church through its clerical leadership also has a very serious obligation to provide pastoral care and spiritual healing to the victim and to any one else harmed by the sexual abuse such as the victim's parents. Pastoral care is not equated with psychological counseling or the care provided by a physical. It is a unique kind of care offered by the religious leader to one whose moral and spiritual well-being has been gravely harmed by a cleric who committed the act of sexual abuse.

<u>The gravity of the obligation to observe the standard of care.</u> The gravity of the obligation can be estimated in part by the very serious harm that is inflicted on a minor who is sexually abused. That harm is greatly increased if the victim is a vulnerable, devout Catholic and the perpetrator is a priest. Catholics are taught to view priests with the highest degree of respect and furthermore are taught to place unquestioned trust in them. The priest is the Catholic's guide to spiritual security. He is the guarantor of favor with God, especially if the person has committed grave sins.

According to Catholic teaching and tradition sexual sins are always grave. Such sins, when committed by a priest are not only sinful in themselves but sacrilegious as well because the sacred nature of the priest. The priest's most solemn and sacred duty is not limited to carrying out specific tasks of the church. His most solemn duty is to lead and inspire by the integrity of his life. In fulfilling its responsibility the Church, through its leaders, must not give even the slightest impression that there is a double standard regarding sexual morality. It must not give the impression that sexual transgressions especially of the gravest kind are somehow excused if the perpetrator is a priest.[64]

On Encountering the Numinous

The body knows the situation.

Eugene Gendlin[65]

We encounter the numinous in our lives in many ways. The more languages we have at our disposal to describe these encounters to ourselves and to others, the more likely it is that we will encounter ever-deepening intuitions of the spiritual at work in sustaining our lives. That which is chthonic in our lives frequently has no cognitive or conceptual language to express itself. We simply know its presence by a felt-sense in our bodies.

I follow Rudolph Otto in these comments. A German Lutheran theologian of the early twentieth-century, Otto saw the holy as numinous – a non-rational, non-sensory experience or feeling whose primary object is outside the self. A numinous invasion, therefore, is not an emotional feeling that arises inside the body and has an object inside the body. This numinous mystery is, or can be, both fascinating and terrifying. The human being inside of numinous experience finds himself or herself in the presence of that which is completely and totally outside of the self and is, therefore, totally other.[66]

United Church of Christ minister Robin Meyers is correct I think when he asserts that propositional beliefs, for example the doctrinal creeds or confessions of faith, are not essential for a maturing spirituality and may, in fact, be detrimental to it. Insistence on belief in specific theoretical words, therefore, may be counterproductive to the development of a mature spirituality.[67] A certain rigidity in belief structures may, in fact, prevent spiritual maturity because the questions are all settled, indeed are calcified, by an abstract, formulaic and institutional praxis rather than by questioning and searching for answers to one's doubts, questions, and lived problems.

Felt Sense Knowing

> *The body senses the whole situation, and it urges, it implicitly shapes our next action. It senses itself living-in its whole context – the situation.*

Eugene Gendlin[68]

Gendlin, in the 1980s, began to explore embodiment as an essential component to human knowing. In any given interaction we human beings have with the world or with other human beings, the role of perception is critical. His initial research asked the question: what was it that made therapy successful or unsuccessful? As his theory evolved he came to the conclusions that in successful therapy clients were able to focus on what their body knew but which they had not yet put into words. Gendlin found that the successful patient focused inside himself on a very subtle and vague internal body awareness – *a felt sense* – which contained the information the client needed to attend to in order to get the key to his problem and its needed resolution. The felt sense of a matter is not an emotion. It is not a well-defined and well-articulated intellectual concept or idea or system of thought.

Rather, an individual's felt sense is an unclear and unclarified pre-verbal sense of something – an awareness that has not been thought-through and/or verbalized. The felt sense may be an emerging awareness of an old hurt, a complex awareness of a situation, or something that is forming in the form of an intuition or of a globalized awareness. A felt sense is, therefore, vague, unformed, unformulated, and usually unverbalized. It is that organismic, whole sense of a

matter, a deep and unworded intuition about what one is working on that one ma
not even know one is working on. [69]

Felt sense knowing includes body signals that when attended to enable us to
bring fuzzy, pre-cognitive knowing into focus; to bring preverbal awareness into
full cognitive formulation. This kind of information is intuitive, pre-logical, and pre-
cognitive. Felt sense knowing belongs to the embodied individual. It is felt in
body sensations that are vague yet able to be identified as the individual turns his
or her attention to them. Attempting to put the felt sense into language, the first
attempts are often incomplete…as if not quite right. Individuals will search for
language to describe the felt sense and it may take several attempts to get a
clear inner awareness of what the body, itself, is trying to communicate.

When we are intellectually stuck – having difficulty in solving an issue or a matter
in our lives, we can become aware of our felt sense of the matter, our deepest
intuitions by pausing to recognize and to listen to the body's felt sense of the
matter. I sometimes describe this process to myself when I am stuck and unable
to move ahead as a knotted and tangled ball of yarn which needs to be
unknotted or untangled and then deliberately re-wound in order to use the yarn. I
think of this as a process of intuitively identifying the beginning knot which must
be untied because it will lead me into other tangles and knots which can be
resolved one knot or one tangle at a time.

One author describes felt sense awareness as a kind of embryonic form of
awareness in which the body and the mind are not split and our awareness is a
different kind of knowing – on the border between our unconscious cognitive
processes and our conscious knowing. Felt sense knowing, therefore, lies
underneath our *everyday awareness of objects, thoughts, emotions, and
beliefs.*[70]

As one works with felt sense awareness, it becomes clear that an inner
resonance signals important materials or important pre-cognitions or important
intuitions. The felt sense, then, is tacit, embodied knowing, an internal form of
body knowing and awareness, and it includes the body's own, individuated sense
of knowing.[71] An important aspect of Gendlin's work is his insistence that the
body and cognition are not split apart. In Gendlin's work, the body extends
beyond the skin of the person and includes the situations in which the felt sense
arises and manifests itself.

One of the examples which he uses is the felt sense that one is in danger. The
body-self has captured something inside the environment or the situation that
alerts the body-mind that something is wrong in the surrounding situation. My
personal example of a felt-sense is that in the clinical presence of some clients,
the *fur rises on my back.* Since I am obviously not a primate with a coat of fur,
this felt sense is an evolutionary remnant that warns me not to trust the narrative
that I am being told and not to trust the person in whose presence my felt sense

or fur rising occurs. In general, this sense of fur rising on my back happens in the presence of individuals with severe character disorders, i.e. sociopaths. In addition, there can be a simultaneous felt sense that I should get my back against a wall – either metaphorically or in reality.[72]

Learning to work with felt sense knowing can include the following:

- Focusing on the body or doing a total body scan – asking what needs attention or asking where truth can be found
- Acknowledging in some way or another the felt sense – welcoming it as one's teacher
- Seeking words to describe the felt sense – this can also involve descriptive language such as symbols, images, or even a strong auditory sense of sound; in general, when one does this, the words at first are tentative, exploratory, vague and inconclusive. As one follows the felt sense, the body either accepts or rejects the word chain – all intuitively sensory rather than cognitively verbal.
- Just being with one's body wisdom – not seeking immediately to transform it into actions or problem solving – allowing the intuition to ripen

I got into this discussion of epistemology by backing into it. I cognitively knew, just as many others know, that there are religious and spiritual issue that are consequent to issues of abuse done by clergy. In reading the literature, however, the non-specificity of what I found was annoying. I had a deep intuition that this incompleteness is not a mistake or an accident. In addition, as a clinician I found myself longing to know more – a gut-level longing. Something deep inside of me – an aspect of myself without words – understood that this topic was not only important to others; it was important to me. I needed to understand this topic for my own healing. I needed to understand this topic to understand others and their needs for healing.

In studying and reading many different authors as they attempted to analyze the current crisis inside the Roman Catholic faith heritage, I kept stumbling across a deep longing to be a healer of their wounds, or at the very least, a facilitator of their healing. I kept saying a mantra to myself: *these persons are quite able to manage their own lives; they have not asked you for help.* Nevertheless, I kept encountering, even tripping over, deep intuitions about the woundedness of victim advocates, therapists, attorneys, and others who have confronted the Catholic hierarchy about the sexual abuse phenomenon that has so distorted and disrupted the Catholic community in America in the past 40 years. The felt-sense of longing to be helpful was a deeply rooted awareness that these healers and helpers were themselves wounded by their work accompanied by an equally deep felt-sense knowing that I was one of those wounded healers who needed to find healing for my own cynicism and negativity about the institutional church. In reading some authors, for example, or in hearing lectures and discussions, my deepest intuitions were about the cost of this work to the advocate's own

personal self, his or her spiritual self. I was certain some of these intuitions were in resonance to my own personal life experiences as a whistle-blower inside my cradle faith community.

Our individual and collective encounters with evil and our encounters with corrupted religious institutions have stripped us bare of the spiritual naïveté and denial of our cradle faith communities. The inner felt sense was that this encounter with the face of evil in a direct manner was an important and unaddressed aspect of the current clergy sexual abuse phenomenons in our religious denominations.

If we, the spiritual teachers and helpers of the survivors of sexual abuse were this deeply and religiously or spiritually wounded, how could we help others with their religious and spiritual wounds? I knew from years of clinical practice that if I (we) did not care for my (our) own wounds; I was and we were ineffective healers and perhaps even dangerous healers in our work with others.

In 2015, speaking at a SNAP conference ever so briefly about these issues of religious and spiritual sequellae, I was overwhelmed by the response of individuals in the audience. It was as if I had touched an exposed nerve or lanced a long-festering a boil. I who prefer anonymity in crowds was no longer anonymous. I who prefer remaining faceless and nameless in new situations was no longer faceless and nameless. People – known and unknown - kept coming up to me and asking me to talk with them further about the complex and interfacing issues I'd raised.

Gendlin talks about implicit intricacy. An embodied felt-sense comes to us as a relatively complete entity. We feel, we intuit, we hunch as if this kind of knowing was simple. But when we begin to examine these emerging realities in our body's sense of the situation, we find that many various aspects are all engaged inside the apparently simple intuition or hunch or sense of the matter. To use my earlier analogy, there are many knots contained within each felt-sense intuition. Gendlin says we might be able to cognitively name three or four aspects of the situation but that the felt-sense is much more complex than these three or four aspects. He encourages us to open the felt sense and to enter it, thereby discovering its wisdom for us in a given present moment or a given situation.[73] *Sensations and learnings come into a living body that is already elaborate. When we think, we work with more than just what came in from the outside.*[74]

The Situational Aspects of Felt-sense Knowing

Claiming that a *situation always involves some living thing that is in the process of organizing its future living,* Gendlin elaborates his belief that the current demands on human knowing and doing, by their complexity, demand newness. Newness arrives inside the container of felt-sense knowing. The breakdown of old patterns of perceiving and doing things are foretellers of the future which is

arriving. As we lose that which has meaning to us, or as it is destroyed by events in our lives, the human body is the source of our trauma. But the human body is also the source of that which is vitally alive and new. Not knowing what to do, we – our body – senses more that we can say with the old language we have been given by our culture and by our previous life experiences. Gendlin comments that we then often already have an unclear, indeed, pre-verbal sense of the solution we are seeking for.

Thus, the felt-sense way of knowing is the way of the body, the wisdom of the body as it guides our daily life and our daily interactions. It is the body's feeling sense of its accumulated wisdom. Buddhist teacher David Rome summarizes it up this way: *The body doesn't lie: whereas the conceptual mind often departs from reality.*[75]

Tacit-Knowing

> *We should start from the fact that we know more than we can speak.*
>
> Michael Polanyi[76]

If, as Polanyi taught, creative works and works of scientific discovery are charged with strong personal feelings and commitments, then in our study of the religious and spiritual sequellae we need to make a space for these non-objective aspects of research methodologies. Our informed guesses, hunches, and imaginings become part of the process by which we begin to know our world. Tacit- knowing, therefore, encompasses much more than we can state in propositional forms. In such a model, many bits of tacit knowing or tacit knowledge are brought together in the formation of new models and new theories. In 1967 he wrote:

> *The discoverer is filled with a compelling sense of responsibility for the pursuit of a hidden truth which demands his (sic) services for revealing it. His act of knowing exercises a personal judgment in relating evidence to an external reality, an aspect which he is seeking to apprehend.*[77]

In Polanyi's work, there is an emphasis on dialogue within an open community as an essential way for new knowledge to emerge. The *Infed.org* online encyclopedia notes that *he recognized the strength by which we hold opinions and understandings and our resistance to changing them.*[78]

Explicit Knowing

To confront consciously one's inner demons – the daimonic – takes great courage. It is an enormous struggle with who one really is and how one really feels, an arduous, demanding process in which pursuing or persisting in artistic work can be instrumental.

Steven A. Diamond[79]

Explicit knowledge or explicit knowing can be written down or spoken and transfers readily from person to person. An example can be quite simple, for example, the knowledge that Washington, DC is the capital of the United States Government. This kind of knowledge can be shared by means of speech or written letters. It can include verbal knowledge or symbolic knowledge such as mathematical formulas for gravity or relativity.

In repeated studies of creativity and great discoveries, it is well known that mastery of one's subject and diligent study over long periods of time are the foundation for scientific knowledge. Yet from Archimedes to Einstein, it is clear that the scientific method must include and make space for the intuitive, the informed hunch or even the mystical revelation. In his work on creativity, the philosopher-psychologist Rollo May stated that the emergence of the daimonic was always an aspect of genuine creation. Creativity is our human impulse, therefore, to give form, structure, and meaning to inner and outer chaos.[80] Great advances in human knowing – such as the theory or relativity or the nature of the human genome – have always made space for the intuitive inner guidance of a master scholar.

While we can conceptually separate explicit knowing from tacit-knowing, in practice they are related. To me, as I understand this arena of epistemology, tacit knowing precedes explicit knowing in many situations. This is one reason I like the Johari Window model for organizing human work. It makes space for that which is known and can be shared but it also makes space for that which is unknown and must be uncovered before it can be shared.

In general, then, explicit knowing includes the following aspects of knowing:

➢ That which is codified and can be readily transferred between and among individuals
➢ That which can be acquired by formal teaching, use of deduction, and informed skill transmission
➢ That which can be aggregated, stored, and appropriated at a later time

Tacit-Knowing

> *Knowledge management is the dynamic process of creating new knowledge, identifying sources of this new knowledge, and the elicitation and distribution of this new knowledge.*[81]

Tacit-knowing is knowledge that cannot readily be transferred from one person to another by only verbal or symbolic means. Yet, paradoxically, according to Polanyi, all human knowledge is rooted in tacit knowing. Tacit knowing includes a tacit feel for a situation or a subject. I see it as deeply intuitive but often unworded and unconceptualized knowing. After one has met and worked with 100 acutely psychotic patients, for example, one not only knows the theory behind therapeutic action, one has an inner guiding sense of what is needed even before one begins to intervene. A whole world of information is lodged within the body – much of it unworded. That sense of the therapeutic matter at hand is highly contextual – based on a situational reading of the entire milieu as well as of this individual. One is not only intellectually reading the patient's behavior: One is reading one's own internal responses and one's own personal reading of the matter as well. The body's knowing, therefore, is highly contextual and situational.

In dealing with suicidal patients, for example, nurses very rapidly learn to pay attention to their intuition about this patient *in this day in this situation*. If one overhears one's inner voice having a discussion about death vis-à-vis this client and one refuses to pay attention, a successful suicide or an unsuccessful suicide attempt may occur. In my experience, this inattention to one's own inner voice vis-à-vis the situation of a suicidal patient only needs to happen one time. From then on, the inner warning voice does not get ignored.

Tacit-knowing includes skill-based knowing. Playing a musical instrument, kneading dough, driving a car, and riding a bicycle are the ordinary examples used to illustrate this form of knowing. One cannot concentrate on the theory and do the task at the same time. I think about the medical and nursing models for skill development. First, one reads a procedure manual. Then, one observes a master teacher doing the skill (perhaps once, perhaps a hundred times). Finally one actually performs the procedural skill on a living, unique human being whose body rarely resembles the body in the procedure manual. As one does the procedure over and over, a set of skills and a set of intuitive knowledge develop over the repetitions. As my example, I personally recall learning to start intravenous medications. I did not like hurting people so I decided to become as skilled in this procedure as possible. I spent hours palpating my own veins to learn where they might be used if needed. I always took plenty of time palpating a patient's veins and I also asked them what they knew about their own body. Only when I was sure that I could "get in" on a first try did I proceed. Eventually, I did not have to think about the procedure but could think about the patient. I have not started an IV in years. But the skill is there and it could be called upon

if needed. It is now a combined form of explicit knowing, tacit-knowing and felt-sense knowing.

Tacit-knowing is, therefore, that which we know but which remains mostly pre-verbal. It is akin to felt-sense knowing but is somewhat different. It consists of assumptions, beliefs, mental models for organizing life, and other forms of knowing that are deeply intuitive – albeit interactive with – the external world at a preconscious or unconscious level of our personalities. It differs from propositional knowledge

Some individuals classify knowledge in this manner:

> Know that (factual knowing)
> Know who (networking knowledge)
> Know why (scientific knowing)
> Know how or embodied knowing (tacit knowing)[82]

Polyani believed that while declarative knowledge may be needed in the process of acquiring skills, once acquired, human being acquire nuances of awareness that may represent that which cannot be declared but simply sensed or utilized. How, for example, does a skilled master carpenter know which piece of wood to accept for a fine heirloom creation and which piece of wood to reject as unsuitable. This is a question of tacit knowing.

Another example: how does a therapist know when to abide by all of the rules for therapy and how does she know when, for this particular client, the rules must be broken in order for healing to occur? How, in making the decision to break a rule, does the healer avoid being abusive? These are all questions of tacit knowing done by a skilled practitioner with integrity.

The Johari Window

The Johari Window is an organizational management conceptual tool. It is used in team-building skill development. It is used in self-help groups as well as in organizational management team development. There are four quadrants or rooms.

> The first quadrant includes that which is known to self and others
> The second quadrant includes that which others know about us but that we do not yet know about ourselves
> The third quadrant includes things which we know about ourselves but that others do not yet know
> The fourth quadrant includes things which neither of us know about the individual's self

The goal of Johari window work is to increase (a) the amount of self knowledge that each individual has (2) the amount of knowledge about others that we have, and (3) to decrease the unknown or uncodified information which is active or interactive but unannounced in any given situation. When that which is unknown but interactive becomes known, the organizational management model hypothesizes, work units become more predictably productive because people have a more accurate or more informed sense of each other's abilities, capacities, strengths and weaknesses.[83]

The Sexual Abuse Phenomenons and Spiritual/Religious Sequellae

As I have thought about the work of survivor advocates and helpers of various sorts (canon lawyers, civil attorneys, therapists, whistle-blowers, etc), I have hypothesized that each individual has a cache of tacit knowledge and felt-sense information in addition to explicit knowledge which is factual and which can be or has been transferred to other people. This kind of complex knowledge is the foundation of our work on behalf of other people. In is usually factual expert knowledge built upon a solid foundation of intuitive knowing. Thus, for those of us who are experienced activists and advocates, our knowing is composed of factual knowledge, networking knowledge and scientific knowledge. It has a strong intuitional foundation of tacit-knowing and felt sense knowing.

I have come to believe, therefore, that there is a large body of tacit-knowing and felt-sense knowing that underlies the other forms of knowing. My own idiosyncratic way of expressing this is to say that each of us has a bank of knowledge and knowing that we don't yet know we know. It informs our actions but we have not codified it into explanatory language. It is pre-verbal knowing. Thus, we have been unable to directly transfer this knowledge to others.

Secondly, I have also come to believe that individually we probably cannot individually unearth this body of tacit-knowing or felt-sense knowing in order to codify it. Both Gendlin and Polyani emphasize the need for a community in order to free this pre-verbal, pre-conscious knowledge into codifiable language which can be transmitted by humans inside the greater communities of life and work.

Many, many years ago I was a participant in National Training Laboratories workshops – learning an organizational supervisory model for administrators. The NTL model was based on intensive group work and on intensive individual work. It was a form of encounter group learning. For 14 days the first time around and for ten days the second time around, I belonged to small groups which worked on developing organizational management skills. Both experiences transformed my own inner life as well as my patterns of getting work done inside organizations. I learned that while there were some things I could learn on my own, there were many skills I could only learn inside a group process model. Honing my innate abilities vis-à-vis intuition, I soon learned that the group always knew more than the individual. In a well-working and honorable group, there was

a form of serendipity that occurred. Once a basic layer of trust was well-established the group members individually and collectively could achieve in ways that did not occur in isolation or in groups where mistrust was the norm. Since I was only 26 years old at the time, these NTL gatherings became the foundation marker for my own administrative style. Inside these intense groups, I learned to intuit trustworthy and competent relationships as well as to intuit those which lacked integrity and were incompetent. In short, I learned about tacit-knowing and felt-sense knowing before I ever heard those words or concepts defined by master teachers.

I know from working in organizational roles for many years that the sum of what we collectively know in these intuitive forms is better harvested in group work rather than in individual work. There is something to be said for serendipity as we seek to understand complex intuitive knowing.

I can know, for example, that someone is abusive without having a shred of credible data. Something in my felt-sense awareness or my intuitive awareness alerts me to the hypothesis that this person is actively abusive. I may have absolutely no confirming data. Yet, there is a strong intuition not to trust this person. When this happens to me in professional and social environments, I simply pay attention in a different way to these interpersonal transactions. I become more alert – as I look for clues and for corroboration of my intuition. What I have discovered over the years, is that often – but not always – there will be a subsequent public revelation of abusiveness that does not surprise me even as it surprises many others. I am rarely fooled by pious language and God-talk when I sense the other is not honest in his dealings with people. What I have learned is that there are certain constellations of personal behaviors and attitudes that tend to accompany or to signal the presence of abusive behaviors.

Tentative Conclusion

I have come to a working hypothesis. If a group of informed individuals agreed to begin working together in an orderly and planned manner, the task of creating a taxonomy of religious sequellae and a taxonomy of spiritual sequellae to (1) clergy sexual abuse and (2) institutional betrayal abuse would begin to manifest itself in real work and in important work. Serendipity would happen and we could begin to harvest our felt-sense knowing and our tacit-knowing in order to create these taxonomies. These working taxonomies could then be the foundation for empirical research protocols. We could begin to move what we intuitively know about these difficult matters into codifiable language.

Until some of us take seriously the task of sitting with each other in intentional communities, we will be unable to harvest our vast store houses of felt-sense knowing and tacit-knowing. We will be unable, therefore, to begin real work on creating taxonomies of spiritual abuse sequellae and religious abuse sequellae.

Thus, little progress will be made in developing protocols methodologies for doing religious and spiritual healing work.

Additional Resources

Gendlin, E. T. (1982). *Focusing.* New York, NY: Bantam

Kuhn, T. S. (1962). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Polyani, M. and Sen, A. (2009). *The Tacit Dimension.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Weiser, A. C. (1996). *The Power of Focusing.* Oakland, CA: Harbinger Press

Chapter Three
Activism in a Mennonite Voice[84]

Introductory Comments

During the drive here from the airport on Thursday evening, I was reminded once again that clergy sexual violence and morally corrupted institutions both resemble Kudzu.[85] For those of you who do not recognize Kudzu, the Washington beltway was lined with it. It is an invasive vine that smothers and kills all other plant forms in its path. It must be aggressively and persistently managed to control its invasive and noxious presence.

Who are these Mennonites?

We Mennonites are the twentieth-first-century descendents of the 16th century Reformation Anabaptists. In many ways we are neither Catholic nor Protestant.[86]

In the sixteenth-century, our faith ancestors represented a radical divergence from both groups as early as 1530 or 1540. Roman Catholic *and* Protestant princes and priests hunted down, imprisoned, tortured and killed our ancestors.

Our principle differences in belief from the Christian majority include: (1) adult confessions of faith and adult baptism; (2) a radical separation of church and state; (3) a refusal to carry or use the nation-state's weapons; (4) communitarian discernment; and (5) discipleship – faithfully following in the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth.

Today, our Anabaptist faith family represents more than 1. 7 million baptized believers from 83 world nations. Approximately 2/3 of these are African, Asian, or Latin American.[87] Thus we are multi-colored, multi-gendered, and represent many of the world's language groups. Our international church's official languages are English, French and Spanish.

The Mennonite Church USA represents approximately 98,000 baptized members.[88]

We are one of Christianity's historic peace churches and our witness to the power of nonviolent, serving love has gone around the world.

Yet, inside our communal lives, we are interpersonally violent in multiple ways. Clergy and religious leader sexual abuse, incest, rape, domestic abuse, child sexual abuse, and spiritual abuse are all common. A small recent survey indicates that perhaps 1 in 5 Mennonite Church USA adults have been victimized by abuse and violence.[89] The majority of these victimized individuals are women and their children.

During the last week in July, 2015, the worldwide Mennonite church gathered in PA and in early July, 2015 the United States Mennonite Church met in MO. The problem of sexual abuse inside our world-wide communities was raised and addressed in both gatherings. The Anabaptist-Mennonite Chapter of SNAP was present at both as were representatives of other concerned Mennonite organizations.

This is a marked change from the summer of 1990 when I wrote an essay about family ethics for the Strasbourg World Conference of Mennonites which was held in France. In that essay I described and discussed the epidemic of family violence inside Mennonite communities. The editor of that collection was extremely displeased with me about the content of my essay. At the time there was internal dissent about including my concerns for this worldwide celebratory gathering of Mennonites. But this short essay was eventually published.[90]

To my knowledge, this was the first time – in a denomination-sponsored publication – that the worldwide Mennonite church was officially put on notice about the nature and quantity of affinity violence in the Mennonite world.

Who are God's People?

In light of Pope Francis' metaphor about *clerics needing to smell like their sheep*, we need to ask the question: "who are God's sheep today?" *W*e can extrapolate from the ancient prophet Ezekiel in Jewish scriptures and make a reasonable conclusion for the twenty-first century:

The sheep in God's contemporary flocks are those who have been plundered by their political and spiritual leaders. The people of SNAP – in this room and around the world – are, therefore, the people of God. Today's religious leaders have danced on your backs, raped your bodies, mis-appropriated and mis-spent your money, wounded your spirits and force-marched you into emotional, social and spiritual exile: thus, you know the evils of corrupt, organized religion in intimate ways – in your bodies and in your souls. [91]

Informed Activism

I think that informed activism about religious institution corruption in any and all of our various denominations looks remarkably similar.

These patterns of ecclesial corruption – including the idolatrous sacrifice of children on God's altars for institutional, sexual, political, economic, religious and personal power - were known to the Hebrew prophets and they were known to Jesus. Today they are known by every one us in this room.

My Conclusions

As a sexual violence activist, I have absolutely no doubts about two things:

These denominational sexual violence narratives are a pandemic reality – a world-wide phenomenon present in probably all religious and spiritual communities. The world-wide situation is worse than the flu pandemic of 1918 and this problematic behavior has been going on for millennia.

Secondly, the religious *and* the spiritual consequences of sexual violations in a religious context are serious ones. For my purposes today, I will call them *child and adult spiritual attachment disorders or child and adult religious attachment disorders.* Benkert and Doyle name them *religious duress disorders.*[92] Freyd names them *betrayal trauma.*[93] Winell names them *religious trauma syndrome disorders.*[94] The American Psychiatric Association DSM 4-r simply called them religious problems and spiritual problems.[95]

Whatever language we use to describe it, it is now clear: there is a religious trauma component *and* there is a spiritual trauma component in our human response to these forms of institutionalized violence.[96]

This kind of analysis leads me to two conclusions:

(1) Because of its pandemic nature and because of its serious health and social consequences, the phenomenon of sexual abuse inside religious communities needs the attention of the public health sector of our nation and the world.

Since the religious hierarchy will not volunteer what they know about incidence and prevalence data, we need a public health alliance to gather this data for us. We need the assistance of the Surgeon General of the United States and the research assistance of the National Institute of Mental Health.

(2) Those of us in this room with theological, spiritual direction, pastoral, and clinical degrees (and perhaps the lawyers as well) need to begin planned meetings around conferences such as SNAP We need extend our stay by 1-2 days so that we can work together in a concerted and deliberate effort to map what we know about religious trauma and spiritual trauma. Our purposes here are quite simple: (1) to build the body of knowledge that can support informed activism on behalf of victimized individuals *and* (2) to develop appropriate spiritual and clinical support services.[97]

We are, for God's sake, our various churches' theological, pastoral, spiritual, and clinical voices. If we don't do this work, it won't get done.

Additional Resources

Bloom, S. L. (Ed.). (2001). *Violence: A Public Health Menace and a Public Health Approach* [Forensic Psychotherapy Monograph Series]. New York, NY: Karnac Books,

World Health Organization (2002a). *World Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva, Switzerland.

World Health Organization (2002b). *Summary: World Report on Violence and Health.* Geneva, Switzerland.

Chapter Four
The Question of Soul Murder

Behold, the reign of God is within you.[98]

Introductory Comments

Quoting American psychiatrist Scott Peck's book, *The Road Less Traveled,* American author bell hooks lifts his definition of love: *the will to extend oneself for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth.* She continues to quote Peck: *Love is as love does. Love is an act of the will--namely, both an intention and an action. Will also implies choice. We do not have to love. We choose to love.*[99] Hooks continues on, now in her own voice: [*w*]*hen we feel deeply drawn to someone, we cathect with them; that is we invest feelings or emotion in them.*[100]

In a culture which often mistakes the intense feelings of cathexis and/or sexual attraction for love, it is good before we think about soul murder to think about love – the love of life; the love of family; the love of life partners; the love of siblings; the love of friends; the love of children; the collegial love for co-workers in the work we do; the compassionate love for those we serve – those who need our assistance in order to live and to thrive.

For many of us, when we think about love, we also need to include the love of that which is both transcendent and immanent; that which invades our individual and communal lives in so very many evanescent ways as to be un-nameable, ineffable, and, therefore, indescribable. When the un-bidden, un-known and un-knowable enters, there is a sense of the uncanny or even a sense of the deep and dense unity of all things.

In the course of our ordinary lives, we may not even notice or recognize this always present but unknown and unnamed presence. While, for many of us, this transcendent reality is a noun – a literal and transcendent being that lives somewhere on the other end of the sky, I tend to think of it as an active constantly creating verb inside the human commons. I am, therefore, quite comfortable with Paul Tillich's identification of this creative transcendent impulse or force in our lives as the very *ground of our being, as being-itself.*[101] To me, God is, therefore, the infinite, creative, and active power of being or constantly changing presence and consciousness. This power of being is in opposition to or resistive of those actively harmful cultural forms or to those static archetypal social realities which are destructive to human welfare and which function to create non-being.[102]

Hooks continues:

> *When we understand love as the will to nurture our own and other's spiritual growth, it becomes clear that we cannot claim to love if we are hurtful and abusive. Love and abuse cannot coexist. Abuse and neglect are, by definition, the opposite of nurturance and care.*[103]

Asking the question, what it means to be spiritual, hooks continues to rely on Peck. The spiritual dimension of our human lives *is that core dimension where mind, body, and spirit are one.*[104] Implicitly, therefore, hooks identifies and conflates experiences of human spirituality with human experiences of unity rather than with our rather more ordinary human experiences of fragmentation, disunity, discord, separation, dislocation, disconnection and dissociation.

In my opinion, hooks properly emphasizes that in our discussions of love, abuse, and the soul, we human beings do not need to be religious to be spiritual beings. Therefore, we do not need institutions to mediate our inner awareness of that lived inner sense of unity and transcendence – known to Amerindians as the *Great Spirit;* sometimes known in historical Judaism as the Unutterable Name; known to contemporary Christians as God; known to many new age contemporary feminists as Goddess; known to Tillich and other existentialists as the Ground of Being; known in Islam as Allah; and understood among America's ubiquitous twelve step recovery movements as the Higher Power.

Consequently, in hook's opinion, we do not need religious institutions to mediate our loving relationships with others. In addition, we do not need these same institutions to mediate or control these deeply personal experiences and expressions of our individual spirituality. As I write, I recall that in Christian scriptures, the human teacher Jesus said to his disciples, *where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them.*[105] Two or three do not constitute a politicized global and monolithic, organized, institutionalized religion.

In a speech given in Dublin in 2013, Father Thomas Doyle, a friar in the Dominican order, dissected the word *church.*[106] According to Doyle, in Roman Catholic theology and praxis, the word church can represent multiple overlapping meanings:

➢ Church can represent buildings – wood and stone cathedrals for example;
➢ Church can represent the organizational or institutional structures of management, for example diocesan managerial organizational entities led by a bishop and a world-wide church headed by the pope;
➢ Church can represent the church's hierarchical and patriarchal managers themselves – the pope, cardinals, and bishops;

- ➢ Church can represent the clerics, the ordained caste of priests and vowed, celibate religious men;
- ➢ Church can represent the people or disciples Jesus gathered around him and his teachings during his lifetime
- ➢ Church can represent the amorphous and mystical body of Christ - the people through two millennia who have been or are drawn by Jesus' life and spiritual message; the people he and his teachings continue even now to gather into communities around the world.

Doyle quite properly points out that the human man, Jesus, did not establish the Roman Catholic Church (or indeed any Christian Church) in its historical or current institutional form. He notes in addition that for any organized religion, to exist, it must have the power to create and shape reality for individuals *and* for entire communities.

In organized, institutional religion, for example, in order to gain eternal salvation individuals must believe in the institutional teachings of the church's hierarchy and its institutional managers. Without the church as institution and the hierarchical managers of the church, such as its bishops, there is no salvation.

Noting that many religious teachings in his faith tradition are designed to maintain and reinforce institutional power, Doyle comments that the primary source of Catholic lay spirituality, therefore, is lodged within the religious institution and its ordained hierarchy. Consequently, inside institutionalized religious experience *lay persons need ordained and consecrated priests to communicate with the Higher Power.* Inside this kind of theology is the embedded premise that popes,., bishops, priests, and cardinals control the delivery system for lay spirituality and for human salvation.

Doyle directly counters this ideology of institution-mediated eternal salvation when he says, w*e do not need priests, bishops, cardinals or popes to communicate with the higher power….I've been a priest for a long time. You do not need me to do the right thing. You need to look at your own soul.* He goes on to comment that authentic spirituality is not a pyramidal spirituality in which divine power flows downwards from the church's ruling hierarchy through layers of institutional managers into the laity.

Rather, radical spirituality (the spirituality of Jesus' teachings) is horizontal and innate. Every human being has some connection to the spiritual reality or the non-material aspects of human life. Thus, the mystical presence of God is within.

The hallmarks of this other-than-institutionally-mandated spirituality are charitable altruism and compassion. Essentially, a spiritual person is always in the process of becoming the person she or he was created to be by the immanent presence of the divine Spirit. Authentic spirituality, therefore, is necessarily personal rather than institutional.

However, even as I accept hook's and Doyle's assertions about religionless spirituality, I think it is important to note as contemporary moderns and post-moderns that much of our daily lives will be lived within the context of institutions. For most of us, therefore, our spiritual lives will be modulated or moderated by our ongoing encounters with religious institutions and organizations.

Thus, we need to understand their influence on our concepts and on our lived experiences of love, care, nurturance, service, and compassion. We need to understand their pyramidal structures of power, control and authority in order to understand their inherent capacity and inclinations to abusiveness, secrecy, competitiveness, spiritual intimidation, and even overt criminality. We need to understand, therefore, institutional manifestations of situational and structural abuse.[107] This is especially true in situations where religious or spiritual teaching institutions are, themselves, abusive in the name of God, in the name of that which is transcendent.

It is always in an institution's best interests to maintain itself across time and space. Institutional managers are hired who understand and can effectively promote this basic principle of institutional survival. Thus, by means of these successive generations of managers, institutions seek to avoid negative publicity. This is simply the nature of pyramidal institutions in patriarchal cultures.

This inherent nature of institutions means that every community needs an active culture of informed critique – the watchdog function – which helps to keep institutions and their managers honest. The more powerful and wealthy the institution in the human commons, the more its surrounding community needs to be attentive and watchful. In short, just as powerful individual leaders need to be held accountable to the commons for their private or personal actions so too do managers of powerful institutions need to be held accountable for their actions on behalf of the institutions they control.

This watchdog principle is as true of religious institutions as it is of secular ones. The temptations inside all institutions to abuse human power and authority for personal gain are always present. When institutional abuse is done in God's name, the emotional, psychological and spiritual damages to the institution's individual and communal victims can be quite profound.

Spirituality and the Soul

Nobody knows what the soul is.

Mary Oliver[108]

Doyle defines spirituality *as the invisible life of the human soul.* Spirituality, therefore, *is an acknowledgment of our personal and individual connection to or connectedness with a higher power, with that which is outside the self.* In this presentation, Doyle does not, however, discuss the location or the nature of the human soul.

On the other hand, in bell hook's concern for the sub-definitions for the complex word *soul,* she helps us to understand what she is talking about in the language of human love. She notes definitions of soul that include the following:

➢ An animating principle of the self
➢ The life-force itself

Online dictionary definitions for the word *soul* are equally abstract and, therefore, elusive

➢ The spiritual, thus immaterial part of a human being or animal
➢ Thought to be the eternal aspect of a human being or animal
➢ The spirit or essence of a person
➢ The principle of life, thought, feeling and action in humans but separate from the body, therefore immortal
➢ The spiritual aspect of a human being or other living animal
➢ The quality of being alive, perhaps, equated with breath?

By following the chain of human-invented words related to the word *soul*, we have circled back to that always elusive word *spiritual.* Twentieth-century philosopher-theologian Mary Daly in her books and public lectures has taught her listeners and her readers that the way we theologians and clinicians understand and use words in our work is important. An examination of a word's synonyms, antonyms, and verbal extensions needs to be followed closely in order that we can come to a common agreement about what phenomenon(s) we are seeking to understand.[109]

Online dictionaries define *spiritual* in the following ways:

➢ Of or relating to the human spirit or soul
➢ Related or joined in spirit
➢ Of or relating to supernatural beings or phenomena

- Of or relating to sacred matters
- In opposition to material or physical things
- Non-material, incorporeal, intangible, inner, transcendent,
- Otherworldly, mystical, metaphysical, extramundane
- Of or relating to religion or religious belief
- Sacred, divine, holy, non-secular
- Ecclesiastical, faith-based, devotional
- Relating to the human soul or spirit
- Of, or relating to, religion or to religious beliefs

When we seek out the dictionaries' synonyms for the word spiritual we find a cachepot of words whose meanings, in my opinion, are diffusely vague to most Westerners. Some of the following are, in fact, downright unappealing to the contemporary Western mind and imagination. As we proceed, therefore, we need to keep in mind the definitions we use because these human-defined words shape what we can know and how we can know it.

- Metaphysical
- Sacred
- Divine
- Holy
- Intangible
- Airy
- Discarnate
- Disembodied
- Ethereal
- Ghostly
- Immaterial
- Noncorporeal
- Nonphysical
- Rarefied
- Refined
- Unfleshly
- Unphysical

The antonyms for the word *spiritual* are much sharper and, therefore, simpler to understand:

- Physical or material things as opposed to the human spirit or soul
- Secular – as opposed to religious beliefs

When we examine these collected words, what becomes immediately visible is a linguistically embedded and pervasive set of Western dualisms: the body versus the soul; the secular versus the religious; the material world versus the spiritual world; the profane versus the sacred.

What happens, in my opinion, by mistaking words in their poetic and metaphoric usage for a too-literal usage, is that we lose touch with the physical-spiritual realities of human embodiment. We lose touch with the reality that there needs to be a human body for a human soul to exist. There needs to be corporality for spirituality to exist. Thus, the human soul is, of necessity and by definition, an embodied soul.

New age thinkers and writers often raise the question of human nature as they ask who we human beings are. In general, their conclusion is that we are spiritual beings on a human path rather than physical beings on a spiritual path. My personal reply to this conundrum is to assert that we human beings are simultaneously both/and rather than either/or.

The complex question of the human embodiment of souls has preoccupied Eastern and Western philosophers for centuries. Eastern philosophies tend toward a belief in a pre-existent soul which repeatedly reincarnates inside successive sentient, not necessarily human, bodies. Western philosophies influenced by Christianity tend towards a belief in resurrection of the ensouled body at the end of time. Western iconic imagery, for example, often pictures hell as a place of tortured bodies.

It is probably necessary, therefore, before proceeding to declare myself. I do not believe there can be living human beings without souls. In a similar way I do not believe there can be human souls without full embodiment. I am personally agnostic on the topic of soul life after death. I do not, however, believe in the literal resurrection of dead physical bodies. In a similar manner, I have great trouble wrapping my mind around the issue of multiple, successive, embodied reincarnations for the same soul. Thus, I have personal troubles in believing in past lives as influential realities in current lives.

To use a much older concept, *human ensoulment*, once human life is created by the formation of a human zygote from male and female gametes in sexual intercourse (or, alternatively these days, by in vitro fertilization) and, therefore, ensouled, it becomes impossible to separate the living human body from the living human spirit; cognitive thoughts from emotions, and the physical body from its life-force…..except in metaphor or in literal physical death.

Fragmentation and Unity

The dearth of spiritual guidance in our lives was surpassed only by the emotional poverty of this feeling of great loss.

Paul Fericano[110]

Most of the world's contemporary religious and spiritual traditions teach us about unity and about oneness. While the lived trajectory of our lives is often fragmented, we intuitively know that prolonged and/or intense experiences of fragmentation (and its accompanying internal sense of dislocating alienation) are disruptive to our physical wellness and emotional wholeness as individuals. Stopping even momentarily to think about these matters, we intuit they are spiritually disruptive as well.

We know that life events which foster alienation, fragmentation of the personality and dissociation inside an individual's life narratives are individually and collectively disruptive in natural human groupings such as family networks or friend networks. Individual and social fragmentation and alienation are, therefore, immensely disruptive realities to the human psyche and to the human community.

No literal language captures the intense disruption of the inner world when we humans are thrust into unexpected situations of betrayal, violence, trauma and our subsequent or consequent internal experiences of cognitive dissonance – of our need to make sense of that which seems most senseless to us. When, as Jewish-Hindu spiritual teacher Ram Das suggests, we are thrust into very human situations in which life events are unbearable to us, it is our very ordinary human task to learn how to bear the unbearable and then to bring our daily lives back to the mundane and to the ongoing. We are not unscathed in these events of our lives. Nevertheless, if we are to go on living and if we are to make meaningful sense of our lives, we must set ourselves to the task of healing and to the tasks of resolution.

We can be deeply and permanently wounded by life's events and we can paradoxically choose to live lives subsequent to those events that demonstrate courage and wholeness and even wellness in the midst of our brokenness. We can learn from our personally experienced wounds about how to be compassionate with the wounds of others. But first we must learn compassion for the Self. We must learn how to grieve our losses. We must learn how to let go of our attachment to the life trajectory that has been dismantled by life and life's realities. We must grieve for the life that is not now and can never again be our life. And, having grieved that which is forever gone, then we must make the decision to persevere and to live the best possible life we can construct for ourselves out of the rubble of our lost life and its lost opportunities.

Hecate's Crossroads

> The *world breaks everyone and afterwards many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break, it kills.*
>
> Ernest Hemingway[111]

When we are forced by life's circumstances to change the ongoing direction or anticipated trajectory of our lives because the unbearable and the unthinkable have happened, we are essentially cast into that situation which the ancients called Hecate's crossroads.[112] The way back to where we were before traumatic life experiences changed us is closed. We cannot go back to who we were before. We cannot continue the life trajectory we were previously on. We must, therefore, choose a new pathway into our future. As a consequence of the traumatic event(s) and our ongoing life choices, we will become, therefore, someone we did not know before traumatic event(s) entered and abruptly changed our life trajectory without our consent.

For example, clinically I once knew a young adult who, as a child, had needed to have a leg amputated to save his life. His parents had made this decision for him since at the time of the amputation he had been too young to give informed consent. He barely remembered, he told me, what it was like to have two good legs. But sometimes, he said, he dreamed he was running free.

His young adult dexterity with his artificial leg and occasional uses of a cane or crutch was amazing. His parents, his medical team and he, himself, had diligently applied himself to rehab in order that his ongoing adolescent and later his adult life could have independence and freedom. He was never going to have an adult life with two biological legs. But he was going to have a whole life – an adult life filled with meaning and purpose.

I think, as well, of former United States Senator Max Cleland who was wounded in combat in Vietnam and who later wrote the book *Strong at the Broken Places.*[113] At age 25, both legs were amputated along with his right forearm. The book's title is taken from Ernest Hemingway's quotation in the novel, *A Farewell to Arms.* Cleland's life in the ongoing aftermath of these amputations has been filled with vitality and active service to others.

We human beings are profoundly social. We cannot exist in absolute separation from others. Our very survival as physical organisms is dependent on the care of others and this is true no matter how independent we believe we are. It is true no matter how deep or long-lasting our wounds received at other's hands.

In addition, our individual consciousness is continually being shaped by the collective consciousness of the whole – the people in whose midst we live. Much like the Mobius-strip, the consciousness of the collective and the consciousness of the individual are but aspects of the greater consciousness of the whole.

Thus, it becomes clear: experienced trauma in the life of one individual inevitably affects the life of the collective in which that individual lives. In a similar manner when we begin to heal our own individual lives, that healing spreads out into the commons.

Body and Soul

When we do this kind of close look at how we human beings define the body, the human spirit, the soul, and the life-force, it becomes clear; the human body cannot literally be separated from its life-force or its invigorating spirit or its soul except in physical death. In a similar way inside embodied human life, that which is sacred cannot be disembodied from the physical world of body and the social world of culture in which the sacred is received and perceived.

What we are talking about in *soul murder* is therefore a very painful and extreme metaphor for the intense alienation of the self from the body; of the body from the mind; of the body-self from the spiritual-self, of the person from his or her people. We are talking about a highly disrupted and disruptive narrative of the self – a narrative of alienation, estrangement, fragmentation, dissociation, and separation rather than a narrative of unity and wholeness. This disruption and its concomitant experiences may be self-identified as a religious problem or it may be self-identified as a spiritual problem.

In addition, we are also talking about experienced reality in which an individual's ongoing life has been interrupted by the disruptive. This can be a natural disaster such as Hurricane Katrina or it can be acquaintance rape. The life trajectory which pre-existed the disaster has been interrupted in a traumatic fashion. This means that the life trajectory has been unalterably changed or affected. The individual who exits the traumatic event is not the same individual who entered it. Therapists, therefore, note the proximity of intense grief reactions to trauma reactions. A comment is sometimes made that the clinical or therapeutic disciplines of traumatology[114] and thanatology[115] are deeply interconnected. As I think about this clinical wisdom, one of the aspects or manifestations of this interconnection is lodged within the the survivor's need to grieve that which has been lost.

In the chapters which follow, we will examine these two categories (spiritual alienation and religious alienation) in more depth.

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Chapter Five
Narrative, Thick Description and Autoethnography

> *Autoethnographic personal accounts are professional contributions in their own right.*

> Neimeyer, Botella, Herraro, Pacheco, Figueras, and Werner-Wildner[116]

Introductory Comments

While many scientists in many academic disciplines distrust research subjects' self-reports or a personal narrative construction and analysis, I firmly believe in the study of sexual violence, we must listen to two narratives: (1) the narrative of the individual who has been abused and (2) the witnesses[117] internal narrative as he or she re-tells and re-listen to the other's stories of abuse and violation. Inside these two narratives, the malicious and malignant faith of the whole is embedded. To deconstruct and then learn how to understand that embedding, what is needed, in my perspective, is a combination of research methodologies:

- ➢ Quantitative research – most specifically demographic research to establish stratified incidence. What groups are most at risk, for example, for harboring and subsequently concealing the sexual abuse of children? Are there statistically significant differences between, for example, rates of victimization inside the Western Rite Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Rite Orthodox Church? If so, what accounts for these differences? How do these compare with the Anglican or Episcopal experiences?
- ➢ Quantitative research regarding treatment modalities and success rates – this is the medical model for establishing treatment protocols
- ➢ Qualitative research including longitudinal studies of survivors through the life span – somewhat on the model of Erikson and Erickson[118]
- ➢ Qualitative research including autoethnographic writing by survivor advocates and survivors
- ➢ Theo-historical research into the long history of clergy sexual abuse inside Christianity and its theological justifications and foundations – the long taproot which sustains sexual abuse and institutional abuses[119]

Autoethnography

Autoethnography emerged in the 20th century as a methodology for harvesting the wisdom of a human life and its narrative structure as it has been lived, as a given human being constructs the meaning of that life. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) define autoethnography.

> *Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience.*

This approach challenges canonical ways of doing research and representing others and treats research as a politically-socially-just and socially-conscious act. A researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and to write autoethnography. Thus, as a method, autoethnography is both process and product.[120]

These authors note that in the mid-1980s, social scientists among others began to note that so-called objective research methods often contained the paradox that the researchers' vocabularies and research paradigms were, in and of themselves, not objective. Human narrative stories, most particularly interactive human narrative stories such as sexual violence accounts, therefore, began to be realized as *complex, meaningful and useful phenomena that taught morals and ethics, introduced unique ways of thinking and feeling and helped people make sense of themselves and others.[121]* Such an approach acknowledges *subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence* on the research process.[122]

I am drawn to this kind of qualitative research and writing, particularly in complex subjects such as the sequellae to human sexual violence and the sequellae to institutional forms of structural and betrayal violence. My personal theoretical model is that in the experiences and interactions of sexual abuse survivors with their helpers *and* in the interactions of institutional abuse survivors with helpers, therapists, lawyers, and other advocates, a hologram of abusive experience is eventually created in the interface between the narrator-creator and the narrator-receiver. This is, I believe, particularly true when the human trauma experience has been activated by multiple forms of violence: physical assaults; institutional socio-economic attack behaviors; interpersonal betrayals; and institutional betrayals.

The two narratives (of the victim and of the victim's helpers) are not the same for both individuals inside the interaction but they contain many of the same themes As Herman and her associates note, survivor helpers and survivor advocates often begin to carry the devastating story of victimization as if it was their own story.[123] This is the exquisitely precise nature of counter-transference trauma, secondary trauma or compassion fatigue. Thus, I believe one way to understand the emotional, spiritual and religious sequellae of clergy sexual abuse and abusive institutional clericalism is for victims' helpers to examine their own individual life stories vis-à-vis these professionally-received client abuse stories as a way of generating paradigms or models to be explored inside more traditional research approaches.

In addition, as an American feminist, I am deeply influenced by my perception that there is no personal reality that is not simultaneously a social or political reality. While the sexual abuse of an individual is a deeply personal experience of the embodied self, it is simultaneously a deeply embedded socio-cultural meme, i.e., a political one. The same is true – perhaps even more so – in human experiences of abuse, betrayal and criminal malfeasance by institutions such as

denominational churches and their church-affiliated organizations such as colleges, hospitals, relief agencies, homeless shelters, etc.

As we begin, therefore, to study the long-term spiritual and religious sequellae of (1) clergy sexual abuse and (2) institutional betrayal of the victims of clergy sexual abuse, one place to begin to understand these somewhat indescribable consequences is from the inside our own life stories. For it is a truism that sexual victim advocates, in their work to help the victims of sexual abuse, have also been much abused by the institutional church. Even as institutional betrayal of victims and survivors litters the religious landscape, so, too, does institutional betrayal of victim and survivor advocates litter and pollute the institutional, religious landscape. .

Victim advocates often carry hundreds or perhaps thousands of client stories. Compassionate listening means (in and of itself) that these stories become a part of our lived internal life narratives. Our knowledge as professional and volunteer care-providers of these degrading and horrifying stories is part of the reality of our professional and personal lives. Not only do victims and survivors encounter, for example, the issue of assumption-shattering. So, too, do we - their helpers.

To avoid compassion fatigue and professional burn-out we must learn how to titrate the impact of these stories on our own psyches, spirits, and relationships with others. The goal of healing work is not to create more victims. The goal of all healing work and victim advocacy work is for victims to learn how, as Jewish-Hindu spiritual teacher Ram Dass so eloquently and so succinctly puts it, *to bear that which is unbearable.* Increasingly, I have thought this is also an essential task for healers and survivor advocates. Indeed, more recently I have come to conclusion that it is a task for the violence and violation-embedded community as a whole.

Refusing to listen to and then speak the truth about violence inside our individual lives and inside of our communal lives means that we betray those victimized others who have been violated. By our silence, we become complicit with their victimization. This is as true for entire communities as it is for individuals. Seeking to maintain an intact assumptive world for our own lives as individuals and as communities, we participate in acts of betrayal that intensify the anguish of those who have previously been victimized by sexual perpetrators and sexual predators.

Just as survivors of sexual violation must find their own way back into speech about the terrible events which have happened to them, so too must helping individuals and entire communities find their own way to acknowledge and speak about these matters. In religious communities which emphasize God's love and human compassion for the wounded and vulnerable other as mirror images of each other, our individual and collective refusals to recognize victimized

individuals and our proclivity to blame victims must both be repudiated as a participative form of evil.

Thus, in my introductory comments to this book, I began with my own experienced situation of institutional betrayal as a way of opening the conversation about the meanings and impact of religious institution betrayal on the lived faith experience and the internal experience of one's individual's shattered spirituality. At various places in future chapters I will stop and do more of this kind of personal excavation and exegesis.

Methodological Considerations

It is very clear to me that no one story of sexual abuse by clergy encompasses the human response pattern to such abuse. In a similar way no one story of institutional betrayal in the wake of clergy sexual abuse encompasses all potential stories. Each individual – sexual abuse victim or sexual abuse victim advocate – has an individual religious and spiritual response to the content of the abuse narrative. Sexual abuse experiences and the experiences of being institutionally abused are *forms of existential life crises after which life does not seem quite the same.*[124] Their after-effect lingers as the individual must, retrospectively, make sense of their experienced presence inside a life narrative. Ellis, et. al. calls these experiences *life-epiphanies.*[125]

In utilizing ethnographic methodologies, researchers seek to explore and to understand a particular culture in order to explain that culture to both insiders and to outsiders. When researchers utilize autoethnographic research methodologies, Ellis, et al. write:

> [*T*]hey *retrospectively and selectively write about epiphanies that stem from or are made possible by being part of a culture and/or possessed by a particular cultural identity.*[126]

In addition, autoethnographic researchers also interrogate and then analyze the narratives for the truth or meaning contained in them. One of the methodologies used is what anthropologist Clifford Geertz calls *thick description.*[127]

The underlying methodological concern in autoethnographic research, as I understand it, is that the narrative story needs to be harvested in order for its collective wisdom to be unearthed. When this happens, it begins to be possible to formulate questions to be studied by means of other research methodologies – methodologies based on collective experience rather than the individual narrative.

Thick Description

In his 1973 book *The Interpretation of Culture* American anthropologist Clifford Geertz described think description as a methodology for understanding the complexities of human behavior (as individuals or as entire cultures) in terms of the behavior's socio-cultural context. The interaction of individual or collective behavior and the surrounding culture, therefore, is the subject matter of thick descriptive approaches such as autoethnography as a research methodology. This kind of a methodological approach is, therefore, best described as a form participant observation research.

The Robert Wood Johnson Research Foundation states:

> *Thick description is a way of …achieving a type of external validity. By describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people.*[128]

The Foundation continues:

> **Thick description** *[emphasis theirs] is a detailed account of field experiences in which the researcher makes explicit the patterns of cultural and social relationships and puts them in context.* [129]

For Geertz and his followers, the task, therefore, is to extract the meaning structures that both encircle and inculcate or constitute a particular cultural narrative. I think this is an important addition to our discussion of these research issues to date. Because sexual violation interrupts the assumptive frameworks of victims' and survivors' psyches and lives it is essential to understand the narrative structure of the trauma as it has been experienced and then re-constructed after the traumatic event is over. A similar reality exists in relationship to institutional abuse and betrayal which is often secondary to the physical violation.

As we begin to examine more closely the religious and spiritual sequellae of (1) clergy sexual abuse in the context of religious and spiritual teaching institutions *and* the spiritual and religious sequellae to survivors and their encounters with clericalism-corrupted institutional structures, the methodologies of thick description and autoethnography can assist us to unearth the complexities of these little understood phenomenons.

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Chapter Six
Mid-sentence Musings and Reflections

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[T]o see the world as it really is, is devastating and terrifying….it makes routine, automatic, secure, self-confident activity impossible….

Ernest Becker[131]

Reflections

For me, personally speaking as a woman peace-studies activist, as a sexual violence victim's advocate, as a retired psychiatric-community mental health nurse, as a retired college peace studies professor, and as a pastoral thealogian, I have had the least introduction to and exposure to the shattered assumptions model.[132] Only as I began to do this current literature review, have I re-encountered Janoff-Bulman's work – first of all in other people's writings and then by reading her work for myself.

Ironically, in light of my prior superficial awareness of this model, at this moment it seems to me that it might be the most efficacious model for exploring, researching, and coming to better understand the religious and spiritual aftereffects of religious abuse and spiritual abuse. These religious and spiritual aftermaths of sexual abuse inside religious institutions such as churches, ashrams, zendos, or other spiritual teaching centers include, but are not limited to, a loss in faith propositions or doctrinal presuppositions. It is common to hear sexual violence survivors talk about their loss of trust in the institutional church or their lost trust in the church's propositional teachings about itself, God, and the human path to salvation in this life and in the afterlife. It is much less common in the public domain to hear survivor describe the internal whirlwind of spiritual devastation these acts of clergy sexual violence create.

In particular, I have found that a shattered assumptions model personally helps me to explain (to myself and others) certain aspects of my personal life. Since, with this book, I've begun more deliberately to do autoethnographic reflections and writing, I include my life's personal experience as one window into the deep personal taproots of my knowledge and my theory-construction. In choosing to do this kind of scholarship, I am guided by the feminist dictum: *the personal is political*. I am guided by feminist praxis. No woman's story represents every other woman's story. In our unique human stories, however, the faith of the whole, our shared culture, is always present.

In a certain metaphorical sense, this monograph has been constructed on an intellectual loom and I am the weaver who shuttles the multiple and variegated yarn strands into place – the yarn strands of my personal life and its experiences with deeply upsetting and traumatic evens and the yarns of my professional life in which I have been a witness to traumatic events and traumatic life histories in the lives of others. Thus, deeply personal inner experience is woven together with outer observed experiences of others from the various communities of my personal and professional lives. In seeking to understand others, I also seek to understand my self. In working to understand and to heal my own spiritual and emotional wounds, I seek to become a more knowledgeable and more compassionate witness to the spiritual and emotional wounds of others.

In this chapter I include, therefore, some vignettes from my personal life's encounters with traumatic life events. They provide me with a frame for my personal investigations into these matters of religious and spiritual abuse sequellae. For readers who find personal self-revelation in professional academic work to be irrelevant, intellectually narcissistic, or academically unacceptable, these deeply personal sections in this chapter can be skipped. But as they are skipped, some threads in the loom remain outside the pattern and are, therefore, not integrated into the whole.

These events from my personal life, therefore, frame my professional work of bearing witness to human suffering in the lives of others. They frame my work as a healer. Such intricate and complex loom work is, I am now convinced, an intellectual template which could reasonably and helpfully guide our individual and collective investigations into the spiritual and/or religious trauma wounds in the aftermaths of clergy sexual abuse trauma, institutional betrayal trauma and blind betrayal abuse trauma. Somewhere in our individual and collective work, we must make room for the personal to enter. This is true, I believe, because it is in our personal consideration of these matters that our activism is both formed and informed. In addition, it is very clear to me that felt-sense knowing and tacit-knowing are best surfaced inside human relationships, i.e., human conversations. Not only book knowledge, as important as that kind of knowledge is, teaches us about these complex and intensely personal matters.

Scientific Construction
– About the necessity to be methodologically clear in our work

The interrelated concepts of soul murder, soul death, soul betrayal, soul wounds, soul theft, and soul loss are not accessible to direct observation but must be inferred from people's self-reports as well as from one's own personal self-other reflective observations. It is unlikely, for example, that theologians, psychiatrists, sociologists of religion, psychologists, human development specialists, and lay people in the commons define the word *soul* with the same kinds of language and definitional propositions. When we cannot even agree on the precise definition of *soul* it becomes nearly impossible to construct adequate heuristic theories and so-called objective scientific measurement protocols.

About the only thing we can say with certainty is this: after the human body dies, the soul is no longer embodied in that individual's previously-living material shell. All other statements about the soul's life and death are simply working hypotheses.

Inasmuch as we can directly encounter, experience and bear witness to the inner life of the soul only in our personal life experiences, we need to rely on self-other reported experiences to make clinical inferences about soul wounds and soul death. In addition, because no one's soul is an exact replica or duplicate copy of any one else's soul, there will be wide variations in individuals' personal

encounters with their souls and with the effect of traumatic life events on their souls. To study the living body's soul wounds, soul loss soul theft, or soul death we must use narrative as the structural framework and the methodology of our investigations. Of necessity, therefore, we will use inference as our hermeneutical method of interpretation. We will need to unearth and then use metaphors and similes to explain our research findings.

Empirical dimensions of religiosity are relatively easy to measure because religiosity is a behavioral manifestation of the soul's or self's external posture in the world. It appears as if religiosity has two elements: an internalized propositional belief system (or world view) and an externalized pattern of action (behavior). If, for example, I believe that my eternal salvation depends upon being born again and regularly attending church services, I will confess my salvation and I will attend religious services with people who hold a similar conviction. Refusing to do one or both of these actions classifies me as an unbeliever or as an apostate, therefore, a person living in a state of sin. In this worldview to live in a state of sin automatically means that my eternal salvation is in jeopardy. Both of these (confession and attendance) are observable behaviors based on an internal belief system which must be inferred by others. Both (the public confession and participation in religious observances) can be self-reported to survey takers. Both can be counted and measured by more so-called objective measures. This is the kind of research done by the Pew Research Center[133] and by ARDA (the Association of Religious Data Archives).[134]

A Working Hypothesis

In the past eight months of reading and writing, I have come to a tentative working hypothesis: the betrayal trauma models and the shattered assumptions model seem to be the most promising organizing models for clinicians and researcher to utilize as we begin to structure our individual and collective examinations of the many diverse and sometimes puzzling religious and spiritual sequellae to (1) clergy sexual abuse, (2) institutional betrayal of victims by the institutional church; (3) institutional attacks against whistle-blowers and survivor-advocates; (4) institutional betrayal of the religious institution commons – the people in the pews known as the laity, the people of God or God's beloved community; and (5) the puzzling reality of a community's angry denial and turning a blind face when faced with incontrovertible evidence of a religious leader's betrayal of his or her community of faith.

Personal Experience as Teacher

I have learned about certain aspects of the human trauma response by direct personal experience, in my case a life-threatening and life-altering car accident in my late twenties and the much earlier childhood trauma of being beaten, slapped, and verbally abused by my mother. My out-of-body experience as a sequellae at the time of the car accident, my post-accident generalized phobic responses, and my persona acquaintance with dissociative memory recall many years later provide me with one window into both kinds of life experience. They undergird my theoretical understanding of the human trauma response.

In a similar way my personal narrative of the unpredictable episodes of maternal abuse has provided me with a firm belief that it is in truth-telling with those who love us and provide care to us, that we, the traumatized survivors of abuse, find our way back into a whole life, a spirit-infused life; a joy-filled life.

Now many years later (as an aging woman) I can periodically encounter residual sequellae in my physical and emotional body. This kind of personal knowing and awareness, therefore, is from the inside-out. In these stories of traumatic life encounters I bear witness to my own experienced wisdom about these matters. Others can choose whether or not to believe my reported experiences. If they choose to believe my witness to my inner life, they then can make inferences about my emotional and spiritual soul life. They will inevitably make judgments about me and the veracity or non-veracity of my accounts.

Even today, many years after I completed an extended and complex body/mind therapy process in mid-life, there are aspects of these life-altering events for which I do not have an understandable and satisfying narrative structure in my psyche and in my memory. For example, the *why me* question is unanswerable unless one accepts some aspects of the randomness of the universe. Some elements of these recalled life experiential narratives can still evoke intense anxiety and so I tend to stay away from re-encountering and thinking about them.

Some aspects of the story of that long-ago car accident, however, are very clear – as if fast-frozen and stored in a below zero refrigerated ice chest. I have never forgotten their life-disruptive presence in my life. The same thing is true for my experiences of being physically and verbally abused in childhood. While many details are lost in history, some are as clear today as when they happened.

For example, I have never forgotten the very clear experience of having part of "my" self on the emergency room ceiling in an out-of-body experience watching my inert physical body on the gurney below as "I"/my body waited for the emergency room staff to do their magic and re-unite my body and consciousness. But it was rage, in the end, not doctors that reunited them.

"I" decided to re-enter my body when the emergency team brought in the guy whose jeep had just minutes before front-ended and plowed into the car in which I had been a passenger. At this moment in time I still didn't know if my colleague and friend Diane (not her name) was alive or dead. As they wheeled in the gurney with his living and conscious body into the triage area, "I" flew down from the ceiling and re-entered my body because I wanted to confront this man with the full fury of my rage. As soon as my body and my spirit were reunited, I started screaming obscenities at him. And then I passed out again. When I next woke up, I literally could not speak. For almost twenty five years I lived with the belief that my vocal equipment had been permanently damaged by my enraged screaming. To "save" my voice I stopped taking voice lessons, I stopped singing in semi-professional by-audition community choirs and I stopped doing all solo work. Only in the course of this mid-life extended therapy process in which voice lessons were prescribed did I recover my singing voice and the joy of making music.

My next memory is of waking in a hospital bed with raised railings. Still semi-confused about what had happened to me, I couldn't figure out how to lower these protective rails. At some level this is a hilarious detail. I was a nurse. I had lowered and raised hundreds of bed railings during my career. Being determined that, by God, I both could and would use the bathroom on my own – I climbed out over the bottom end of the bed. This was clearly not rational thinking and behavior on my part. The nurses came running and they were very unhappy with me. But by sheer determination I made it to and from the bathroom without passing out from pain and confusion. The staff watched every step I made – from very close in. When I was safely in bed, I got the professional scolding I very much deserved. I again lost consciousness.

I was terrified of being dependent and helpless. I was so determined to get my pre-existing life back that I signed myself out of the hospital against medical advice and spent the next three to six months rehabilitating my body and my psyche. For example, within less than a week I began to force myself to drive on all kinds of roads and in all kinds of weather at all times of the day and night. Within days I had returned to work. When I was not working, I was driving my car on winding, narrow back roads and crowded multi-lane interstates. When I got too anxious to drive, I would pull off the road and just cry and scream until the waves of anxiety passed. Each time this happened it was an act of the will to resume driving. I did hours of physical therapy. I got all of my broken teeth repaired or replaced. But without telling anyone I began to stockpile my muscle relaxant medications thinking that I might as well just kill myself rather than live with chronic neck and back pain. My mantra become this: *if and when I can't bear this pain/my life anymore, I will kill myself. But before I do that I will try to teach myself to bear it if I can.*

It was almost four years after the accident when a clinical psychologist colleague-friend of mine found me in my office on my knees using a chair seat as my desk because I could not tolerate sitting in a chair to work. He asked, *what are you doing on the floor?* I told him my post-accident pain was only manageable if I did not sit in a chair to work. He looked at me with great compassion and said, *I can help you but first you must see the orthopedist downstairs.* In this way I began to learn how to use my mind to help my body – one of the most basic tools in the toolkit of chronic pain management.[135] But my post-accident depression remained unspoken and unaddressed. Since no one asked me about it, I didn't raise the topic.

One way I sought to help myself was to seek out professional conferences where mind-body medicine principles were being excavated and taught to young professionals. Thus, in this back-door manner of seeking help for my own self, I became part of an international movement to return medicine and nursing to their shamanic roots as body *and* soul healers. Without my car accident experience I might well have remained part of the professional culture which strongly devalued and criticized the body/mind healing movement, the psycho-neuro-immunology aspects of contemporary medicine and nursing.

I had earlier found a reason to live in my strong desire to support my friend and colleague Diane (the car's driver) as she had multiple neurological brain and spinal cord surgeries. That we each made it back into a good life – albeit a forever changed life – is due to the skills of our medical teams, the support of our families and friends, and, in both of our situations, a strong desire to live meaningful lives that served others.

Twenty-five years after the car accident, in body/mind therapy with physician Emmett Miller[136] and in a light state of altered consciousness, frightening memories of this long-ago accident began to return but the bits and pieces of this narrative were scattered over my inner psychic landscape like an explosively ruptured bag of popcorn in a very dark theater. I could "see" and pick up individual pieces of popcorn but I had no intact narrative container in which to put them. I didn't even know I didn't have a narrative container. Both Emmett and my primary care physician Judy Martin recognized the importance of this ancient accident narrative to my then-current status of a much wounded body/mind and I was referred to a crania-sacral body worker for six months of intensive body work. As my face and body was professionally touched, more and more memories returned. I eventually did almost three years of cranial-sacral body work and body-mind healing work before concluding the time of diminishing returns had arrived. I signed consent forms to release information and these three individuals consulted with each other and with me about ways to help me. For the second time I had knowledgeable, empathic allies in my efforts to heal this ancient confusion and pain-filled narrative.

In the several years of therapeutic body/mind work with Emmett, I made masks. These particular masks were my attempt to tell my therapeutic team what my inner felt-sense was of my face at the time of the accident and now, much later, inside these altered states of consciousness; inside the therapeutic hour. I had no words adequate to the task of communicating my remembered pain. I had no adequate language to talk about my sense that my life had come totally unglued inside a crumpled automobile. Thinking about these complex issues in my life history, I was often mute for minutes at a time – unable to find words that could adequately communicate my inner experience.

Figure 1.0   Figure 2.0

The two masks above were made approximately a month apart. In the first mask I tired to embed information about the accident and the Jeep which had plowed head on into the car in which I was a passenger. In the second I sought to convey my inner felt sense about what my face felt like inside the container of this ancient car accident so many years before.

On encountering my clinical appointment muteness, Emmett had said to me, *do you do art work? I think doing art work might be helpful to you since you can't tell me what you are experiencing.* I immediately connected with the idea and thus an extended period (almost three years) of mask work evolved. As I made masks, poetry began to emerge and vice versa. The masks and the poetry were the way the body/mind/soul was speaking when I had no out-loud explicit-knowing words to speak and was, therefore, literally mute for long periods of clinical time. For example, here is a segment from an early poem.

Una frontera oscura

Yesterday I crossed borders
But knew not how I passed from one land into the second

There were no border guards
With guns at the ready to prevent my passing
There were no petty functionaries
With stamps and inks to mark my papers
Or to deny my travelrights
There were no gates to seal the boundaries
To foreigners and aliens – all those who do not belong
There were no trained dogs with bared teeth
To stop me from straying

Yesterday I crossed borders
But knew not how I passed from one land into the second

What I still find thought-provoking in looking back at my mid-life self is that at times during this therapy process I was thinking and dreaming in Spanish – my second language – and at times in English. These times of trauma in my life happened years before I had any ability to use Spanish conversationally although I had been exposed to it in high school. But sometimes my experience of cross-culture shock in my 40's seemed to provide a linguistic template for examining and understanding these much earlier events in my life. Living with traumatic memory, I came to understand, had much in common with living in a second language nation and not understanding a word that is being spoken to you.

One night at home during this complex multi-disciplinary therapy process, I startle-awoke from a deep sleep to feel my body being lifted by strong hands and arms. Almost instantaneously, I knew this was a car accident felt-sense memory and almost immediately a bit of narrative returned. I didn't know what preceded that felt sense or what followed it. I had never before asked myself what happened when the emergency vehicles with their flashing lights arrived for the conscious, self-aware "I" was not there to witness their arrival. Slowly more and more bits of this much earlier lived story emerged: first as a felt-sense and then this felt-sense was rapidly followed by an accurate narrative story. Entire pieces of this dissociated story began to make sense to me.

Several years later (as my work with Emmett was winding down) I woke to smell something very hot in my house. Half awake I concluded there was a hot wire somewhere. I literally examined and pulled every plug in my three level house and there were no hot wires. I checked the car in the garage. I checked the stove and the oven. I checked the ironing board. I checked the furnace. Finding nothing I retraced my steps doing a second check just in case I had missed the source of the hot metal small. Only after ascertaining that, in present reality,

nothing was burning could I go back to bed. I was utterly puzzled by this strong acrid smell of hot plugs or metal burning. Only as I lay in bed trying to quiet my wide-awake, hyper-alert, and very concerned mind/spirit did I remember being told in the hospital that the first responders had to cut open the car to pry Diane and I out because the dash was wedged up against our chests and the doors were crumpled like an accordion bellows. As soon as this long-ago forgotten story narrative from Diane's husband re-entered my memory, I fell asleep and the hot wire smell has never returned. My sleeping yet alert psyche had unearthed the wisdom memory of the sensory body and another piece of the puzzling trauma narrative puzzle was in place. I now remembered how I was removed from the crumpled car in which I was imprisoned and I remembered being transferred to an ambulance. I remembered choking on my broken teeth and being suctioned. I remembered asking about Diane but I still don't remember the answer I received. Perhaps my ambulance crew didn't know. I remembered the long-forgotten waves of intense physical pain as I wandered in and out of consciousness. I now know, by deduction, that Diane was transported by the first ambulance. Her life hung in the balance between life and death much longer than mine did. By the time 'I"/my body was transported into the hospital emergency room for triage, she was already being worked on.

One evening I remembered the terrifying darkness that surrounded me inside the car as "I" left my body/my conscious self for an extended period of time. When Emmett later asked me about my sense of this darkness, I spontaneously said, *I went after Diane's spirit to bring her back. I went hunting her. I thought she was dead and, inside our crumpled car, I couldn't live with not knowing for sure. But I kept wandering in and out of consciousness. Some of it I simply don't remember.* In the mask below, I tried to capture that felt-sense memory of threatening, menacing and anxiety-loaded darkness.

Figure 3.0

During this same general time period, I attended a John Denver concert at the University of Notre Dame. This was in the era of *flick your Bic.* The on and off nature of these flashing lights created an absolute inner sense of panic in me. I simply could not tolerate these lightning bug-like lighters flashing everywhere around me. I had to listen to the music with my eyes tightly closed. In the years since then, this phenomenon has not re-occurred – most particularly first at a Paul Simon concert and then at a much later Garth Brooks concert in the same UND auditorium. I have concluded that my anxiety during the Denver concert at the presence of these flicking Bic lights all around me was aroused because of the close proximity of my therapy work with Emmett at the time. What "I" was seeing were the flashing lights of the ambulances and their police escorts as they converged on Diane's wrecked car and our wrecked lives. My overwhelming fear of dying during this concert or of having an out-of-body experience or of losing self-control by screaming in the presence of these flicking lights was, therefore, an understandable fear.

What I later found clinically useful to my understanding of traumatic memory was multiple other traumatic memories seemed glued together so they began to emerge into a felt-sense and a narrative form as well. At the time of their initial and consciously-unbidden arrival, they un-nerved me.
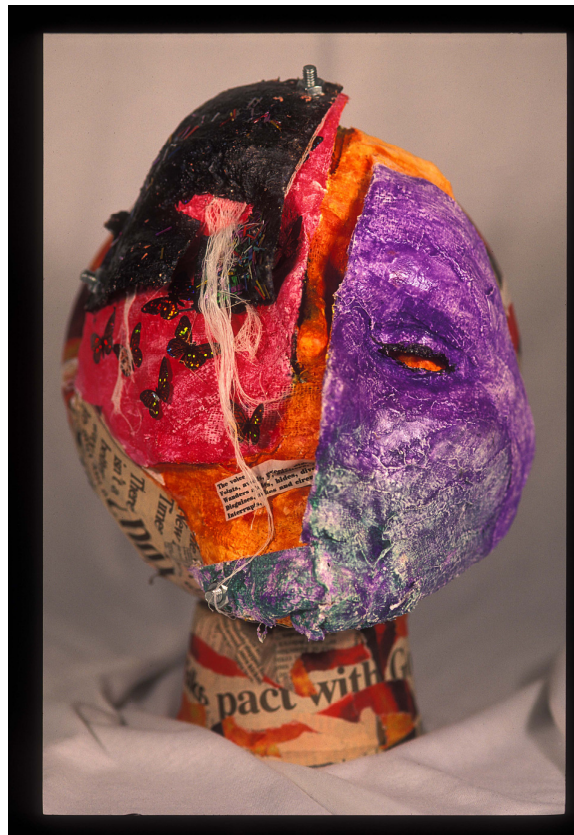

Figure 4.0

The mask above emerged inside the narrative of this paragraph. In this next clinical example Emmett had been teaching me how to self-initiate the deep relaxation response; in doing so he used a descriptive metaphor of the body releasing its stress. That particular metaphor took me spontaneously out of the altered state of consciousness. I sat bolt upright in the office's reclining chair and stared at him in totally mute terror. The stunned look on his face at my unpredictable behavior and my simultaneous experience of being verbally mute and emotionally numb changed the nature of the work we were doing together. After a couple of minutes, I found my physical voice. I could tell him what had happened inside my body/mind/self. This spontaneous emergence of a whole-body memory, along with its re-experienced terror, fury and rage took us into a whole new arena of traumatic body/mind survivor work.

The transference phenomenon was complex and multi-sensory. For example, in the middle of one appointment what I really wanted to do was to get out of his chair, find a hiding place, suck my thumb, and hold my teddy bear while I just cried. My adult mind censored this wish and I never told Emmett about it. But the intense need to regress into being a very frightened child was significant to me. I have had a distinct memory for many years – maybe since childhood itself – of hiding behind the living room sofa because I was afraid. I clutched my teddy bear. I don't know how old I was but I was small enough to crawl behind the sofa and hide between the sofa and the wall. I was young enough to suck my thumb. I was needy enough to hug my comfort bear. It is significant that in recalling this memory I was both inside my body feeling my fear and my sadness and outside of it witnessing the little girl crawl with her comfort bear behind sofa. As I write, I wonder if this was my very first experience of an out-of-body experience. My felt-sense of this matter as I write is that it was. There is no real narrative attached here – just a memory hanging in time-space as the body recalls itself as a younger person.

I still don't understand the brain's connection of these kinds of traumatic life narratives (an adult car accident and childhood experiences of maternal violence). I just know they were, and are, packed together like peas in a pod in my body-mind. In releasing one pea from its shell, the other peas are released as well.

It amazes me still that with all my academic preparation and clinical work as well as personal therapy over the years, that until that moment in Emmett's office I had never put together a cognitively organized narrative in which I finally understood the reality that my mom had been intermittently, unpredictably, explosively and physically abusive to me. It is probably no mistake that only several years after my mother's death could I access these ancient memories of her abusiveness to me. It is also probably no accident that my endometrial cancer surgery, just months before I met Emmett and entered his practice, had deeply wounded my physical body in a botched surgery. At some level my womb – a female reproductive organ with many literal and metaphoric meanings to

women – had carried my fears and my longings from inside the mother-child relationship.

But, on that day in 1996, as I told the newly-remembered narrative story to Emmett – one of a specific and especially violent memory that emerged almost intact with its sense of rage and panic attached to it – I could see by the look of compassionate horror in his eyes that my story was not a normal and ordinary childhood trauma story. For the first time in my adult life, at age 55, I began to understand that my very brilliant, very musically gifted, very magical, and very religious mother had also been a physically, verbally, emotionally, and spiritually abusive mother to her only daughter. More about the long-known but little understood deep mother-daughter wound inside my psyche-soul gradually became visible and accessible to me. As an adult I could begin to make cognitive and emotional-narrative sense of that experience which as a pre-school child I could not do.

When I got home after that particular therapy appointment I immediately phoned my oldest brother. I begged Dick to tell me if I had been a *really, really evil child? Had I, maybe, deserved that day's beating?* His response was so comforting: *Sis, you never had children. You never had a chance, therefore, to learn about these things by watching your own children grow up. You were an ordinary child doing the things ordinary kids do. So, no, you were not an evil child. She was a very demanding and difficult mother at times.*

Some months later during a visit to my brother John's home he confirmed my memories of this very specific episode of mother's rage as happening in the way I remembered it. In particular, he confirmed one detail as having happened in the exact way I had remembered it. Now, when I recall John's grade school aged face in my memory of this event, I understand that I was between two and four years old when this particular beating took place.

I was much too young to cognitively understand what was happening as abuse but the body remembered and it stored the experience and some very specific images and moments of a childhood conversation between John and me froze inside me in a way that Emmett's mid-life therapeutic work with me could unearth and retrieve.

In the mask below, I sought to create a visual narrative of that event as a way of memorializing it – now that it had been recalled, re-integrated into my life's ongoing narrative, and spoken aloud to my medical care team and to my brothers.

102

Figure 5.0

This totemic mask was created to show my therapeutic team what it was like to be a permanently watchful child, silenced in so many ways by my childish fear of my mother's unpredictable fury and rages. It is a mask that is a play of images on the theme of a mask-wearing child. There were masks layered on masks in my childhood as I sought to be a good child and as I sought to win her love or, at the very least, a truce in her ongoing war with me. The smallest child image on the "totem pole" above is approximately the age I was when this dissociated narrative of being beaten in the basement of our house with a washing machine drainage hose – this life-changing narrative occurred.

Because I was a clinician seeking help from a clinician, Dr. Miller often took moments of our work together to teach me about dissociation. In one session he described dissociation as an experience in which the individual is standing inside a forest and where there should be a tree, there is nothing. Instead of a living and alive tree, there is only a shadow tree. I immediately comprehended that the missing tree was the missing memory or missing narrative. I went home and cut up a favorite tee-shirt and made a mask.

Clinically, in the lives of others, I already knew about the dense, perhaps even thundering, silence of clinical intuition in working with women who had been abused in some way as children. That dead space of no intuition alerted me to the possibility, no, the probability, of a physical or sexual violence history which was not yet present inside a client's recalled or spoken life narrative – a dissociated narrative of a lived life that had not yet been re-claimed and spoken aloud.

Figure 6.0   Figure 7.0

In many of the masks, the front view of the mask also masked a second aspect of my experience. I began to embed information or metaphors about whatever memory was retrieving itself. I began to do a running visual commentary on these emerging memories and their traumatic origins and their meanings to me.

In addition, thinking of shamanic initiations, I began to write initiatory prayers to accompany each mask.

Sounds I cannot hear call me
Sights I cannot see lure me
Tastes I cannot taste tempt me
Aromas I cannot smell cover me

Forgotten shadows find me

Guardians of the moon, please protect me
Nymphs of the still pools, please protect me
Skywatchers of heaven's fire, please protect me
Towering spirits of the date palm oasis, please protect me

This particular mask of the shadow tree and this particular initiatory prayer framed the very first poem I wrote for Dr. Miller to show him (and I suppose my own self as well) that I had understood his conceptual and metaphorical discussion of the missing shadow tree(s) in my life experience and life narrative.

El umbral del bosque

In this darkest of woods there is, I hear,
A shadow tree. Once it was a living tree filled with bird's nests
And papery wings of masquerading butterflies.
Standing on the edge of tree-filled darkness, I taste my terror.
No lighted paths lead through.

In this darkest of woods there is, I hear,
A shadow tree. Once it was a living tree filled with bird's nests
And motionless, resting butterflies. Clothing the tree with wings
As still as fluttering leaves, these silent monarchs of the forest
Waited for winter's sun to heat their wings into spirals of golden prayer.

Intruding into chaotic tangles of bleak, dead stillness,
I notice the absence of butterflies.
Alone, now, so very alone in this thick quiet, I sought the shadow tree
But have stumbled, instead, into Ereshkigal's enchanted forest.

In this darkest of woods there is, I hear,
A shadow tree. Once, centuries ago,
It was a living tree filled with bird's nests
And sweet living butterflies poised for flight.
In search of the shadow tree, I stumbled into this dank grove.
Intoxicated with the pain and grief of years
I clutch life to me.

Knowing not the mysteries of Ereshkigal's gateways
I prostrate myself on the forest floor.
Silent and afraid, I wait for the shadow tree to find me.

In this darkest of woods there is, I hear,
A shadow tree. Surrounded by living trees
It stands unmarked and unnoticed.
Now only unspoken echoes
On the forest's floor speak of its ghostly presence.
Butterflies and birds are all gone. No papery rustle or warning call
Mark the place of the tree.

Shrill rumors of shadow trees
Are whispered to be cross-stitched
On the borders of the altar cloth on Ereshkigal's high table.[137]

What, as a clinician, I still find helpful in my personal understanding of dissociation, is that as my memories of that car accident in my thirties and as my previously dissociated memories of mother's physical abusiveness in my pre-grade school years began to heal, so too did my deeply wounded mid-life physical body and my emotional begin to heal.

Parts of the phobic responses to these traumatic events of my childhood and young adult self, however, have remained. I do not like to drive on rainy Friday nights during the drinking hours. If I need to be a passenger in this situation, I have taught myself to fall asleep. In short, the car accident wounds have been healed, but their physical and emotional scar tissue remains and occasionally the internal reminders of these events must be actively managed.

In a similar way, the memories of my mother's abusiveness have healed but there is scar tissue. I have learned, for example, when my adult self encounters my wounded early self in relation to my mother, to simply say out loud: *Mother, go away. You are dead. You are not wanted here. You don't belong here in my house.* In this way I interrupt my rage-filled reveries about my mother. I deliberately re-direct the ongoing flow of images and feelings and words in the inner psyche. In this way I seek to regain emotional equilibrium and inner silence/peace. It has taken me many years to fully acknowledge to my closest

friends that I was a physically, verbally, religiously, and emotionally abused child in an economically and culturally privileged family. In particular, I have been reluctant in Mennonite circles to talk about this story inasmuch as my mom was seen as St. Ruth among her contemporaries. My parent's prominence in our small home town has meant that I have been protective of my parents' memories in the lives of their families, friends and business associates.

Healing comes when and if we allow it to come. After my mother's death I was visiting my Aunt Margaret. She had an eighth grade education. She truly didn't understand my professional work in the world. But she loved me. And I adored her. She had been like a second mother to me in early childhood – babysitting me. Shortly after my mother's death I visited her. We began talking about family stories when she paused, breaking the gossipy flow of the conversation. She said, *Elizabeth* (for she always called me by my middle name), *I want to tell you something: Bob and I both thought that your mother was one of the most selfish people we have ever known*. It was like a healing balm poured out on my spirit. This working class woman, my most beloved aunt, who loved me unconditionally but didn't have sophisticated clinical knowledge, somehow knew I needed to know her opinion (and my mother's younger brother's opinion) of my mother and she took the risk of offending me in order to tell me about my uncle Bob's and her perceptions. In the years since then I often return to this conversation when I need reassurance that I am not totally insane in my often negative internal reactions to my mother during and after her life. Since Aunt Margaret died shortly after this conversation, there was only this very tiny window of time for her to tell me what she believed I needed to know. And she was correct. I did need and I do continue to need to know this opinion of my mother's character.

Therapy-assisted awareness of my personal encounters with trauma and violence has allowed me to compassionately believe the stories of many women and men who are the survivors of affinity violence and domestic abuse. Accepting my own life story for what it is – rather than as what I wish it was – has allowed me the internal space and compassion to believe other people's stories as what is.

Since my religiously fanatical mother was the official God arbiter and interpreter in my family of origin, her physical and verbal abusiveness has colored my religious life in the Mennonite commons and my private spiritual life since my earliest memories.

I also have some personality characteristics or defects that are difficult to manage. It is sometimes hard for me to trust older women. I am that rare oddity: a feminist woman who prefers men's collegial friendships to women's. I have always chosen male therapists. Given a choice, I have chosen to work for men in supervisory roles.

During my early career nursing was predominantly a woman's profession. Only in the past ten years have I come to understand that my reasons for leaving nursing administration as a career path was that I often did not like nor trust the older women I worked for. In my late twenties and early thirties, the gods were good to me in that they opened other roads and paths for my life. I could use my clinical skills in ways which were supervised by trustworthy and honorable men.

Nevertheless, in the course of my lifetime, I have been blessed with smart and healthy women who have befriended me. I am always amazed that they like me. When someone (usually a woman in a position of authority and power) says, "I need to talk with you," I often emotionally freeze in absolute dread that I have unknowingly and unintentionally done something horribly wrong. I have learned in professional settings to be upfront and ask, "Are you mad at me?" Usually people look startled because what they wanted to talk to me about was not my horrid personality, my evil self, my wicked, completely inappropriate social behavior, my shit-poor professional work or my totally inadequate life. Once I know they are not going to verbally attack me, I relax. On the other hand, if they are really angry at me, I "instinctively" freeze in place - totally unable to defend myself. Becoming aware of my emotional and physical immobility, I remind myself to breathe deeply into the situation and then try to use all of my clinical skills to help me listen. I have, therefore, permanent scar tissue in the areas of trust, anger management and conflict management. At some very deep levels of my personality, these issues of others' anger and rage directed my way continue to terrify and immobilize me.

One consequence that I have been aware of since my therapeutic relationship with Dr. Miller ended is that I prefer the written voice to the spoken voice. I am capable of using both and do. But anyone who wants to know me will eventually need to encounter and accept my written voice as having an intimacy, vitality, and validity my spoken voice may or may not have. Being repeatedly slapped across the face and mouth has had its consequences in matters of claiming and using a personal voice. Only when I am in trusting relationships with others do I trust myself to spontaneously say what I really think and feel. I test and re-test new relationships to make certain they are trustworthy. I often deliberately put my worst foot forward to make certain it is safe to show my tender and compassionate side to these newcomers in my life. That said, once I trust someone, I am capable of warm and close friendships and collegial working relationships. I prize a mixture of compassion, integrity, and intellectual or emotional astuteness in others. The new age movement has slowly persuaded me that the characteristics that I most prize in others are also manifested aspects of who I am. We not only project our rage and our craziness out into the world of others. We also project that which is healed and whole and good inside of us.

Below is the mask I made to celebrate the end of my therapeutic work with Dr. Miller and my cranial sacral therapist. It is the mask I made to celebrate a

somewhat more intact and integrated body/mind. I bought special paper and I used a collection of small sea shells I had brought home with me from Central America's soul-healing beach walks so many years earlier.

This is a mask of healing and a mask of reunification of my self with myself. Looking back, I see the mask-poetry work I did over a period of approximately three years as an essential component of the therapeutic soul work I needed to do to heal my much wounded physical body.

Figure 8.0

It is a matter of personal pride to me that I have never hit or beaten a child. Most certainly this is a result of my early decision that I never wanted to be pregnant and I never wanted to raise a child. I didn't trust my self in light of my history of being a beaten child. Clinically, I knew the literature about intergenerational transmission of child abuse and I decided that the one guaranteed way to stop that transmission pattern was to refrain from growing a child inside my body. My quick shorthand answer to strangers who ask, *did you never want children?* is to reply with great casualness, *No, I never wanted a child. I would have been a terrible mother.* Even as an old woman I am certain I made the right decision when I was in my childbearing years. I sometimes think when I am with my aging friends and their grandchildren, *I would have been an absolutely horrid mother but I would make an awesome grandmother.*

I know without a doubt that my decision to work for women's and children's safety in the world is rooted in my childhood experience of being a physically, verbally, emotionally and spiritually battered child. I have known that for years. I

have always chosen, however to remain silent about this self-awareness in the public realms where I lived and worked.

Only when I heard editor-journalist Tom Fox speak at the 2015 SNAP conference in Alexandria, VA did I begin to re-think my earlier decision about staying silent in the public realm about my private life as a child. He talked about his personal decision-making process of keeping silent about being molested by a priest in his own adolescence. Like me, he had confided in trusted others and like me he felt his professional work on behalf of others might be invalidated by a confessional mode of address in the public sphere.[138] Only on the cusp of his full retirement from the *National Catholic Reporter* did he choose to tell his story in a public forum.

I have long believed that it is in the truthful narratives of our lives that our life's wisdom is formed. Many years ago I read that Trappist Monk Thomas Merton instructed his estate's literary managers that after his death they were not to censor and sanitize his work in order to protect his memory. In short, when his journals were published, they were to be published whole rather than edited. When I read this in one of the many biographies of Merton since his death, it made immediate sense to me. Our lived life, as a complex whole, is where our wisdom resides for future generations. Too much sanitizing of our life histories means we have not left accurate cairns in our wake. Our mistakes are as important life-teachers as are the things we did well. In some ways, when I look back over my life, it seems to me as if my mistakes and misjudgments were more important learning methodologies than my successes. Each time I said to myself, *I will never do this again to myself or to anyone else,* was a crucial juncture and a moment in time of personal, ethical, and spiritual maturation. Parenthetically, I will say this: the gods, whoever or whatever they are, provide us with multiple opportunities to learn these needed lessons. If we don't learn the lesson the first time it appears, there will be a second and a third time – until we finally are ready to change and grow and become whole.

The Processes of Healing

> Sometimes clients (we) prefer to keep the suffering that they (we) know to the healing that they (we) don't know.

<p align="center">Clinical Aphorism</p>

Many years ago in a professional conference for physicians and nurses California oncologist Rachel Naomi Remen[139] spoke about end-of-life therapy with adult individuals who had been traumatized by abuse in childhood. She told the story of one of her clients. She asked him how he had developed such a rich, emotionally healthy and productive adult life after having grown up in a physically and emotionally abusive family. He paused to think about her question and then said, *Rachel, there was the family dog. I knew she loved me.* Remen

abstracted the wisdom of this story. She said, *it only takes one of us to help people heal. It only takes one of us.* I knew what she meant first hand. I too had a beloved family dog and she licked my childish face when I cried.

In my lifetime I have met many adult men and women who have taken an interest in me, have mentored me, and have appropriately loved me. Each has helped me to heal my wounds. I have had very good therapy. Each therapist, in his turn, has helped me to mature and to heal my wounded self and soul. Each loving friend or friendly colleague has built my ability to trust men and women as friends, colleagues, and supervisors.

Most especially, feminist thealogian Nelle Morton,[140] who was exactly the age of my mother, helped me simply by being a wise older friend during my graduate years at Claremont. She supported my studies in ways my mother could not and, more importantly, would not. I would go to Nelle's house bearing a new book, flowers, chocolates, or a bottle of very good wine and we would sit and talk as cross-generational colleagues and friends. I would simply absorb her aging wisdom and her welcoming hospitable spirit. Even now many years after Nelle's death, I often think to myself: *Nelle, simply by being who she was, healed many aspects of the mother wound.*

As another example of healing: in my early thirties, I met American psychoanalyst Rollo May[141] at a small working supervisory conference for professional clinicians. I was one of the organizers of this conference which we held at Cabo San Lucas in Southern Mexico. Looking back, I am guessing that I was the only individual present who, before he arrived, had actually read all of Dr. May's published books. I had been the one to suggest we contact him and see if he would be our teacher about some of the more existential aspects of being healers and of doing clinical work. In this weeklong encounter group we told very personal stories of our lives and our clinical work, I was relatively quiet – just enjoying the beauty of this remote resort area and time away from my administrative position, a focused time to be with my colleagues and friends.

One of the youngest members of the group, I was soaking up the group's wisdom about the self-other processes of doing and evaluating therapy. This was not my first encounter group supervisory process and in this intensely structured kind of learning environment I always learned so much.

I took to swimming in the hotel lap pool every afternoon during our scheduled break. The outdoor pool was relatively isolated and I was usually its only lap swimmer. Most of the group, including Dr. May, preferred walking and wading on the sandy beach. An introvert, I used this time away from the group to be a body-self rather than a mind-self. I used this alone time away from the group to anchor what I was learning. During these swims I became a water creature rather than a land creature.

One afternoon Dr. May came looking for me after having asked my friends where I was. He indicated that he would like to talk personally with me. I agreed and we arranged a time to go for a walk together before dinner.

During that walk, he shared his own personal development issues as a young therapist as a way of teaching me. At one point he looked directly at me and said, *Ruth, because you are already here on planet earth, you belong; because you already are, you have the right to be.*

Then he talked about his perception that the life-wounded healers who persistently and continuously did their own personal work of healing were often the most gifted healers of others. As we talked, it was as if he was transferring ancient shamanic wisdom about the therapeutic healing process to me. When I got home I made a small drawing or icon of a hot Mexican sun and wrote my summary of May's words, *since I am, I have the right to be.*

This tiny framed statement travels everywhere with me. As I write, I am looking at this very same image/icon I made when I was thirty-something years old. In the years since then, it has become a life mandala or a life philosophy.

> *I am here. I have a right to be here. I have the right to heal my wounds. I have the right to live a happy and good life. It is not God's mistake that made me. I am not an evil person. I am a child of the universe. I belong.*

This same reality is the spiritual birthright of every human being. I really do believe this. Dr. May has long ago crossed over but he lives in my heart as well as in my mind as a beloved teacher and a perceptive mentor. He taught me something amazing. It does not take years and years to heal a broken spirit. It takes just a moment when the time is ripe, a perceptive and loving human being is present, and the self is trusting and open.

Many years later Dr. Remen's experiences as a clinician have reinforced this belief for me vis-à-vis my own healing; vis-à-vis the healing of others.

Given time and help, people can and do heal from the most horrific wounds. This most often happens inside the container of trustworthy compassionate interest and help. I think it is rare that people can do this hard work of healing on their own. It is not impossible but it is rare. We ourselves often need helpers if we are to be effective helpers of others.

As we think about our very personal spiritual and religious soul wounds, we also need to ask people to share the narrative stories of their healing work. This may yield more important insights than being able to precisely diagnose such wounds – no matter how intellectually satisfying we may find that particular aspect of our work. When an individual can identify and tell us about what has been helpful to

them in their own healing work, we can begin to form hypotheses about how to facilitate our advocacy and healing work inside the religious commons.

Learning from the Experiences of Others

In addition, my work with the survivors of sexual violence and sexual harassment has given me insights into human trauma responses. My cross-cultural work with American peace studies students inside some of the world's active war zones has provided me with yet another "field laboratory" to witness and examine these human responses to the tragedies of others' lives. My consultations and opportunities to do lay preaching about these troubling topics have also added a layer of practical wisdom to my thinking about these matters.

Therefore, in the course of 45 years of my teaching and clinical career, I have witnessed the human trauma response in many different settings.

➢ Talking with an old blind first nation man on his cot in a refugee resettlement camp, I learned many things about surviving in an active war zone and what life was like to live in a second language nation where he didn't understand the language and culture of those who sought to help him in exile. I witnessed his particular form of war trauma as I held his hand, listened to his life stories, and as we wept together for the life he had lost and for the friends and family he had lost as he and his daughter and her small children had fled their native homeland for their lives.

➢ Walking with a close friend on the crowded streets of Haiti and breathing in a redolent mix of an impoverished nation's tropical smells, I witnessed first-hand and up-close a traumatic flash-back originating inside a military tour of duty in Vietnam ten or fifteen years earlier. Our visit to Haiti was during the last years of Baby Doc's reign of terror. An odor of fear was always present as we encountered Haitians in their daily lives. A Goshen College student had been shot, but not killed, in the preceding months. I had known my friend had been a medical officer in the American-Vietnamese war but we had never before talked about his tour of duty. The next time I visited his home, he brought out his slides and we looked at them together and he told me some of the stories that haunted him. He showed me the pair of boots he had taken from a dead man's feet because he needed them and of the deep sense of guilt this "theft" caused him when he got back into civilian life. More than a quarter of a century later, my friend and I attended a Christmas holiday buffet party in the Tucson foothills. The five physicians in the group gathered in the living room – away from all of the other party goers hanging out in the kitchen. They began to tell doctor stories and then all of a sudden one man began to share distressing intimate details about his tours of duty in Vietnam. This opened a floodgate of story-telling. As a nurse and as my friend's guest, I was deeply privileged to be trusted as a quiet and compassionate witness to their life-traumas as they supported each other in sharing the

professionally traumatic memories which they carried as part of the legacy of that war. Being physicians and officers in mash zones or in other safety zones had not protected them from direct experiences of trauma and from indirect experiences of vicarious trauma.

➢ Debriefing student volunteers who were working in a crowded refugee camp on the border of Nicaragua and Costa Rica, I learned more about vicarious trauma as I supervised their work and helped them to make sense of the lives and experiences of the refugee women and children they were trying to help. As an educator, my heart split wide open on one visit. The children were using the ground and sticks to write the alphabet, doing their spelling and arithmetic assignments. The students had no books and no paper and they had no pencils. But a teacher in the camp had organized this "school" and she was teaching literacy to a small group of impoverished refugee children. Her only pedagogical tools were a small blackboard, chalk and a few worn children's books. Goshen College students helped her by working and playing with the children. My job was to support the students so they could support these little children who lived inside intermittently electrified barbed wire fences.

➢ As a conference speaker and lay preacher on topics of domestic abuse and sexual abuse, on several occasions I witnessed dissociative alter personalities spontaneously emerge.

➢ Walking a group of students through a just-vacated field where people had recently been tortured and murdered and seeing direct evidence of the holes where captive prisoners had been forced to live and die raised questions in me about unbelievable evil. It raised questions about how to detoxify these human stories enough so that the students and I could learn from them. I wondered about the shamanic wisdom that these acres of land needed to be cleansed of their own memories. Several years later after the land had been rehabilitated and a marker installed to name and honor the men killed there, I walked this field with another group of students while our local teacher taught them the tragic history, wisdom and memories of this field. Feeling the powerful energies of the field under my feet, I continued to intuit that a shaman was needed to clear the negative energies and memories that the earth itself held. Here I had already been deeply influenced by Luisah Teish's conference lecture work in which she had described going to the door of no return in Africa – one of the ports from which slaves were shipped to the Americas.[142] A Yoruba priestess, she described her shamanic liturgy work of sealing the spiritual door between land and sea so this kind of human atrocity could never again take place there and so that the individuals who had walked through that door would always be remembered.

➢ Becoming friends with one of Guatemala's intellectuals, a woman who had been forced into international exile – running from her home in the middle of the night to escape being disappeared – taught me about residual trauma. After a peace treaty brought relative stability to her nation of

origin, she returned home. Troubled by intrusive memories and almost crippling anxiety, she was first diagnosed as a schizophrenic but then heard about a clinic that treated war survivors. Here, she told me much later, she was properly diagnosed as living with PTSD. Buddhist meditation practices, she told me, helped her to gain emotional and spiritual stability in a post-trauma world. Not a trained therapist, she ran small healing group workshops in her home – teaching other less economically privileged and equally traumatized indigenous men and women what she had learned in therapy.

➢ While living in Costa Rica, I was befriended by a North American Methodist minister who, years before, had been imprisoned and repeatedly tortured in a South American nation by that nation's military. He taught me both about trauma and about the resiliency of the human spirit. His pathway to healing included becoming a teacher of the young – teaching them about the treacherous political realities ordinary citizens faced each day inside dictator states. He rarely talked about being tortured but one night in his home over cocktails and dinner, he taught me. That night I saw his great pain and his great vulnerability. But mostly what I saw was his courage and a deep personal spirituality of compassion. Outside the walled house in which he and his family lived, a brilliant fuchsia bougainvillea tree was in full bloom. Whenever I think about this colleague and friend, I recall that tropical plant as a visual symbol or icon for his life. In ways I do not understand, those who tortured him did not kill his passion for justice towards the impoverished and oppressed. His experiences instead of silencing his voice bred compassion for the unjust suffering of others. He was, I thought that evening, in some very uncanny ways, stronger for his lived experiences of surviving imprisonment and torture.

➢ Living for a week in a middle-class Nicaraguan home during the Civil War of the Sandinistas with the USA-financed Contras, I witnessed a previously unknown level of poverty up close. The mama of the family and I talked about her children who were all serving on the revolutionary front. She talked about her Catholic faith and the local base community that provided help to her when she needed help in getting food. She earned needed money by hosting consciousness-raising groups from North America and Europe. After our little group disbanded, I remained in Nicaragua for several days and chose to stay in a local hotel – one that catered to North American, Central American and European newsmen. This was the week during which Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega flew to Russia.[143] North American news anchors with recognizable faces such as Tom Brokaw were very visible in the hotel's hallways and restaurants. The hotel served a menu of exquisitely cooked and plenteous food. In my final days in Nicaragua, as I walked the streets of Managua or fought for a place on very antiquated and crowded busses, or browsed in local markets and stores, I thought repeatedly of "my" mama's nearly empty cupboards and refrigerator. The juxtaposition of privilege and wealth for

North American news personnel – and me - with a war-induced absence of privilege and non-existent necessities for life in "my" mama's home broke open my heart. I have never been the same. I made a vow to myself that I would teach North American students to see their world as it really was. In the process, of course, I would also teach myself.

➢ Touring Guatemala with a small group of Guatemalan Mennonite women and an even smaller group of North American Mennonite women, I heard the stories of living inside an impoverished nation ruled by a violence-inclined military junta dictatorship. This was the historical era of assassinations and disappearances.[144] We could talk freely in the van driven by American Mennonite missionaries but we could not talk freely in the small guest houses where we stayed or on the streets we walked during this intensive ten day cross-cultural consciousness-raising opportunity. One of the Ladino women was so poor, she had no shoes. Because she needed shoes to do the walking we would do, the missionaries had earlier taken her shopping. My Guatemalan roommate on this trip told me about her fears for her university-aged son and daughter. As our small group visited first nation Mennonites in their rural highland homes in an active war zone, their fear of this small group of North American and Ladino strangers was palpable. Yet because they trusted the Mennonite missionaries who lived in solidarity with them, they trusted our tiny cross-cultural group of Mennonite women with their stories of war, rape, disappearances, and the violence of war-induced poverty. Up close I witnessed a communal spirituality that was as warm and compassionate as it was wary. I understood almost immediately that these native men and women were my spiritual teaches – not the North American missionaries. Having almost nothing in the way of material goods and living inside an active war zone, they had a living faith and a rich communal spirituality that sustained them as individuals and as a community.

Thinking about What These Experiences Taught Me

In all of these experiences and hundreds more like them, my cognitive internal rudder, spiritual gyroscope or emotional compass was frequently challenged. It was one thing to have book knowledge. It was quite another to need to deal with these realities as they emerged inside my lived-life and the lived-lives of others. While my clinical training and academic education provided me with a small intellectual or emotional buffer, nevertheless, these experiences were emotionally and cognitively challenging and spiritually troubling to me.

These experiences cumulatively challenged my inner world and my awareness of evil in the human commons became more nuanced. A much-too-easy-Christian-propositional-doctrinal faith was first challenged and then totally obliterated. Eventually I discarded the need to believe anything propositional at all about the gods even as I kept alive my belief that I was not alone in the universe nor was any human being and that there was a transcendent reality which was external to human life and to human control.

Another consequence was that I turned away from institutional religiosity towards an awareness of an internal spiritual reality that could not be denied because, at times, it simply invaded my awareness. I either had to believe I was psychotic or I needed to accept the inner presence of the divine as genuine.

Therefore, the soul's inward journey to spiritual maturity began inside trauma-filled narratives (my own and others). Needing to understand my world as it really was led me into many encounters with others who were doing the same kind of spiritual journey – one motivated by the compassionate need to serve others and an inner need to create a rich and sustaining spirituality.

Along the way I lost nearly all of my abilities to trust wealth and power enriched religious institutions and their powerful authority-clad leaders. I learned to distrust ideology-loaded theological discourse. In particular, I avoided religious discourse that fed the cultural tendencies of religious communities and the personal tendencies of individuals to use prejudice, xenophobic hatred, and verbal violence as a way to control and respond to others. As I moved about the world in my personal life and in my professional life, I looked for a community of compassionate people – no matter what their religious heritage – in which to anchor my own work and my own spiritual journey. In some manner or other, I separated religiosity from spirituality in my mind and made the decision that I was no longer a religious person – even as I sought to live in a spiritually compassionate and hopefully healing manner with others, many of whom were already traumatized by their personal experiences of intolerance and overt violence in its many forms.
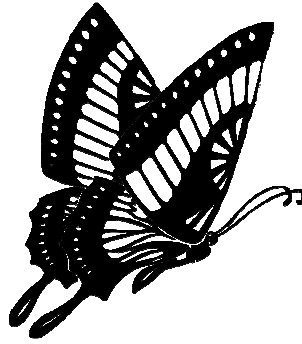
Section Two

Religious and Spiritual Problems

Section Two
Introductory Notes

Our effort to comprehend a small part of the absurd nature of our situation, no matter how horrible or how dire, is an opportunity for growth. Maybe even grace. Claiming what's been given is infinitely more redeeming than agonizing over what's been taken away. Not only does it lift our torment into a brighter light, but it helps us realize how small and insignificant are the men in foolish hats and housecoats who try to keep it, and us, in the dark.

Paul Fericano[145]

In my search to find heuristic models for addressing the issue of spiritual or religious sequellae, I have located four such models: the APA DSM model of religious and spiritual problems,[146] Benkert's and Doyle's religious duress model,[147] Winell's religious trauma syndrome model and the shamanic model of susto or soul loss.[148] These will be examined in Section Two.

In addition, in the course of seeking resources for this book, I have become aware of three models arising in the scientific communities of medicine and psychology. These models are complex PTSD,[149] betrayal trauma,[150] and a shattered assumptions model.[151] These will be examined in Section Three.

In as much as this monograph is an attempt to provide a foundation so that we[152] can begin multi-disciplinary categorization work for spiritual and religious problems, it is essential to organize what we already know (across denominational lines and across interfaith lines). In my experience as a classroom teacher, when undergraduate and graduate students could organize what they already knew into some sense-making schema, what they didn't know came into a much clearer focus. This allowed them to move beyond simple regurgitation of that which was already cognitively *and* intuitively known to them. They could move, therefore, into a much more complex self-guided process of questioning and discovery. The pedagogical goal, of helping students organize their knowledge into recognizable and, therefore, named or narrated information was to help them develop the ability to recognize, name, and analyze the complexity of human problems. A side effect was often the development of humility in the face of all that was unknown in the arena of complex human problems. Inside my classrooms, I came to believe that no matter how much we know, there is much more we don't know about these complex, long-lasting human problems in our global cultures and in our local communities. Thus, there is always more to learn and to integrate into our social activism.

In a similar way, as we begin to organize what we already know about religious and spiritual trauma in the aftermaths of (1) clergy sexual abuse of the laity and (2) institutional cover-ups of such abuse to protect the religious institution, we need, I believe, to widen our conceptual frameworks for serious inquiry into the

long-lasting religious and spiritual sequellae of such abuses. To do this much-needed work, we need to know what we know and we need to know what we don't know. And, of course, we need to devise methodologies to study what we really do not intuit or know about these troubling religious and spiritual realities in many religious abuse survivors' lives.

As we begin to think about codifying what we already know about the religious and spiritual sequellae of clergy or religious leader sexual abuse of the laity, what I hope is that what we know by felt-sense knowing and tacit-knowing will now begin to come into focus in much clearer manner. As that happens, we will also begin to know what we don't know.

Once we know what we don't yet know, then we (and others) can devise appropriate research methodologies to uncover that which we cannot yet recognize, name, and, therefore, know. This is equally true for the religious and spiritual sequellae of corrupted forms of institutional abuse that arise in the wake of clergy predator sexual abuse.

Chapter Seven
Religious Problems and Spiritual Problems

The only way to contain an epidemic is to contain it where it exists.

Tim Cunningham[153]

Introductory Comments

An individual's religious life history is inevitably rooted inside a specific cultural or institutional religion. Without institutions, there could be no organized religious entity for the people. Simultaneously, without individuals, there could be no collective religious institutions. Institution and individual, therefore, form a Mobius-strip. There is no institution without members or participants and there can be no participating members without institutions.

In a similar way, an individual's spiritual history is rooted in and revelatory of his or her culture. Pre-existing forms or archetypes of spirituality are known in many different cultures. Culture (and their cultural or institutionalized forms of spirituality) and individuals (and their personal experiences of spirituality), therefore, cannot be separated from one another without doing damage to both.

Life and Death

It is probably politically unwise and intellectually imprudent to compare religious institutions to ancient termite mounds. But just as ancient centuries old – now dead - termite mounds remind us that they once housed repeated generations of individuals, so too do we remember that inside the structures and forms of institutional religion human babies are born and the dead are buried. While each individual lives for a short season, religious institutions survive for multiple generations. Each generation adds its accretions to the living institutional mound of religious structures and practices. The mound's inner spirituality and shared religious climate shapes the institutional religious home or nest. Consequently, it shapes the spirituality of every individual who lives and works inside any particular living nest and vice versa.

For the nest to continue to thrive, individuals must be safe inside its shelter. A sense of predictable order and trust in the whole is needed in order for individuals to co-create a communal home inside it. For the collective whole to thrive, each Individual must feel needed and at home inside the nest. Individuals must find and then continue to make their home inside the pre-existing mound's living inner structures or nest. In such a way individuals continue the work of co-creating the living mound with other individuals. As generation after generation after generation make their home inside the nest, the mound continues to live and to grow. The living structure becomes more and more complex; it becomes

multi-layered as generation replaces generation. Its historical memory or structure becomes more densely constructed.

However, living termite mounds can be, and have been, destroyed by internal factors as well as by external factors. Destroyed from within or destroyed from without, an abandoned termite mound no longer houses a functioning termite community. No longer are babies born and cared for. No longer are the dead disposed of. To all appearances, the communal termite mound (even when its physical structures remain intact and visible for centuries) has died and every one of its living genetic descendants now lives in other termite mounds.

In a similar manner, the great American temples of the Aztecs, the Maya or the ancient Incas are no longer temples of liturgy and worship although they remain well-visited tourist attractions and anthropological dig sites. The culture (and its living communities that supported these ancient temples) collapsed under wars of conquest, disease, or under natural forces such as prolonged drought. New ideologies such as Christianity, by persuasion or coercion, replaced ancient worldviews, liturgical and ritual ideologies. New gods captured, by coercion or persuasion, and then anchored into place the people's loyalty and devotion.

While today's American indigenous cultures may and often do carry forward some of the cultural customs and ancient belief systems of these ancient temples, rituals of devotion and worship are no longer conducted there. Their people's acts of individual and communal devotion are no longer offered at these ancient altars. The people's petitions for safety are no longer heard there.

In my personal perception of these complex matters, it is impossible to separate an individual's spiritual history from his or her encounters with religious institutions and their cultural forms – either in positive or negative ways. It is impossible, to speak metaphorically, to separate a living termite colony from its mound. If a mound dies, the colony dies. If the colony dies, the mound dies. Individual and mound are, therefore, bound in a profound symbiosis of individual and community.

The Death of a Community

In human communities, the death of a religious community is particularly visible in situations where a significant number of individuals have experienced personally traumatic encounters inside the margins of the community. In short, the community has become unsafe and actively destructive for its inhabitants. Encounters, for example, with physically and sexually violent spiritual teachers or with despotic and tyrannical leaders or with the hypocritical social violence of power-and-wealth-corrupted religious institutions can cause the death of an individual's faith. It can also cause the long-term decline and ultimate death of a specific religious community.

The death of an individual's unquestioning faith and the death of communities of faith are, therefore, inextricably linked. When an individual chooses to leave his or her cradle community of faith in unbelief and unfaith, the institution loses a vital living and co-creating component. The institution is weakened from within. When a large percentage of a community's membership leaves or fails to reproduce itself with succeeding generations of believers, eventually that religious institution dies. That institution's god dies when the community and its living mound dies.

When the institution dies, that institution's particular naming of God also dies. Its liturgies and its worldview die. It may be that there are very isolated individuals who worship the Goddess Inanna of ancient (5500 BCE) Sumer (today's Iraq) but there is no global world religion that offers liturgies and rituals in her name. Thus, one the ancient world's most powerful Goddesses (Inanna) is no longer a living name for the divine. At some now distant point in time, the memes of her deity and worship liturgies that honored her failed to reproduce themselves in the commons. The living human genetic descendents of her worship now call on other gods and offer liturgies of worship inside other communities whose name for God is other than hers. I conclude, therefore, that when a living community dies, its gods die with them. Similarly, when the god's name dies in a particular community, that community of religious faith dies.

Embodiment

In addition, in my personal perception, it is impossible to separate an individual's soul or his/her spiritual life-force from the living human body. It is impossible inside intact communities of faith and praxis to separate individual faith from cultural teachings about faith without weakening the community. In a similar way it is impossible to separate an individual from his or her community of faith without weakening the faith of that individual. Either act (weakening the community and weakening the individual) create times of internal stress and feelings of estrangement, dislocation and alienation. It is in these times that assumptive worlds are first threatened and then abandoned.

As long as a human being is alive, s/he is both a physical and a spiritual being. Individuals may, however choose to be or to not be religious individuals. Thus, there is an element of the material or corporeal world inside every spiritual impulse. Equally so is the reality that there is an element of the spiritual inside every living human body and its impulses. As human beings we are, therefore, both sacred and profane. Inside our interior experienced human reality, there is no dualism; only unity. In ordinary discourse, we do not, usually at least, separate the breath of life from life itself. In a similar way we do not, usually at least, separate the human body from its life force or spirit.

The Fervent Human Desire to Believe

In her December 27, 2015 blog, *Questions from a Ewe,* the anonymous blogger enters into a discussion of "Living a Myth" in light of the 2015 movie *Spotlight.***[154]** In particular the blogger wants us to consider the fervent human desire to believe a myth – long after it is time for us to give up belief in that particular myth for a more realistic sense of the world as it is.

She writes:

> *The movie chronicles the Boston Globe's investigative journalism that led to its January 6, 2002 bombshell story about the Catholic Church knowingly leaving pedophile priests in active ministry for decades. Though individual sex abuse stories had been published throughout the previous decades, this story altered the conversation because it demonstrated that a sick, systemic culture involving hierarchy and lay people enabled and helped to perpetuate widespread abuse. It revealed a culture pretending each abuse case was simply an individual, isolated "whoopsie there" incident so as to perpetuate the myth of a perfect church.*

Seeking to protect itself from the scandal of priest sexual abusers, the Boston diocese, itself, became scandalous in its willingness to deceive the community in which it was anchored and in its pervasive disregard for the victims of sexual abuse. In turn the community colluded with the church's hierarchy in *its fervent human desire to believe in and perpetuate the myth of the perfect church.[155]*

Religious or Spiritual

In line with the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (the DSM 4),[156] I want to arbitrarily separate the word *religious* from the word *spiritual*. In real daily life for many people, these two words are interchangeable as in *s/he is a deeply religious person* or *s/he is a deeply spiritual person.* In making this arbitrary separation, I am violating the common sense wisdom of ordinary discourse.

In what follows, I follow the professional clinical work of Dr. David Lukoff, a psychology professor at the Saybrook Graduate School. Lukoff was one of the developers of the American Psychiatric Association DSM-4 diagnosis of religious and spiritual problems. Since then he has developed an on-line continuing education course to further explain the dimensions and ramifications of this set of diagnostic categories.[157]

Lukoff quotes the American Psychiatric Association category *V62.89:*

> *This category can be used when the focus of clinical attention is a religious or spiritual problem. Examples include distressing experiences that involve loss or questioning of faith, problems associated with conversion to a new faith, or questioning of other spiritual values which may not necessarily be related to an organized church or religious institution.*[158]

When asked what spirituality is, Father Thomas Ryan, CSP replies that spirituality is a *growing intimacy with God experienced through the people, events, places, and things in each day's life.* Inside that claim is the notion that as living human beings each and every one of us, are embodied spirits.[159]

Religious Problems

> *When Shadow appears as an archetype…it is quite within the possibility for a man to recognize the relative evil of his nature, but it is a rare and shattering experience for him to gaze into the face of absolute evil.*

Carl Jung[160]

According to Lukoff's online continuing education course, the sub-category, *religious problems*, includes the following:

> ➢ Loss or questioning of faith
> ➢ Change in denominational membership
> ➢ Conversion to a new faith
> ➢ Intensification of adherence to religious practices and orthodoxy[161]

Religious problems can be triggered by a variety of external or internal realities. For example, exposure to scientific concepts may challenge religious beliefs – thus triggering doubt and a loss of faith. In addition, as individuals mature and pass from childhood and adolescence into adult life, their body-mind matures and they can experience developmental crises in faith as they move from one less mature stage into a more mature one. Clinical sequellae can include (but are not limited to) the following: feelings of disenfranchised and non-acknowledged grief and loss, anger and resentment, despair and sadness, a sense of emptiness and isolation, or even an internal sense of deep relief.

In a similar manner to clinical psychology practitioners, religious or spiritual mystics have noted an experienced phenomenon called the *dark night of the soul* (the hardships or the difficulties of the soul as it learns to detach itself from the world and attach itself to its Creator).

Religious problems can also be triggered by institutional changes in memberships such as those caused by intermarriage, mobility, or change of denominations. Here individuals often experience a kind of de-stabilizing and dis-orienting loss as they move away from that which has been familiar and as they leave a valued community behind.

Religious problems may be intensified by conversion experiences or experiences of spiritual renewal such as those triggered by sermons, altar calls or spiritual retreats. They may be triggered by personal encounters with other world religions than the one an individual was born into. They may be triggered by intellectual questions and the very human experience of doubt.

In addition, religious problems may be triggered by encounters with traumatic experiences of a wide variety. In terms of this essay these encounters are (1) with a clergy person or spiritual teacher who is also a sexual assailant and (2) with a corrupted religious institution that protects and provides cover for the sexual abuser. The deeply personal experience of physical and betrayal trauma raises the question of whether there is a loving, protective God; it raises questions of being abandoned by one's faith community; it raises questions of being abandoned by God. It raises questions of whether one has been duped into basing one's previous life on false premises. Individuals may experience severe cognitive dissonance, despair, deep grief, rage and anger, hopelessness and a sense of psychic numbing. A wide range of attachment disorders such as the inability to trust others is a common experience.

When I study these categories and their definitions in light of clergy and religious leader sexual abuse phenomenons, I realize that while we can separate religious problems from spiritual problems as a heuristic device, individual victims of this abuse do not and probably cannot separate them in lived experience. From the life narratives of survivors of clergy and spiritual guru sexual abuse, we know that the loss of faith is common. We may hear, for example, a survivor comment that it is impossible to believe in a god (a specific naming of god) whose clergy repeatedly rape pre-pubescent boys and girls or vulnerable adolescents. To my way of thinking, as a pastoral thealogian, sexual abuse sequellae therefore represent both a religious and spiritual problem.

Losing faith in a particular naming of God is, nevertheless, a life-changing event for the individual who once believed in that God. It changes the survivor's inner relationship with the sacred and it changes the survivor's outer relationships with the community that fostered these early pre-trauma belief systems. It is no exaggeration to say that loss of faith as a consequence of sexual and religious abuse is a world-view altering event. That pre-violation inner guidance system about self, others and world is forever changed by the act(s) of violation and betrayal. For the life to proceed, a new guidance system or rudder and anchor will need to be created.

Spiritual Problems

> *When people can't go to church, its not only the religion that they lose but its that ability to congregate, to socialize every Sunday, to go to dinners and go to parties and to go to weddings and go to funerals. It's a social event which everybody needs.* [When s/he is unable to participate in these social events], *the victim feels alone*.

Mitchell Garabedian[162]

Lukoff notes that *spiritual problems* are defined as resulting from or the sequellae of distressing life experiences that involve a personal relationship with a transcendent being or life-force but are not necessarily related to an organized church of religious institution.[163] In his online study guide about this relatively new set of diagnostic criteria, Lukoff identifies a group of intensely personal experiences as potential seedbeds of a spiritual crisis. Spiritual problems are, therefore, defined inside the following categories:

- ➢ Spiritual emergence problems arising in one's relationship to that which is transcendent
- ➢ Mystical experience
- ➢ Near-death experiences
- ➢ Meditation and spiritual practices
- ➢ Psychic experiences
- ➢ Visionary experiences
- ➢ Shamanic experiences
- ➢ Alien encounters
- ➢ Experiences of being possessed[164]

Some of the sequellae noted are a total and discontinuous upheaval of the personality, spontaneous and uncontrollable non-ordinary states of consciousness, a sense of loss of personal control, involuntary muscle movements, interrupted human relationships, fear of being insane, intense anxiety, a felt sense of God's absence, a sense of depersonalization, a sense of total oneness with all that is; emotional turmoil and confusion, depression, agitation, and a sense that one's inner *and* external world has forever changed.

After reading Lukoff, I conclude that *religious problems* are those problems in an individual's life which, while having a personal component, are issues and problems which originate inside an individual's relationships to organized or institutionalized religious experience and their encounters with that religious institution's theological or metaphysical teachings. They are, therefore, in their origins or essence, not considered to be spiritual problems.

I similarly conclude that *spiritual problems* are those problems which arise inside an individual as these relate to his or her personal spirituality and/or soul. They may be triggered by real-time events in the outer world or by elusive yet overwhelming events in the individual's inner world. They may have some isolated interpersonal components – such as disbelief in the goodness of others or mistrust in others' trustworthiness – but are more related to phenomenons of the inner world. They are, therefore, deeply experiential.

It was of interest to me that one of the differential diagnoses which Lukoff suggests must be made for individuals living inside a spiritual crisis or spiritual emergency is that of the various psychoses. Psychotic experience is also a deeply disturbing and life-altering experiential reality for many persons. In both psychotic thinking and in spiritual emergencies, the person engages in primary process (or magical) thinking. Individuals trapped inside psychotic thinking and individuals trapped inside spiritual emergencies can exhibit similar behaviors and cognitive-emotional changes. Both can be trapped within overt psychotic perceptions of the realities or non-realities of the internal and external world. In both situations, human judgment about the external and factual or even the common interpretive realities of the world can be quite impaired. This reality is, therefore, the backdrop of the need to do a thorough personal history and psychological evaluation in order to make a satisfactory differential diagnosis.

While Lukoff does not raise other traumatic events and encounters as factors in the development of spiritual and emotional problems, it seems to me that personal encounters with the pernicious shadow side of organized or institutionalized religious experience – particularly where any form of physical or sexual violence and abuse is a component: this too is a breeding ground for religious problems *and* spiritual problems. Thus, an individual's encounters with corrupted institutionalized religious experience also can affect an individual's perception of the conceptual and experienced worlds encompassed within the words *religious* and *spiritual*.

The betrayal of the embodied self by sexual violence is, therefore, complicated by the betrayal of the internal self – or soul - and its religious-spiritual world view. When the perpetrators of these correlated abuses (individual and institutional abuse) are spiritual or religious leaders, the betrayal is, it seems to me, magnified because an element of that which is both immanent and transcendent is introduced. It may seem to the victim-survivor of sexual abuse, therefore, as if God has raped the individual or as if God has betrayed and directly or indirectly attacked the individual.

Thus, abusive encounters with corrupted organized institutional religion and its leaders can create spiritual problems as well as religious ones.

While by our words in this chapter, we can separate the lived experience of spirituality from the lived experience of religious life, the two realities are not so

easily separated in any given individual's embodied life experiences. It is important, therefore, to be aware of the arbitrary nature of this linguistic and heuristic separation as we begin to form and then examine a theoretical construct of *soul murder* consequent to clergy sexual abuse.

As a linguistic construct the separation or divorce of religious problems from spiritual problems needs, therefore, to be tested against the real life experiences of individuals who have been sexually or physically victimized in the name of their God or in the name of their particular religious institution.

Inside the culturally socialized and embodied human psyche and human soul, individual and communal religious experiences often blend into spiritual experiences and vice versa. Thus, troublesome religious problems can be experienced as spiritual problems and vice versa.

For example, in my liturgy courses with Brian Wren, I learned to think about religious liturgy as that religious event or that communal religious happening where the individual is simultaneously submerged within a particular worshipping community and mystically floats above it in ways which reveal the immanent and transcendent – the divine. As the community joins in the very human acts of collective worship and liturgy, the goal is to free and reveal the immanent presence of the transcendent to both the community and to the individual. My best personal example of this revelatory phenomenon lodges within Mennonite communal a capella singing. I have long thought that while Mennonites are not a sacramental religious community, that communal singing functions as a sacramental reality for many of the community's participating members.

In particular, when Mennonites sing the doxology, *Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow,* this beloved hymn unites us beyond the words. The hymn, as it is sung, crosses the barriers of age, gender, race, sexual and gender orientation, nationality or other forms of ethnicity. This is perhaps the most beloved hymn inside Mennonite communities in the USA and Canada. Even now, living in voluntary exile outside a Mennonite community, I am brought to tears by you-tube renditions of this song. It expresses my homesickness for my now-absent, discredited, and utterly destroyed experiences within my cradle faith community.[165]

As we begin, collectively across denominational borders, to think about the various religious and spiritual problems faced by the survivors of sexual abuse inside religious communities, we need to keep in mind these heuristic definitions.

Perhaps it can help us if we think of religious issues as originating within the theoretical-theological, i.e., propositional, aspects or managerial organizing frameworks of organized systems of worship and if we think of spiritual issues as originating in the fully embodied and, therefore, the experienced or uniquely personal aspects of human spirituality and the human soul.

Since religious issues and pathologies tend to bleed into spiritual issues and since spiritual issues and pathologies tend to bleed into religious issues, this abstract separation of the two is primarily for heuristic purposes. But such an intellectual division of categories should allow us, I think, to create a lexicon or taxonomy of sequellae that can be used diagnostically by clinicians and their clients alike to understand the religious and spiritual aftermaths of sexual abuse as well as the religious and spiritual aftermaths of institutional abuse.

To begin to understand the complexities of these issues as they present themselves clinically we need to make an initial survey of the terrain in which post-traumatic religious and spiritual pathologies arise and thrive. To do this we need to pay attention to the way words and organizing constructs are defined and used.

Additional Resources

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http://www.spiritualcompetency.com/

Chapter Eight
Estrangement, Separation and Alienation of the Soul

He who is able to love himself is able to love others. He who has learned to overcome self-contempt has overcome his contempt for others. But the depth of our separation lies just in the fact that we are not capable of a great and merciful divine love toward ourselves. On the contrary, in each of us there is an instinct for self-destruction, which is as strong as our instinct of self-preservation. In our tendency to abuse and destroy others, there is an open or hidden tendency to abuse and to destroy ourselves. Cruelty towards other is always also cruelty toward ourselves. Nothing is more obvious than the split in both our unconscious life and conscious personality.

Paul Tillich[166]

Introductory Comments

In this brief essay I want to do a close reading of Paul Tillich's (1886-1965) Harvard Chapel sermon, *You Are Accepted.*[167] This sermon is generally regarded by both theologians and lay readers to be Tillich's most influential sermon. Early on he establishes his goal for this sermon: *let us therefore try to penetrate the deeper levels of our life…*[168]

Beginning with the concept of sin, he boldly asserts that *sin is separation.*[169] Separation, by its very nature, is estrangement. Its manifestation is threefold:

➢ Separation of the human individual from herself or himself in a form of internal splitting
➢ Separation of the human individual from other human individuals
➢ Separation of the human individual from the Ground of Being

In Tillich's view we humans share a state of separation with all other sentient beings. However, humans are unique in that they know they are separated and, thus, they suffer from their knowledge of separation, their knowledge of their estrangements. In our state of separation we know that we are estranged from that to which we belong. In this separation it is not only our passive experiences of being separated but also our active participation in the separation of the self from itself, others, and the Ground of Being. This is, according to Tillich, the nature of human sin. Sin is equated, therefore, with this existential separation of the human self from all that is.

Conversely and perhaps paradoxically, grace is equated with the state of unity. We human beings could not know our separation if we had not already experienced unity. *Grace is the reunion of life with life. Grace transforms fate into a meaningful destiny; it changes guilt into confidence and courage.*[170]

Tillich, having established the reality of separation as sin and unity as grace, takes us into the inner regions of the self where there is a constant struggle between separation and reunion or unity.

> *Our generation knows more than the generation of our fathers about the hidden hostility in the ground of our souls. Today we know about the profuse aggressiveness in every being…Are we not almost always ready to abuse everybody and everything, although in a very refined way, for the pleasure of such self-elevation, for an occasion for boasting? The madness of the Nazis and the cruelty of the organized lynching mobs in the South provide too easy an excuse for us to turn our own thoughts from our own selves….The strangeness of life is evident in the fact that we can know all this, and yet live today, this morning, tonight, as though we were completely ignorant. And I refer to the most sensitive people among us. In both mankind and nature, life is separated from life. Estrangement prevails among all things that life. Sin abounds.[171]*

Noting that the path out of our alienation from ourselves, others, and the Ground of Being, Tillich boldly asserts that grace or and our awareness of our unity with all that is often strikes us in the following kinds of situations when:

- ➢ We sense life is meaningless and empty
- ➢ We have violated someone we have loved and/or are estranged from
- ➢ When we experience disgust for our own being, our weaknesses
- ➢ When we sense and experience disgust for our own lack of direction
- ➢ When the longed for perfection in our individual and communal lives does not appear
- ➢ When despair destroys joy and courage to go on

In the most quoted section of this sermon, Tillich continues:

*You are accepted. **You are accepted**, accepted by that which is greater than you and the name of which you do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later. Do not try to do anything now; perhaps later you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. **Simply accept the fact that you are accepted** (emphases his).*

He goes on to note that:

*After such an experience we may not be better than before and we may not believe more than before. But everything is transformed. In that moment grace conquers sin, and reconciliation bridges the gulf of estrangement. And nothing is demanded of this experience, no religious or moral or intellectual presupposition, nothing but **acceptance** (emphasis his).**[172]***

Tillich notes that when we receive the power to accept ourselves as we are, broken and estranged; we become able to say yes to ourselves. In these moments of knowing we are accepted by that which is nameless and perhaps un-nameable we become whole. Self-hate and self-contempt disappear and we become re-united with ourselves.

Becoming whole within ourselves, we are then freed of the need or desire to hate others, to hold them in contempt.

Experiencing acceptance and wholeness, our relationships with others also change. We begin to understand our unity with all that is: creation, others, ourselves, and the Ground of Being Itself.

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Chapter Nine
Religious Duress

Back then we were youngsters in a world where authority was accepted without question, and where certain authorities with sanctioned access to children – clergy, teachers, coaches, and scout leaders among them – were almost godlike in stature. In the case of priests, they may as well have been God, at least in the view of adults like my mother, daughter of Irish immigrants who was born and raised in Boston and who brought up her children with the Baltimore Catechism. You won't find a hint that the clergy could be anything but pure in that book.

It was a time of blind obedience and absolute trust of elders. And it was a world where monsters cloaked in authority roamed free, although no grown-up warned us of that.

G. Wayne Miller[173]

Introductory Comments

American psychiatrist and former Maryknoll nun Marianne Benkert and American Dominican Roman Catholic canon lawyer and expert trial witness Father Thomas Doyle have proposed that the experience of *religious duress* is a significant factor in the lives of Roman Catholic children and adults abused by clergy and other members of the religious hierarchy.[174] They define religious duress in the following terms:

Religious duress is a unique kind of threat and constraint involuntarily experienced by some members of the Roman Catholic Church as a result of religious indoctrination and training. Fear, awe, and respect for the clergy foster the development and actualization of religious duress. This phenomenon can seriously impede a person's capacity to accurately perceive and evaluate abusive reactions perpetrated on them by clergy. This constraint poses an impediment to emotional and spiritual development. Internalized religious duress confuses and socially psychologically overwhelms such individuals and renders them incapable of absorbing their sexual trauma. The consequent feelings of numbness and immobility distort their perception of reality. It then becomes impossible for the individual to react in a manner that would protect and promote their emotional growth and spiritual wellbeing.[175]

According to Benkert and Doyle, the experiences of religious duress inside the Roman Catholic form of Christianity represent a dark side of their religious tradition.[176] In what follows, I am going to substitute the Jungian concept of the shadow vis-à-vis human encounters with evil for their language of *the dark side*.

The Angry God and Fear-based Compliance

A fear-based belief system among the laity, in which the angry god is placated by an ontologically different, and thus divinely perfected, person (the priest) creates reverential fear of said clergy person. In fear-based faith systems, members of the ordained clergy or leaders of the institutional spiritual guild mediate between ordinary members of the institutional church (the laity) and the gods. Such a fear-based system allows an unscrupulous clergy person or any other member of the ordained caste to manipulate this internalized belief. Such manipulation facilitates clergy abusers whose abuse of the laity takes many forms.[177]

It seems to me that when the priest (or other clergy person such as a minister) is seen by individuals and the entire community as a *special person, favored by the gods,* to challenge that divinely protected human being is to challenge the gods. Ordinary human men and women – seen by their community as set-apart and set-above other ordinary human men and women, boys and girls, become psychologically and sociologically seen as special. They are placed on pedestals and elevated above ordinary members of the community. As minor gods they must be deferred to and obeyed. In addition, they, and their actions, must never be questioned.

If we are taught as children and adolescents that it is a sin to question the gods and their human teachers on earth or to question their teachings about human life, then it becomes a sin to question or to challenge the human beings who mediate spiritual teachings to us. It is a sin to challenge their behaviors as well.

In the course of a lifetime, it generally takes some kind of cognitive dissonance for individuals to begin to question these childhood and adolescent teachings and their concomitant and deeply embedded childhood beliefs. Until that happens, many adults live as if their childhood beliefs and spirituality are irrevocable and unchangeable. It is when the illogical and unbelievable presents itself to us that we begin to question. It is when the unbearable happens to us in our life journey that we are driven to uncover and adopt a maturing spirituality – one that is not based on primary process thinking[178] or magical thinking.[179]

The Alter Christus (Another Christ)

> *The priest is indeed another Christ, or in some way he is himself a continuation of Christ.*

> Pope Pius XI (1857- 1939)
> Encyclical on the Priesthood[180]

> *After God, the priest is everything! Only in heaven will he fully realize what he is.*

> St. John Vianney (1786-1859)
> Patron Saint of Priests

Contemporary Catholic teaching about priests says that that at the moment of their ordination, they become *Alter Christus.* Specifically, this refers to the priest during his consecration of the elements of the Eucharist. When a priest performs the Eucharist, *it is Christ who transforms the bread and wine through the priest speaking the words of institution. The great journey of every priest is the movement from understanding himself as an instrument of the Lord to understanding himself as a priest in Christ's own image.*[181]

At the moment of ordination, Catholic theology teaches lay people, the priest become *ontologically different from* lay members of the Community of faith. Here is Cardinal O'Conner's (1920-2000) take on this ontological difference:

> *In my judgment, this ontological nature of the priesthood is critical. We don't just put on vestments; we don't just receive an assignment. Neither makes us priests. We become priests at ordination. There is an "ontological change" in our spiritual nature. Such is a profound mystery. Is it too bold an analogy to compare the change to Christ the Son of God's retaining his Divinity while becoming a man? Or to observe that after bread becomes the Sacred Body of Christ, it still tastes like bread and feels like bread, but it is now the body of Christ? There has been an ontological change. A cup of wine still smells like wine and tastes like wine, but it is now the Blood of Christ. At ordination an ontological change takes place.*[182]

Not only are priests taught about the ontological difference that sets priests off and above the laity. This theology of the priesthood is inculcated in members of the laity. It is reinforced by the priest's central role in performing the sacraments of the church. Visually, it is reinforced by the priest's robes and vestments during the Mass. Thus by word, actions, and by iconic imagery the people in the pews are taught that the priest needs to be reverenced in the same way that Christ is reverenced. While it is likely that most Catholic adults recognize the humanity of their priest, for children with concrete thinking, the priest becomes not only a

representation of the divine, he becomes divine. Therefore, what he teaches and asks represent sacred and holy teachings or commandments to be obeyed.

Institutional Governance

> Denial is always in the service of something.
>
> Laurie J. Ferguson[183]

The shadow side of Christian experience in a Roman Catholic voice emerged, according to Benkert and Doyle, inside institutionalized hierarchical ruling patterns of dominance, control, power, and authority. These cultural patterns of rule are buttressed by Catholic theologies of the priesthood, religious life, sin, salvation, the sacraments, and an explicit hierarchical theology regarding the role of the laity vis-à-vis the role of the clergy.

Many Roman Catholic authors talk about their denomination's expectations (obligations) for the denomination's laity as *pray, pay and obey.* Members of the laity are instructed to follow the teachings of the church, promulgated by the papacy and clergy, as essential to their spiritual welfare in this life as well as their eternal salvation in the afterlife. Automatic obedience and instantaneous deference to the religious institution's clerical caste of bishops and priests, therefore, are the visible markers of a faithful lay spirituality. In one of his speeches, Father Thomas Doyle critiques this kind of lay spirituality as a dependent spirituality – a lay spirituality of dependency on the clerical caste and its internalized practices of control and rule.[184]

Evangelical, Protestant and Anabaptist forms of spiritual dependency on the clergy for their salvation may have slightly different theological and sociological roots but they are also visible when we look closely.

Pervasive denial about the presence of abusive clergy provides us with diagnostic questions. Recognition and understanding the presence of collective denial is central to our abilities to intervene successfully as we seek to assist those who have been victimized by religious leaders. Countering denial with truth-telling is essential in our efforts to heal the wounds of individuals and the wound of the gathered community.

For example, the Rev. Laurie J. Ferguson writes in a Presbyterian context (and I both paraphrase and comment on her important work) about pathological communal responses to the disclosure of sexually abusive clergy:[185]

- Pastors and other religious leaders are seen by the laity as speaking for and on behalf of God

- Therefore, these religious leaders represent grace and forgiveness, knowledge and power in their essential being as pastors. Thus, pastors are often seen as being an essential conduit for lay salvation
- Congregations, therefore, often view their pastor as perfect and their congregation as a mirror image of that perfection; by identification, they therefore see themselves as living in a reflected state of salvific perfection
- Congregations, falling into this pattern of perfectionistic thinking, are filled with individuals who give up personal or individual responsibility for their own spiritual growth. They do this by forming a dependency relationship with the minister – in which they piggy-back their salvation to his spiritual charisma
- Living on borrowed godliness and goodness, the laity live, therefore, in a state of spiritual immaturity
- The minister is idealized. After accusations of sexual abuse are credibly lodged, members of the laity simply refuse to recognize any wrong-doing including the recognition of sin and the presence of betrayal in the minister's conduct. In my language, not Ferguson's, there is a cognitive disconnect between what they believe the minister to be and what the minister's accusers reveal him or her to be. This cognitive disconnect is managed by refusing to believe the minister could do wrong deeds – such as the sexual abuse of children, adolescents, or vulnerable adults. This is essentially the same cognitive and social processes that Father Doyle calls denial and minimization

The laity, in their reliance upon their minister's perfection, thus feels compelled to defend the minister. As they do this they may refuse to believe and, therefore, chose to ignore the suffering of the victimized individual(s) who bring charges against the minister. They may berate or demonize the victim(s) of abuse as liars. They may blame the abused individual for the abuse – in essence, causing the minister to sin. They may choose to cast doubt on the integrity of the victims and the credibility of their accusations. This refusal to recognize the suffering of the victimized individual is exacerbated by the community's perception of power (the minister's) and their perception of the relative powerlessness of victims (such as a child or a woman). In essence, the community that lives in denial casts its sociological and spiritual and theological preferential option for the powerful victimizer and against the victimized powerless ones[186]

To summarize, in Ferguson's words:

> When lay church leaders heard there was an allegation of sexual misconduct against their minister, the most typical collective responses were a refusal to listen, hostility, dismissal of evidence, and then, if the identity of the victim became known, ostracizing the victim, the victim's family, and at times anyone who stood with them…The response of the laity was total – complete – denial.

This primary defense was rigidly overused, not just by individuals, but also by congregational collectives. The defensiveness led to splitting, scapegoating, selective amnesia, and repetitive retraumatization. Congregations "refused to know" and in this sense often functioned much as the Roman Catholic hierarchy when confronted with sexually abusive priests.[187]

Institutional Betrayal of the Laity

Inside a rigidified and calcified institutional culture of authoritarian clericalism, the human managers of the institution *and* its clergy have betrayed the laity - the communal people of God. Doyle and Benkert note that it is essential to distinguish between (1) Christianity's authentic theology and praxis which reflect the essence of the Jesus message inside Christianity and (2) *the perversion of Christian theology by unscrupulous clerics and their lay enablers.[188]*

Inasmuch as the Roman Catholic Church's code of canon law codifies cultural forms of authoritarian institutional pathology, what we see is both a codified theology of governance and a dysfunctional world-wide pattern of organized structures of worship and governance.[189] According to Benkert and Doyle, the institutional church, its governance and its theology of obedience to clerics and bishops creates patterns of religious duress for Catholic laity.[190]

The organization of clerical governance by the hierarchy is commonly described as infected by the social virus of *clericalism.* Clericalism is the culturally embedded expression of Catholicism's institutionalized clergy and administrative culture. As I have read about clericalism in a Roman Catholic voice, I think about this as the world wide patriarchy expressed in a specific religious voice. I am equally sure that this authoritarian, patriarchal virus infects other Christian denominations and other-than-Christian religious or spiritual teaching communities as well.

Father Thomas Doyle says this about clericalism:

I see clericalism as one of the most prominent and important causes for this entire phenomenon. The attitude is that the clergy are somehow removed and above other Catholics and that we have to be protected at all costs. I think this is a heresy. I think it's an evil virus that infects the institutional church, where the church is identified with the clergy and it should be identified with the people. The victims in these cases are the church. They are the most important part – not the bishops, not the chancery officers, or the monsignors; it's the victims and their families.[191]

Clericalism is, therefore, a toxic interactive form of clergy and lay spirituality as well as a manifestation of institutionalized clergy culture *and* clergy spirituality. In addition to authoritarianism, its virulent presence is marked by narcissm.[192] The

good of the church, in such a model, becomes associated with or represented as the good of the human managers or the institutional structures of the church.

In the context of clergy sexual abuse, some of the behavioral markers of this devotion to the human good of the bishop or the priest or the institutional church are lying, secrecy, attacks on those who disagree, attacks on victims, and attacks on victim advocates. As I've read about the 4 billion dollar price tag the official United States Catholic Church has spent in settlement payments to victims despite their efforts to fight truth-telling and full disclosure, it is clear institutional financial concerns take precedence over spiritual ones in the minds of the Church's kyriarchy.

The Need to be Obeyed and the Need to Obey

What becomes visible when we think about authoritarian patriarchal religious structures is that they are anchored inside structures of interpersonal dominance, elite power and bureaucratic control. In turn, these structures of dominance, power and control are anchored and buttressed by specific theological propositions. For example, many Catholics are taught that Jesus Christ established the Catholic Church and its seven sacraments as the only path to eternal salvation. To be eligible to participate in the sacraments, Catholic laity are instructed that obedience to the church – and its human messengers, their priests – is essential. Eternal salvation, therefore, is mediated to the faithful laity by the clergy and by the clergy's supervisor, the Bishop.

In various doctrinal teachings about the ontological difference of ordained priests from ordinary Catholics, there is a certain kind of theological conflation in which the church's bishops and the priests which they supervise are identified as human manifestations of divinity – most specifically the father God and the divine son, Jesus Christ. Richard G. Malloy, SJ explains ontological change in this manner:

> *Ordination confers an indelible spiritual character which cannot be repeated or conferred temporarily…The vocation and mission received on the day of his ordination mark him permanently.*[193]

In Catholic theology, therefore, ordination permanently configures the ordained priest to Christ.[194] Once ordained and so configured, the priest acts always in Christ's name and his humanity is more closely united to the person of Christ.[195]

One consequence of such theological formulations of the priesthood is the elevation of the priest above the laity. Priests, individually and collectively, therefore, see the priest as more perfect and more spiritual than the laity.[196] This teaching is passed on to the laity by means of the papal encyclicals, the catechism, the liturgy, and the weekly homilies given by priests.

In such a manner inside patriarchal religious cultures, such as the contemporary Roman Catholic Church, human priestly power gets conflated with divine power; human wisdom gets conflated with divine wisdom. Human rule and human managers of that rule are actively conflated with divine rule by means of so-called divinely ordained management structures and liturgies or rituals of ordination.

In such a situation, members of the laity are actively instructed to believe that the church's theology of itself originated in the divine will for human life. By the church's catechism and by its liturgy, the laity is trained to believe that salvation is only brought to them or mediated to them by members of the hierarchy, the clergy and by their regular participation in the sacraments. Consequently, we see the emphasis on obedience and conformity to church law rather than critical thinking and reflection. We see a deflected or inherited, and therefore other-related and immature, spirituality. This is not a spirituality which allows for critical thinking and spiritual exploration. It is not, therefore, a mature adult spirituality.[197] In addition, it is also not a developmentally appropriate spirituality for children, adolescents and adults.

One consequence of this developmentally stunted spirituality is that children, adolescents and adults are made vulnerable to abusive clergy who prey upon their gullibility and the inculcated belief that every priest is ontologically of a different nature, without sin, without sexual desire, and without ordinary human nature. Priests (and the bishops who supervise them) are, therefore, seen as perfected human beings.

What such a systemic understanding of the priesthood means is that what bishops or priests demand of their parishes and their people is total and unflagging obedience to church dogma. This usually translates into obedience to a specific bishop or to priest.

The many and often disparate influences of clerical cultures are often unconscious ones inside any organized religious group. These influences shape individual and communal behavior. As is true in many social institutions, the administrative practices of the organized church's ruling elite are uncritically supported by ordinary men and women in the pyramidal ranks below the elite. This is especially true in the hierarchical organizational structures of world-wide Catholicism where it is not only human structures but also divinely ordained ones.

In their excellent book, *Crimes of Obedience,* social psychologists Kelman and Hamilton note that inside authoritarian cultures, we find people at the top of the organizational hierarchy who need to be obeyed and who, therefore, demand to be obeyed. We find as well, in the lower ranks of individuals inside pyramidal and patriarchal organizations individuals who need to obey.

The archetype of religious obedience, therefore, has the demand to be obeyed as it constellates inside of the hierarchy in relationships with members of the laity – children, adolescents, and adults. The demand to be obeyed is met, it turn, by a constellating need to obey inside the laity. The double-bind nature of this archetype is the question of human salvation in the after-life. If one can only be saved by total and unquestioning obedience, there is no standing room for doubt. In addition, there can be no allowances made for resistance and disobedience.

Thus, we have a reciprocal cultural form or archetypal form in which those who need to be obeyed control those who need to obey.[198]   Inside the context of eternal salvation or eternal damnation, this control is absolute. There can be no deviations from unquestioning obedience if one is to find eternal life bearable.

The Robes of Power[199]

> *Its alright for the groundhog to become enamored of his own shadow but it is unbecoming in Catholic clergy…Sermons that project Catholic life as nothing more than blind obedience to laws alienate all lay people – immensely.*

<div align="center">Anthony M. Stevens-Arroyo[200]</div>

> *A priest, who suffers from narcissism, or any type of personality disorder, is not a good shepherd…When a priest has a personality disorder, the entire parish suffers.*

<div align="center">Anonymous #1[201]</div>

When we add absolutist teachings about the divine will for human life to patterns of clerical governance, we human beings construct another socio-cultural form – the pattern of the double-bind. In a double-bind situation, the social field is closed. Inside this closed field, individuals must respond to ambiguous demands for their obedience. In a clergy rape situation, therefore, the potential or actual victim has limited choices of response and none of them will bring him or her to safety or freedom. Whatever choice the victimized individual makes inside the closed field of Catholic theology and culture, therefore, cannot bring personal freedom. In the view of the judging mind, to disobey a priest is a wrong or a sinful decision. The choices – disobey the sexually abusive priest and go to hell or obey the sexually abusive priest and go to hell form a mental-behavioral trap that

can hold victims paralyzed by fear and terror for decades. Inside this closed interpersonal field, therefore, the victim (particularly a child victim) has no place to go to find freedom or relief.

We know the autonomic nervous system has three responses to overwhelming stress in times of trauma: flee, fight, or freeze.[202] When the individual can neither

run nor fight back, it is common for the body to freeze. When this happens, the mind continues recording and storing the abuse narrative and the personality may actually dissociate or disintegrate in order to protect the body. In attending multiple professional workshops with Peter Levine[203] and his associates, Bellaruth Naperstek and her associates,[204] and in reading Judith Herman[205] and Bessel van der Kolk[206], I became convinced that newly emerging clinical research brings hope to survivors. The route to healing is through the violated body – not necessarily through the conflicted mind. The re-knitting of body and mind inside a truthful life narrative is one route to healing. Individuals do not need to remain trapped inside the freeze response and the fold response to traumatic life events. Healing, therefore, is indeed possible.

A Zen Story

A Zen masters says to his students, *if you say this stick is real, I will beat you; if you say this stick is not real, I will beat you; and if you say nothing, I will beat you. This is a no-win situation for the student. Any potential student behavior results in the same non-desired effect.*

What I learned about Gregory Bateson's work on the double-bind, is that when victims can shatter the bind from within by metacommentary or exit the binding situation, immense psychic and physical energy is released. Caught inside the double-bind the victim is also captured in anger or rage because s/he cannot find a way to leave the binding situation nor can she satisfy the contradictory nature of the command system. The textbook example here is the father who says to his child, *be spontaneous.* However, the child behaviorally responds to this command, it is not spontaneous behavior. Thus, the child is in the wrong no matter what choice of behavior s/he chooses.

This energy is usually, according to Bateson and his followers, the energy of anger and rage. There is the energy of realizing one is captured inside a double-bind communication. There is also the energy of anger and rage inside the creator of the double-bind as he or she loses control over the subject of the double bind; as s/he sees that the intended victim cannot be held inside the closed field. Bateson often talked about meta-commentary as the best way to break the double-bind.

If one can simply walk away from the field of the contradictory command, one is free. But, in many trauma-inducing situations, it is impossible to leave the field of the double-bind message. Meta-commentary, since it releases rage in the creator of the double-bind can be very dangerous. When there is no way out of this *damned if I do and damned if I don't* milieu, abuse is just around the corner.

In the above Zen teaching tale, a student walked up to the teacher, grabbed the stick and broke it into pieces. This is a behavioral form of meta-commentary.

Einstein's principle applies. *No human problem can be solved at the same level of consciousness that created it.*

It is totally unrealistic to think that a six year old child or even a sixteen year old adolescent could do appropriate meta-commentary on Catholic theology to an abusive priest as that priest begins to groom him, to physically abuse or sexually abuse her. As Benkert and Doyle note, victims often freeze – unable to create any action that frees them from the priest's control and abusive actions. Not only are there developmental issues of brain and central nervous system maturation here – the child's ability to cognitively understand and process what is happening. There are also specific issues of church teaching which reinforce the child's vulnerability to abuse.

There are, thus, limits to this awareness of double-bind communication practices as a political and personal strategy for avoiding clergy sexual abuse. However, in the therapy of adults who seek to heal the wounds of child sexual abuse, construction of a meta-narrative can be immensely healing in that the structure of the double-bind becomes visible and the individual can shatter it and its post-victimization hold on her or him after the fact.

Anonymous #2 writes:

> *We need to stick with the church and receive the Sacraments in order to get to Heaven. This is the church founded by Jesus in the year 33 AD so leaving it is not an option. And where would we go anyway?*[207]

When I read this comment on the world-wide web, I saw it as an example that fits what Benkert and Doyle are describing – a total inability to move free from the church and the sacraments because inside the mental construct of this individual the church – no matter how abusive – is the only route to salvation in this life and in the hereafter. This is the commentary of an individual who has received the church's catechism and its teachings about its own history whole and who does not question the church's teachings about itself at all. Thus, this individual exists in a closed theological system with no exit. This is an individual who could be abused.

Authoritarian, Pyramidal Systems of Church Governance

In authoritarian, absolutist pyramidal systems, those at the top of the pyramid control resources to money and power. They control access to information. They control the desired performance of subordinates. In addition, inside the teachings of Catholic theology they control access to God and to eternal salvation. In addition, they rule over those in the lower ranks. In religious systems they purport, as well, to control access of divine approval in this life and to eternal salvation in the afterlife.

In addition, access to institutional information and resources are limited to those in the upper ranks. A climate of secrecy and the *bella figura flourish.*[208] As noted above, patriarchal religious systems are systems in which authoritarianism thrives. There are people whose duty is to obey and there are people whose role and power overtly or covertly includes the social demand or command that they are to be obeyed.

In Stanley Milgram's studies of authoritarianism,[209] he discovered that most individuals did not question the authority (and thus their commands) of people who wore clothing that emphasized their accoutrements of privilege, position and power – such as accomplice actors wearing lab coats and stethoscopes to represent doctors or the clipboards and charts of researchers or the socially recognized robes and academic hoods for college professors.

Thus, the professional clerical garments such as the priestly collar or liturgical vestments worn by members of the clergy to celebrate the Eucharist or other sacraments emphasize their difference from the laity. The robes and collar emphasize the individual's status in life – a status which confers social power to command the obedience of their congregations or dioceses. These forms of clerical dress serve to legitimate the authority and power position of the clergy over the laity. They also serve to provide unquestioned and unsupervised access of the clergy into the lives of the laity. Above all, they speak to the belief that members of the ordained clergy are elevated above the laity.

Zimbardo's important work at Stanford[210] noted the importance of uniforms in creating a social atmosphere inside of which ordinary individuals – wearing the uniform of a specific controlling group – are freed to do individual and collective anti-social or violent acts that they might never do in ordinary clothing inside ordinary life. There is something about the dehumanizing power of uniforms to unleash acts of individual cruelty when confronted with dependent or captive groups. Clergy dress is a uniform much like nurses' whites are a uniform. Seeing a clerical collar, individuals behave in very different ways than they do when there is no clerical collar. It is quite likely, therefore, that clergy have more in common with Zimbardo's study of the impact of uniforms on behavior.

Inside religious systems and various denominations, the religious leader is seen not only to manifest human authority. He or she is seen as mediating God's divine authority. He speaks, therefore, in the human voice of the transcendent God. The human ordained speaker is rarely, if ever, perceived as speaking only in his personal non-divine human voice. In short, the religious community is taught to believe that the priestly or ministerial human being mediates between the community with all of its human needs and the divine with all of its demands and commandments.

If God is represented by his human spokesperson as a God of love, compassion and mercy, the community will have one set of responses to these divine

commandments as mediated by the clergy person. If, however, God is represented as an angry, judging, and wrathful God then the people, individually and collectively, will have another, usually more fearful, set of responses. If obedience to religious law is emphasized, communal and individual spiritualities will be shaped more by fear and duty than by concepts of personal freedom and moral/spiritual development.

In many of his papers, speeches and news media interviews Father Thomas Doyle notes that the contemporary Roman Catholic Church is the world's only remaining absolute monarchy.[211] Occupying the top of this pyramidal religious structure is the pope. Next are the princes of the church – its cardinals. Next in the line of power are the bishops who are subject only to the pope. This three-tiered layer of power and control governs the religious and daily ordinary lives of diocesan priests, members of religious orders, and people in the pews. As noted above, obedience to religious law *and* to the interpreters of that law are emphasized as the pathway to eternal salvation for members of the lower castes within the church – the lower clergy and the laity.

Reflecting on more than thirty years of clinical and advocacy work, Benkert and Doyle note that the shadow side of today's Roman Catholic clerical culture supports the clergy perpetrator of abuse and institutionally provides cover for him – a cover that denies the presence of abuse, minimizes its effects in the lives of victims as well as in the community at large, and shifts blame from the perpetrator and the clerical hierarchy to the victims of abuse and their supporters – thus seeking to protect and maintain the clerical culture.

> *Catholic victims, conditioned by their religious indoctrination, look on the clergy-abuser with a mixture of fear and awe. The clerical attitude of superiority and power elicit emotional security in the victim. These strong feelings about clerics often impede victims from recognizing the seductive patterns the abuser is using to court them. The awe, fear and wonder experienced by the victims cause a significant degree of internal stress best described as* **religious duress** *[emphasis mine]*. *This is a kind of fear inspired in victims that so constrains them that they cannot extricate themselves from abusers. In many ways religious duress is similar to the notion of* **reverential fear** *[emphasis mine], the internalized reverence one has for a religious authority figure.*[212] [213]

Reverential Fear

> *Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways.*

> Psalm 128: 1

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

Proverbs 1:7

A variety of online commentaries provide a beginning exegesis of reverential fear.[214] Hebrew verbs and Greek nouns are dissected as these have been translated into English. Potential meanings for the phrase *to fear the Lord* can include all of the following:

> ➢ Positive reverence for
> ➢ Profound respect for the majesty of God
> ➢ An attitude of respect for
> ➢ An attitude of awe
> ➢ Honoring
> ➢ A fear of God's discipline or punishment for sin
> ➢ Being terrified by
> ➢ A pre-requisite for human wisdom and knowledge
> ➢ Fear of God's power and the potential of divine retribution
> ➢ A wholesome dread of displeasing God
> ➢ In a poverty of human spirit, realizing God's majesty
> ➢ Servile fear of displeasing God
> ➢ An attitude of respect
> ➢ A response of reverence
> ➢ A response of deference
> ➢ A response of wonder and awe

Some concept of *reverential fear* is common inside the Christian teachings of many, probably all, Christian denominations. It nearly always includes holding an attitude of wary respect for or even overt fear or anxiety vis-à-vis the divine source. In addition, it often includes a derivative fear of and deferential reverence for the ordained human beings and religious leaders who guide the laity in their spiritual development and maturation.

I conclude, as an outsider to the Roman Catholic faith tradition, that religious duress is (1) an organizational cultural form, (2) a communal archetype, and (3) an internalized emotional or spiritual experience. I conclude as well that much of this is based on outright fear of the male God and of the male human priest who represents Him. One of its pilings or foundation stones is reverential fear. In short, the taught cultural form of religious duress reproduces itself inside the consciousness of individual Roman Catholic believers. It largely does this by acculturated fear. There is, therefore, a reciprocal archetypal form – one in the outer world and one in the inner world.

In addition, however, many Christian denominations have similar patterns of fear-inducing theologies about God and the ministers who represent God to the people in the pews. As an 8 and 9 year old child I was threatened with hell by

Mennonite traveling tent evangelists. As an adult, I consider this to be a form of toxic religious child abuse. It was not sexual abuse. But, nevertheless, it was abuse in the service of religious and spiritual conformity. One of these evangelists commented in his aging years that it had been necessary to frighten and terrify children in order to save their parents from hell. As an aging woman looking back at the child I once was, I consider this kind of theological rationalization to be both theologically absurd and religiously abusive. In short, it is abusive theology.

This is a Mobius-strip situation in which cultural form and individual consciousness continuously reinforce and endlessly extend each other. In both form and manifested human experience, a member of the clerical caste is seen, in the minds, emotions, and spirituality of religiously faithful children, adolescents and adults, to represent the divine in such unique ways that the clergy person – or other members of the religious kyriarchy such as members of professed religious orders such as brothers, monks, friars, and nuns…and Protestant evangelists – can do no wrong. In this kind of mindset what he (sometimes she) commands, requests, or demands must be instantly obeyed without question.

In addition, ordinary caution is replaced by an unquestioning belief system that the clergy person or other religious person has been called by God and is, therefore, more perfect than ordinary citizens of the religious pews. This called out, therefore, holy person can, ipso facto, therefore, do no harm. Ordinary and common-sense precautions are therefore not operant and the inner rudder or guiding system which keeps us safe in the presence of danger – this rudder system has been dismantled. There is, therefore, no distant early warning system that something is amiss. Absolute trust is a kind of trust which does not protect individuals or communities. Betrayal of absolute trust is, therefore, a most profoundly harmful betrayal.

When the human figure of god on earth is the betraying individual, it is quite likely that the victimized individual who previously conflated this individual with God or with Christ will see the betrayal as one done by God or by Christ.

Freyd and Birrell write:

> *Betrayal violates us. It can destroy relationships and the very trust we need to be intimate I our relationships. It can and does damage to the social fabric that creates the bonds for a healthy society. In the case of children the effects can last a lifetime. Betrayed children may grow into adults who fail to trust the trustworthy or who readily trust people who further betray them. Whether being too willing or too unwilling to trust, difficulty with trust not only interferes with relationships, but also eats away at a strong sense of self. Those who were betrayed as children often suffer severe self esteem problems as well a depression, anxiety, and even psychosis.*[215]

We are in a profoundly metaphysical realm here. Very few individuals will overtly claim that God or Christ sexually abused them. Most relatively healthy individuals will know that such a claim will be seen as crazy. But when we work with individuals and they learn to trust us, it is not uncommon to discover a profound sense of divine betrayal as well as a profound sense of human betrayal. A usual consequence is fear-or-terror infested disbelief in God or in Christ (or other divine figures) as a protective figure.

The Impact of Reverential Fear

> [T]hey (the priests) *weren't looked at as God-like. In my family they were God.*

David Oulette[216]

Benkert and Doyle describe the impact of this type of reverence for the priestly caste on the victims of clergy sexual abuse.

> *Victims of clergy abuse regularly report that they were paralyzed and numb with fear when abuse occurred because of their disbelief that so sublime a person would stoop to harm them.[217]*

Inasmuch as many believers (1) hold the institutional church-reinforced opinion that priests and ministers have/had a divine calling to represent God or Christ on earth and (2) that these ordained individuals lead/led a more perfect and more elevated human life, victims of clergy sexual abuse have tended to believe that the sinfulness of the minister's or priest's abusive actions accrued not to him as the perpetrator or their violation at his hands but to them (and to their spirit or soul) as his victims. Deep feelings of guilt and shame may imprison them inside a wall of silence.

In addition, because the abusive priest or minister is believed to represent God on earth, many victims encounter a form of spiritual death. Quoting Leslie Lothstein of the Hartford Institute of living, the authors accept his diagnostic thinking.

> *The difference is that the role of the priest in close connection with Jesus and with God. And what you hear from the victims – and I have heard from priests who have been victims – is that they fear their soul has been murdered. Its* **soul murder** *[emphasis mine], and they can never get over the guilt and shame of what their responsible role was – why was I chosen, how did this happen to me, and can I ever be reconciled with God?[218]*

Doyle and Benkert summarize the aftermath of clergy abuse in the lives of many victims of clergy sexual abuse:

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- Experiences through the life-span of guilt, shame and fear
- Grief at the life not-able-to-be lived
- A lifetime of spiritual loss
- A lifetime of acute emptiness
- Experiences of the abuse as "ripping away their souls"
- Internal experiences of "roaring anger" when they see a priest or other church-related reminder of their abuse
- Panic attacks inside or near to church buildings
- Nausea when seeing or hearing a priest
- Violent anxiety reactions when seeing or hearing a priest
- Anger at God for violating them and abandoning them
- Living inside a cocoon of fear that prevents them from describing their abuse
- An inability to distinguish between their rage at an abusive cleric and faith in God
- Moral confusion and an inability to make moral judgments about the differences between experienced abuse at the hands of a religious cleric or leader and being a sinful and responsible person for being abused
- Shock at being abused, post-abuse confusion, guilt and shame
- Non-resistance to prolonged abuse
- A sense of personal powerlessness
- Formation of a traumatic bond with the abuser
- Feeling trapped inside the belief that no one would believe them in the external world outside the traumatic bond

Developmental Issues

It is important to note that the age and developmental status of an individual when abuse began and when it ended is an important variable. The type and frequency of abuse as well as the levels of violence associated with abuse in some manner or other interact with the developmental life trajectory of the abused person. The ability of adolescents and adults to construct an accurate narrative of abuse – either at the time of abuse or years later are simply impossible for infants and very young children. Very young children may have an inadequate vocabulary and conceptual field to verbally express what actually happened to them. For example, a very young child may not know the names for his body parts. He has no vocabulary, therefore, and no conceptual field to describe being sodomized or orally raped. She may have no vocabulary to describe being vaginally raped or painfully groped in her genital area.

The Need for Checks and Balances

Checks and balances, internal and external watchdogs, and clear-eyed audits, ought to be designed and built into most systems and processes,

whether its actual dual-signature checks, a second person in the examining room, or an investigative reporting team. Given human capacities for wrong-doing and rationalization, that's crucial when there's a chance that nobody else may be otherwise watching.

Tom Cushing[219]

A change in doctrinal theology and a change in the religious community's praxis of reverential fear are clearly called for in all situations where religious duress is operational as a causative factor in the sexual abuse of vulnerable individuals.

Acknowledging the full humanity of everyone inside the sexual abuse narrative is essential. Acknowledging the full humanity of clerics and other religious leaders is the only way forward if we wish to change the trajectory of the church away from violence and violation. This is the only way to protect future generations of vulnerable individuals from unscrupulous and predatory religious leaders.

No human being is a God. No human being stands in for God. Every human being can be, and needs to be, held accountable to the whole for his or her human actions in the commons. Every human being's spiritual wholeness, therefore, is not dependent upon the spiritual wholeness of any other human being or human system.

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Chapter Ten
Religious Trauma Syndrome

This morning I am thinking about the silence that supports these things. I'm thinking about the subtle moments that some of us experience when there's a dissonance between what I hear and what I see and I withdraw and remain silent rather than ask uncomfortable questions. This goes both ways. I've observed teachers hide behind authority and I've watched students let go of responsibility. I've watched many practitioners, including me, seek in a like-minded group a refuge from living responsibly in the world, learning how to deal with money and each other and accepting the consequences of our decisions and our actions. A place where we won't have to grow up. Who has lived or practiced in a dharma center without witnessing some of these patterns?

A new consciousness seeks to change these ways. What has happened in Catholic dioceses is a flashing-red-signal warning to everyone of what can happen when an entire system not only permits abuse, but then protects it and sheathes it in a protective cocoon of silence.

Eve Marko[220]

Introductory comments

Psychotherapist Dr. Marlene Winell has written about Religious Trauma Syndrome on her Journey Free webpage.[221] Inasmuch as this concept will be new to many individuals, in this chapter I will attempt to summarize her theoretical work. It seems to me as if Winell's work supplements and compliments the work of Benkert and Doyle regarding the pernicious effects of religious duress and reverential fear in the life experiences of Roman Catholic priest sexual abuse victims and survivors. Winell began to study this issue as a former fundamentalist Christian who had earlier (1) left her denominational home and (2) sought to recover from the psychological damages to her own personality that she attributes to her fundamentalist cradle faith community and (3) in her clinical practice began to help others to heal their own wounds from a similar religious background.

What is Religious Trauma Syndrome (RTS)

Religious indoctrination can be hugely damaging and making the break from and authoritarian religious tradition can definitely be traumatic. It involves a complete upheaval of a person's construction of reality, including the self, other people, life, the future, everything.

Marlene Winell[222]

When we ask, exactly what RTS is, Winell describes it in the following terms:

> *Religious Trauma Syndrome is a condition experienced by people who are struggling with leaving an authoritarian, dogmatic religion and* [who *are*] *coping with the damages of indoctrination. They may be going through the shattering of a personally meaningful faith and/or breaking away from a controlling people and lifestyle. The symptoms compare easily with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, which results from experiences of being confronted with death or serious injury which causes feelings of terror, helplessness, or horror. This can be a single event or chronic abuse of some kind. With RTS, there is chronic abuse, especially of children, plus the major trauma of leaving the fold. Like PTSD, the impact of RTS is long-lasting, with intrusive thoughts, negative emotional states, impaired social functioning, and other problems.*[223]

Winell notes that the religious teachings, themselves, may be toxic. She also notes the proximity of toxic teachings to sexual abuse and to physical abuse. In addition, however, attachment to the abusive community may also be toxic. Leaving the community usually results in individuals being excommunicated and shunned by those who remain inside the community. In addition, in many situations individuals have been trained to fear the secular world and they may, therefore, be ill-equipped to begin a life inside that world.

To summarize, the trauma is two-fold: **first** the actual teachings and practices of the religious community may be toxic, yielding life-long damage. This is particularly true if the community utilizes physical or sexual abuse as forms of discipline. **Secondly,** actually deciding to leave the community and beginning to do so means that individuals (1) lose the social support of their community and (2) need to re-structure their ongoing lives without that support.

Symptoms of RTS

Winell identifies clusters of symptoms that can be observed in individuals who suffer from RTS:

- ➢ Personal skills in independent thinking are underdeveloped
- ➢ Personal skills in self-reliance are underdeveloped

Visible to clinicians and other individuals is an additional cluster of behaviors that make the transition to life away from the abusive community a difficult one:

- ➢ Confusion and difficulty making decisions
- ➢ Trouble thinking for oneself
- ➢ An underdeveloped sense of self
- ➢ A lacking sense of inner meaning to life

- ➢ Anxiety about being in the world, for example, anxiety attacks, panic attacks, fears about damnation and hell, depression, suicidal ideation,
- ➢ Feelings of anger and bitterness
- ➢ Guilt
- ➢ Grief and loss
- ➢ Difficult in feeling or expressing emotion
- ➢ Sleep disorders in including insomnia and nightmares
- ➢ Eating disorders
- ➢ Substance abuse and addictive disorders
- ➢ Discomfort with one's personal sexuality and with the sexuality of others
- ➢ Negative body image
- ➢ Impulse control problems
- ➢ Difficulty enjoying pleasure
- ➢ Difficulty of being in the present moment, in the here-and-now
- ➢ Ruptured family and social networks
- ➢ Loneliness
- ➢ Difficulty in social relationships with others

Who is most at risk for the development of RTS[224]

The kind of religion that causes damage is that which requires rigid conformity in order to survive in the group or have hope in the afterlife. Such a fundamentalist religion has a closed system of logic and a strong structure to support an authoritarian worldview.

Marlene Winell[225]

There is a cluster of predisposing factors. These include:

- ➢ Individuals born and raised within authoritarian and abusive religions
- ➢ Individuals for whom family and religion sheltered the growing child and adolescent from the outside dangers of the secular world. Children, for example, may be home-schooled or sent to parochial schools. They may not be allowed to watch television or to go to movies. Their reading material may be prescribed in terms of what they can read and proscribed in terms of what they are forbidden to read. Their circle of childhood friends may be determined by their religious community.
- ➢ Individuals who grew up believing what they were taught was absolute truth and whatever physical or sexual abuse they were experiencing was God's will for them or for all godly human communities
- ➢ The religion itself was an authoritarian, controlling and dominating factor in their individual and community lives

According to Winell (and I abstract and paraphrase here), fundamentalist religions that cause permanent damage are those religions in which there is a closed system of logic and belief. In order to avoid damnation and hell in the afterlife, individuals and entire communities must live inside closed systems of conformity to rigid rules of conduct. A religion of true believers is generated: a religion is which independent thinking is forbidden and unquestioning obedience to the religious authorities is required. Witnessing and proselytizing are required – even for children. She notices the presence of double-bind social and communication structures.

Inside these authoritarian and fundamentalist religions, children learn early to suppress independent thinking. They learn not to recognize or to trust their own feelings and thoughts. They learn to rely on external sources of information: scripture and the teachings of their religious leaders.

Toxic Religions

- ➢ Are fear-based: Usually there is some doctrine of eternal punishment for unbelievers and apostates; In these kinds of communities, children are at the mercy of the adult caregivers and the adult teachers inside the community
- ➢ Are shame-based: Human beings are born evil and must be saved by holding proper beliefs and demonstrating proper behavior
- ➢ The external world is seen as evil and as threatening; true believer shun, therefore, the secular world

In addition, there are toxic theologies and toxic belief systems. These vary by denomination but some are pan-denominational in fundamentalist circles. The theological narrative is one that emphasizes human evil and the need for external redemption. This teaching is usually fear-based. There is an excessive preoccupation, for example, will the afterlife and the prospect of eternal suffering in hell.[226]

Some of these authoritarian fundamentalist religious sects focus their attention on demons and demon possession. In some cases, children who are seen as "bad" children are subjected to frightening rituals of demon exorcism and/or battering. The end result of this is that children can come to see themselves in negative ways as *all bad.* Thinking positively about the self – as good, lovable, and able to think for one's own self is to fall guilty of the sin of self-pride. Winell notes: *physical, sexual and emotional harm is inflicted in families and churches because the authoritarianism goes unchecked.*

Winell states:

> Religious indoctrination can be hugely damaging and making a break from authoritarian religions can definitely be traumatic. It involves a complete upheaval of a person's construction of reality including the self, other people, life, the future, everything.[227]

She notes that there are formidable issues for individuals suffering from RTS.

- ➢ Raising questions about toxic religious beliefs and practices in therapy is discouraged if not taboo due to American presuppositions about religious freedom
- ➢ In side mainline religious groups, their size alone protects them. The assumption is made that victimization is minimal.
- ➢ Therapist have no commonly agreed upon diagnostic categories to assist them in diagnosis and treatment
- ➢ In addition, individuals trapped within experiences of RTS have been taught to fear psychology and therapy as worldly and evil; consequently, human psychological problems such as depression or anxiety are seen as sins, as evidence of not being right with God
- ➢ Doubt is considered sinful, therefore, honest inquiry is either frowned upon or outright forbidden
- ➢ Therapy, in its focus on the self, is seen as self-indulgent and also, therefore, sinful

In addition to toxic theology and toxic ecclesiology, physical, sexual and emotional harm is done to children and to adolescents. Because authoritarianism of the religious community's leaders goes unchecked, there is abuse of women and children. Sexual abuse secrets are a frequent component of abusive religion. In some extreme cases, breaking the will of the 2-4 year old child is actively taught and practiced.[228]

In addition, denunciations of homosexuality are common and may contribute to severe depression and suicide attempts by individuals with a same gender sexual orientation.

In addition to the trauma caused by staying within abusive and toxic religions, there is the trauma caused as individuals begin to break free and as they leave the toxic religious community behind.

Describing PTSD as the result of a traumatic event or events, she states that losing one's faith and deciding to leave one's religion behind is an analogous event to other forms of trauma. There is the *death of one's previous life – the end of reality as it was understood.*[229]

For many people, breaking out of a controlling and abusive – or toxic – religious system is a liberating experience. Individuals may report intense feelings of relief and a sense of liberation. But for most individuals the life tasks of leaving are daunting. Since the toxic religion of their childhood was all-encompassing, individuals may not have many of the needed social skills to successfully live outside the community. Leaving brings about a time of multiple losses: family, church community, friends, and a meaningful belief system or rudder for decision making.

The process ordinarily begins with intellectual doubt – the need to let go of previously inculcated religion beliefs and the social-emotional world that has accompanied religious belief. In this process individuals may encounter deep-seated fears about their spiritual well-being in this life and in the afterlife. For many individuals, there is an intense personal experience of psychological and spiritual turmoil.

As the individual's assumptive framework shatters, it may initially appear as if there is no alternative worldview. Individuals may turn to addictive disorders as a way of quieting the inner turmoil – at least temporarily. In particular, Winell hypothesizes three assumptions of the healthy personality shatter:

- ➢ The world is meaningful
- ➢ The world is benevolent
- ➢ The Self is worthy

Noting that for most people to leave the religion of their childhood is akin to a death or a divorce. It is akin to losing a best friend who has always been there for the individual. A shattered belief system – or assumptive worldview – leaves the person feeling isolated in the social world.

Winell hypothesized, therefore, that RTS is a variation of complex PTSD. As such, it needs to be added to the panoply of diagnostic and treatment options offered to other PTSD survivors.

I hypothesize that RTS us another form of religious duress which harms individuals and predisposes them to be abused by corrupt and authoritarian religious leaders.

Chapter Eleven
Susto

You are the universe, expressing itself as human for a little while.

Attributed to Eckhart Tolle

Personal Caveat

> *Now I understand that a culture without symbols, rituals, or myth is a culture without morality. Stories, values, and symbols are the ways a culture shares its spiritual legacy. A culture that reveres life maintains its myths and symbols: without them, we dehumanize the life we live. A culture that upholds material wealth and technology as its only sustaining values worships death and stagnation. A culture that allows violence, materialism, and technology to determine its priorities devalues life and the spirit which leaves room for mystery, dreams, and growth.*

Carl A. Hammerschlag[230]

I am personally most comfortable with thinking about the living human soul as representing a transcendent life-force that abides within each living human body. Somehow or other the soul's presence represents or manifests our connection to the always moving global sea of creative and creating consciousness which both lives in us and surrounds us. Each human soul represents an energetic connection or link to a vast global web of sentient, perhaps divine consciousness. In some manner or other, therefore, the human soul or spirit is that aspect of embodied individual human life that represents our uniqueness and our essential human nature. It represents, as well, our interconnectedness with everyone and everything. It is our motivating or enlivening life-force. It represents our connection to that which transcends human life. For Paul Tillich it represents our human connection to the divine which in his language is the very *ground of being itself*.[231]

As individuals inside the shell of our respective skins, we are entirely separate from all other human beings and we each carry a unique embodied personal identity or signature much as we each have unique fingerprints. No one in the universe is a duplicate copy of anyone else and no one ever has been. Each of us is uniquely shaped by the continuous interaction of our genetic make up and the culture(s) we live inside. A biologist colleague of mine used to tell her students, *we are each 100% genetic and 100% cultural.*[232] It is likely that mystics and chroniclers of the spiritual life might add that we are also 100% spiritual.

By virtue of our common humanity, we are simultaneously connected with the entire human species inside an ever-changing sea of sentient awareness. Seeing one human being an alien from outer space could capture the essence of what a human being on planet earth looks like; of what it means to be human. With very little trouble, the alien would be able to distinguish us from our genetic relatives, the primates. They would see that no matter what shape or what color, everyone belonging to the human species has more in common with each other than this species has in common with other life forms on this blue marble hanging in space.

We, the members of humanity, are united by our common evolutionary history. What affects one of us, in some mystical or transcendent way, affects all of us. What affects the collective, in a similar transcendent manner, affects each of us as individuals. James Taylor's lyrics in *Shed a Little Light* reflect this wisdom to us:

> *Let us recognize that there are ties between us*
> *All men and women living on the earth*
> *Ties of hope and love*
> *Sister and brotherhood*
> *That we are bound together*
> *In our desire to see the world become*
> *A place in which our children*
> *Can grow free and strong*
> *We are bound together*
> *By the task that stands before us*
> *And the road that lies ahead.*
> *We are bound. We are bound.*[233]

It is, therefore, impossible to separate any individual human being from the vibrant and always pulsing social network of human life. Even the most remote hermit on a mountain top is connected to the vast sea of human life below his solitary perch. To reach adult life, he had to be nurtured and cared for by other human beings. His body needed to be touched and his maturing emotional-cognitive self needed to experience care. Even what he thinks or intuits or feels is deeply shaped by his experience inside the global world of humanity. His umbilical cord to his placenta in his mother's womb was cut when he emerged wet and covered with vernix and blood. United to his mother in her womb, he was "liberated" into his uniqueness and his separateness at the moment of his birth. But his emotional and social and psychological and cognitive umbilical cords to the sea of global humanity can only be severed by death….and even that assertion is questionable

It is likely, therefore, that the human soul also needs the nurturing and loving care of others to mature and thrive. While it is inspiring to think that *I alone am*

the master of my fate and the captain of my soul,[234] nothing could be further from the truth.

Medical doctor Carl Hammerschlag writes;

> *Without faith in a believable ethic, we suffer. The theft of spiritual meaning destroys us at every level: individual, the family, the neighborhood, the culture, the nation, the fate of the world. The theft of spirit disables us physically and emotionally.*[235]

Nothing that a victim of clergy sexual violence experiences is totally foreign to my own consciousness. Nor is it totally foreign to the divine consciousness. The same is equally true of the predatory perpetrator's experiences. I am embedded within the same types of cultural forms or cultural narratives or archetypes that each of these individuals is embedded within. I am governed by the same types of cultural forces that these individuals are. I am, therefore, neither superior – nor am I inferior - to any individual in these culturally repeated and enacted dramas of violation. Indeed, it may well be that my role in these narratives or cultural forms has been pre-determined for me by my life experiences and the life experiences of my contemporaries and my ancestors.

While I do believe in human freedom, I agree with Dr. Rollo May[236] that much of our human behavior as adults is pre-determined by our culture's histories and our personal life histories to date. The older we are, the truer this is. There are growing indications that the violently unpredictable life events which we encounter in life disrupt our orderly progression of development and change our behaviors.

In response to these traumatic interruptions to our life trajectory, it seems to me, we must engage in soul work and this brings us existentially to the questions of evil and the questions of human freedom. In what way can we use the resources of the soul to move us back into health and wholeness? How do we learn to bear, therefore, that which has been, up until this crisis of sexual violence or that crisis of institutional betrayal, unthinkable and unimaginable?

When we are filled with doubts or when we are filled with self-loathing or even when we are filled with drives for revenge and vengeance that frighten us, how do we find a way to create a healing path for ourselves out of this enchanted toxic forest? It seems to me that the soul must lead the way for it is the aspect of our very unique and personal being that is tied to God as the ground of our being.

The world's mystical traditions and the world's great healing traditions recognize, however, that in my very uniqueness *and* in my cultural embeddedness, I am responsible to live with compassion and integrity. I am, therefore, obliged to act upon the highest truth I am capable of comprehending. In Buddhist philosophy, I

am called into authenticity and integrity in the present moment because it is in each successive present moment that I am most authentically free to act in enlightened, compassionate ways towards others. It is in this present moment or that present moment where I can re-engage with life in positive and healing ways.

In the psycho-immune-neuro-chemical composition of the human body, we are increasingly discovering that the body itself – our physical shell as spiritual beings – has innate wisdom. In professional conference settings, it is now commonplace knowledge: the body does not lie. The mind can distort information and our cognitive self can – and often does – create false narratives about our life histories, but the human body carries the true narrative memory of our life history as we have actually lived it.[237]

In many of the world's mystical traditions, it is important, therefore, to learn how to live comfortably with doubts and with not-knowing. The answers we need come to us as we seek to live with openness to life and with as much integrity as we can muster in any given situation.

In addition, I am certain that how we image or describe or intuit the word *soul* is important to our discussions about if and how any given human soul can be murdered by our own and other peoples' non-lethal acts of betrayal, violence and violation.

I can accept the premise or presupposition that the murder of a human body also murders the human soul. However, I remain much less certain about soul death than I am about physical death – even in situations where the human body has been raped, beaten, and mutilated. In contrast to my agnosticism about the soul's life after death, most of the world's religious traditions maintain that in some manner or other the human soul survives the human body's death and decay.

This Question of Violence against the Soul and Evil

> *Less visible [than warfare], but even more widespread, is the legacy of day-to-day individual suffering. It is the pain of children who are abused by the people who should protect them, women injured or humiliated by violent partners, elderly people maltreated by their caregivers, youths who are bullied by other youths, and people of all ages who inflict violence on themselves. That suffering – and there are many more examples that I could give - is a legacy that reproduces itself, as new generations learn from the violence of generations past, as victims learn from victimizers, and as the social conditions that nurture violence are allowed to continue.*

Nelson Mandela[238]

These questions of soul murder, soul death, soul wounds, soul theft, and soul loss are especially pertinent when we talk about various human-caused holocausts such as the Shoah, the nuclear blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki; life inside crowded war-driven refugee camps; life inside brutal dictatorships with torture camps, rapes and disappearances; sexual violation and humiliation; physical battering and bullying; emotional and verbal abuse; and all other forms of interpersonal human violence. These complex questions of human evil vis-à-vis the soul's life confront us every time we begin to examine the human capacity to do violence to the self, to others, and to the living and pulsing ecosystem that sustains each of our human lives.

The human capacity, indeed our almost universal xenophobic inclination, to make enemies out of other human beings who are strange to us in some way is a troubling remnant of our genetic evolution.[239] It is only, I think, when I can make a fellow human being into an "other" or into an inhuman "object" that I can do violence to him or her.

It is also important to note that institutional abuse is another form of human betrayal. It represents yet another human archetypal pattern of trauma-inducing evil.

Individual acts of sexual violation and systemic or structural forms of institutional denial destroy or negatively interrupt the lived trajectory of human lives. Personal encounters with sexual predators destroy lives. So too do personal encounters with institutional betrayal. Many survivors of clergy sexual violence inside a wide variety of spiritual traditions note that their subsequent re-victimization by church institutions and religious leaders was the more harmful of the two violations.

Surviving such violations of the human body and the human spirit; surviving human betrayal; and learning intimately about our very human capacities for brutality, violation and violence: what is the surviving human person to do in order to continue to live inside the human community? What does it mean to directly encounter evil and not be destroyed by our recognizing its face and knowing its name?

Jewish-Hindu spiritual teacher Ram Dass' question is an essential question: *in situations of lethal violence; in situations of sexual violation, how do we human beings as survivors of violation and loss learn to bear that which is unbearable?* How do we create an authentic human life after we, or our most loved ones, have been treated as disposable human waste? After the experienced desolation of life-and-spirit betrayals and violation, how do we re-create a life situation in which our wounds can heal and we can live a meaningful life beyond our victimization and its violation? How do we integrate this painful and humiliating narrative into our ongoing life story instead of being destroyed by it? How do we re-learn to trust other people again? How do we re-learn to trust ourselves? How do we re-

learn to trust the divine in whatever form we meet or know its presence? How do we learn to live with our doubts and not be destroyed by their bone-deep presence in our lives?

In this monograph about soul murder and the loss, theft, or death of the soul, I am both informed by and instructed by this question raised by Ram Dass: *how do we learn or teach ourselves to bear that which is unbearable?* I would extend his question: *how do we learn to bear that which is unthinkable, that for which we have no language or words adequate to express our trauma so that we might find our way again?*

Metaphysical questions about whether or not the human soul lives on after a human being's physical death, in short, the always unanswerable questions of life after death, reincarnation, and resurrection of the body are outside the scope of this essay. In the following paragraphs I am not concerned with questions about the immortality of the human soul. I do assume, however, that as long as any human being is physically alive, his or her soul is alive.

Our human communities are filled with people wounded by violence and violations of many different kinds. They are filled with people who have known massive betrayal by those whom they should have been able to trust. They are filled with people whose most basic assumptions about their lives have been upturned and shattered by their encounters with human evil.

Yet our communities are not filled with literal zombies or soulless walking corpses.

I personally hold to the belief that even in the worst possible individual and collective atrocities we can imagine, the human soul cannot be murdered unless the human physical body is murdered. The human soul can, however, be assaulted and grotesquely mutilated inside collective and personal forms of violence and violation. It can be deeply and permanently wounded, mutilated, and scarred. It can, therefore, be misshapen.

In what follows, I provide a cross-cultural model for understanding the impact of trauma on the human body and its embodied soul. It is widely found in Latin American cultures. It is a model which originates not in medicine or in the academic disciplines of psychology, sociology, anthropology, or modern medicine and psychiatry. It is an example that has arisen within indigenous cultures in past centuries. Its grounding premises and its healing practices still live within the imagination of the people who seek such a healing. In this model healing presuppositions are pre-modern rather than modern. Its customs are forwarded into the present historical era by centuries-old ancestral lineages.

Healing is sought, therefore, in the old ancestral ways rather than in modern scientific ways.

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I first met this model in my mid-thirties when a wealthy Mexican family admitted the father of the family to a 20th century university hospital for the treatment of "crazy behavior" or his psychosis. The family asked the bi-lingual and bi-cultural Spanish-speaking psychiatrist if they could also bring a curandero to the hospital to act as a healer in tandem with modern psychiatry. Looking back, I assume they wanted to cover all bases in their efforts to get their beloved father healed of whatever was troubling him – a spirit or a medical-psychological problem. After some discussion inside the psychiatric department faculty, we all agreed that this was acceptable to us. The family was notified and a date was set for the curandero's first visit to the patient in our psychiatric inpatient unit.

As the nurse faculty member and nurse administrator in the department it was my job to interpret this decision to members of the twenty-four hour nursing staff and to guarantee their cooperation with the curandero's need for help. If the curandero's visit was to be successful, the nurses and psychiatric technicians needed to respect and obey his instructions about our patient's care during and after his healing work. I asked the medical school's resident anthropologist (himself a full member of a local indigenous Amerindian group) to help me to (1) personally understand shamanic medicine and (2) to help me teach the staff I supervised. And so it was I met my first curandero.

Susto or Soul Loss

The diagnosis of illness caused by the loss of the animating soul can be made by the patient or by a shaman. It may be accompanied by the diagnosis of object intrusion – in which case the patient's illness may be caused by a combination of losing his own soul and being taken over by an unwanted spirit.[240] Only when the soul has wandered off or strayed to a place from which it cannot, by itself, return. Children and the aged are seen as having the most fragile connection to their soul. They are, therefore, more susceptible to soul loss. It is important to note in this current monograph that the soul may be driven out of the body by a severe physical blow to the body. It may also be driven out by a severe and/or unexpected psychic or emotional trauma. It many tribes it is believed that it may be stolen by a sorcerer.

In most cases, the soul heads for the land of the dead. The shaman must journey to the land of the dead and fight off hostile forces in order to rescue the soul. Lyon comments that the closer the soul is to the land of the dead or the longer that the soul has been out of the body, the more likely it is that the Shaman will not be able to return the individual to health.

Manifestations of soul loss include a general deterioration in physical health and physical vitality. There may, as well, be seizures, fainting, and fevers. In some tribes financial reverses are also a sign of soul loss.

The shamanic tradition or folk healing traditions of Latin America, most especially Mexico, teaches us that the soul can be captured by hostile forces such as spirits, go into hiding or be lost.[241] Mexican and Mexican-American folk culture, for example, believes that *susto* (fright sickness) is an illness caused by soul loss or the loss of the once vital life force. A variety of online authors note that in social situations of great unrest, the soul has been captured by some outside force. Some authors describe susto as the result of a frightening or life-threatening experience. In cases of susto the soul leaves the body and wanders freely. It is widely thought that in the individual's experience of fright or terror, the soul is jarred loose from the body. Symptoms include anxiety, depression, insomnia, introversion, irritability, lethargy and anorexia. A folk healer, curandero, or shaman may be called to find the soul and then to call or to lure the soul back into the person's body. [242] The end outcome of un-reversed soul loss is usually death.

The Diagnostic Etiology of Susto

- ➢ The soul leaves the body in situations of terror and fright and wanders freely outside the body
- ➢ The soul leaves the body and seeks a hiding place of safety and security – often seen as a cave or cavern deep inside the earth
- ➢ The soul is captured or stolen by an outside malevolent spiritual force usually the evil work of a brujo or sorcerer.
- ➢ The soul leaves the body and heads towards the realm of the dead.

Shamanic Treatment and Care

Each healer, curandero, or shaman has made his or her own soul journey in order to be able to do healing work on behalf of others. Often in their personal life history, they have encountered and overcome traumatic personal life experiences or a life-threatening illness. In their own soul's journey, they heard a command or a teaching that they were to reunite their own soul and body in order to become healers for their people. Many years ago I heard Sun Bear talk about his own calling. He was headed towards death and his spirit had already left his body. As he approached the outer edges of his life, he distinctly heard a voice telling him, *Turn around Little Bear. Go Back. This is not your time. There is work for you to do. Go back. Go back.*

Mircea Eliade has written somewhere that the world's great Shamans have all encountered such moments. The great wound at the center of their being – the personal knowledge of trauma and death – becomes the source of their power as healers.

Each Shaman and each Curandero has his or her own method and ritual of healing. While there are now schools for contemporary shamans in 21st century developed nations, most practitioners in traditional cultures have been called by

the spirits to their work. Many of them study with each other – learning how to use natural methods of healing. But the usual originating pattern of their work is the voice of the Spirit calling them. The second aspect of the pattern is that their communities recognize them as healers and call them to the work of healing. As they do their work, therefore, it is confirmed within their communities and they become widely known as a healer of the people.

One now commercialized remnant of an ancient healing practice among Amerindian tribes in the American Southwest is the ubiquitous sale of tiny sand paintings found in tourist locations all over the American Southwest. The ancient traditions of sand painting was a healing tradition among the American Navajo people in which the sick person's family gathered with a shaman and in the midst of chanting and drumming the painting for a healing work was created – only to be destroyed and swept away at the end of the ceremony. The sand was then taken to a very distant location, buried, and was never used again. These Amerindian rituals bear a certain similarity to the spirituality-infused dry painting techniques of Tibetan Buddhist monks whose works are also destroyed when their work has been completed. I have been told that Australia's aboriginal people also have customs of dry painting during their rituals of healing.

I visited with a shaman in Antigua, Guatemala. A healing shrine had been set up in one of the large tourist stores – all the way in the back in a side room. A very large altar and tended shrine had been constructed and the shaman was in attendance. People seeking healing, a reversal of bad fortune, or a guarantee of a safe endeavor of some kind consulted with him and he then worked with them privately inside the shrine. Offerings of candles, rum, flowers, and money were made. Since this was a public area, I seated myself and simply was present to the stream of people seeking this old indigenous man's help. At a break in the traffic he came to me and asked if I needed his help. I very respectfully told him I was a nurse and I was seeking to understand how he helped people. We talked for almost thirty minutes and then another person approached the shrine to seek his help and he went back to work. He worked with the spirits, he told me, and without their help, he could not help those who came to his shrine seeking help. The spirits showed him what to do or what the seeker of his help needed to do to change the troubling trajectory of his or her life.

On a different trip to Guatemala, near the time of the summer solstice, I visited the ancient ruins of Tikal. Inside the ruins, I met a very young Shaman – a twenty-something shaman in training so to speak. In our lengthy conversation he told me that at the crosshairs of the year – the solstices and the equinoxes – the local shamans stayed in the ruins after they were closed to tourists. They visited the ancient altars of their ancestors. Here they did collective healing ceremonies for people needing their help. It was very dangerous in that time for Guatemalans to talk openly to a North American stranger about the war in their midst and so our conversation about the nature and purpose of these ceremonies was very cautious and indirect – filled with much circumlocution - but I came to understand

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that one of the purposes of the ceremonies was to petition the ancient gods to stop the killing and disappearances of their people.

It appears to me, at a great distance from this topic and the cultures which hold it as a working hypothesis, that shamanic action or curandero action in cases of Susto can meaningfully and helpfully address the symptoms and life problems of a terrified person and the symptoms and life problems of a terrified community.

Contemporary American shamans such as Michael Harner[243] and Sandra Ingerman[244] discuss their efforts to assist contemporary Americans with the reality they call soul loss. In their work as contemporary shamans, they seek to help individuals reunite body and soul and, in this way, return to full health. In a post-modern world we are seeing, therefore, a renewed interest in the shamanic path to healing from soul fright or soul loss.

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Section Three

Historical Trauma Studies and Hypotheses

Section Three
Historical Trauma Studies and Hypotheses

When you live with a secret, the power of that secret has some direct correlation to the worth of the life your have; the most loved ones around you; the more you have to lose by being found out.

Fred Moody[245]

The clinical history of the study of trauma must, for our purposes, include awareness of war-caused trauma and affinity abuse (such as domestic violence, incest, and acquaintance rape) caused trauma. Both kinds of trauma (as well as stranger rape) have figured largely in our clinical and cultural awareness of the damages of overwhelming (i.e., traumatic) encounters with violence. Both war trauma and sexual violence trauma have influenced out twenty-first century awareness of the damage trauma does to the embodied lives of individuals caught up in these complex narratives of violence, betrayal, and loss.

Combat Trauma

The terminology of combat fatigue, battle fatigue, and shell-shock neurosis included earlier diagnostic attempts to understand and to describe the psychological damages experienced by veterans during and after combat.[246] Today, the clinician's diagnostic category of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has been substituted for these earlier diagnoses.

Following the American-Vietnam War, returned veterans demonstrated high levels of post-war trauma (evidenced in social disorders such as homelessness and addictions), personal distress (evidenced in high rates of suicide) and in physical symptoms (such as anxiety and somatic complaints) and the diagnosis of PTSD was created to accommodate to this growing therapeutic awareness of combat trauma as a major source of these socio-physical disorders.

At approximately the same time the emerging American feminist second wave movement began to document the traumatic components to domestic abuse and rape. Studies of incest and the sexual abuse of children soon followed. By the mid-1980's it was becoming clear that clergy sexual abuse was a major issue as well. These socio-personal realities formed the second motivating factor for the creation of the new diagnosis, PTSD.

Sexual Violence and Trauma

At the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, Charcot (1825-1893), Janet (1859-1947) and Freud (1866-1939) were all acquainted with the medical diagnosis of female hysteria.[247] Janet's studies of the clinical phenomenon of dissociation remain foundational to our understanding of these realities today.

Freud, for political reasons, disassociated his theoretical work from the idea of sexual trauma in the lives of small children (most particularly in the lives of his adult women clients) - as one of the predisposing factors for dissociative phenomenons in their social histories.

In their studies and clinical work, these nineteenth century Victorians heard clinical histories regarding the earlier sexual abuse of small children in their now adult clients. The causal importance of what they heard, however, was not recognized.

It took the second wave of the American Women's movement to break the public silence about domestic violence, affinity rape, and sexual harassment as very common traumatic events in women's lives.[248]

By 1983 and 1984, the centuries' long silence of clergy sexual abuse victims began to shatter as the families of victimized children and as adults victimized as children began to utilize American courts to coerce the church to reveal its institutional secrets.[249]

Traumatic Grief

Traumatic memory and/or complicated grief results in complex emotional responses to situational factors where grief and trauma coincide.

➤ Sudden and violent death of a loved one or loved ones as in police violence or drive-by shootings or gang-related violence
➤ Prolonged community violence that leads to the repeated deaths of friends and family members
➤ Sexual violation and murder of one's child by a stranger or by a family acquaintance
➤ Disappearances
➤ The loss of home and community represented by refugee experiences

I am reminded here of a young adult I met in the course of my professional career. He was a political refugee who was now living inside North America. He told me about the military assassination of a group of his high school teachers, classmates and friends and the demand of the military on site that if he wanted to stay alive he needed to step over or on the bodies of his dead friends and classmates. As we talked, he wept – telling me, "*Ruth, I stepped over them to stay alive.*" My sadness as I recall this story is that at the time I didn't understand the human trauma response and so I doubt that I was at all helpful to him as he learned to carry this life-narrative with him without being destroyed by it; as he taught himself how to bear that which was unbearable. But he is one of those early individuals in my life who became my teacher – and remains so to this day. By recalling his story, I seek to honor him and his immense courage as he sought

to make a way into a future his assassinated friends, teachers, and classmates would never see.

The Cinderella Effect

The increased risks of violence such as rape and battery or even murder for step-children are informally known as the Cinderella Effect. In my professional career, I grew increasingly wary of second marriages or situations of a live-in boyfriend where a small child, a pre-adolescent or early adolescent girl child was also present in the home. In these situations, these boy and girl children become extremely vulnerable to murder, rape, battery, or other forms of abuse at the hands of the new live-in boyfriend or new spouse.

Theoretical Models

In this section I review several concurrent theoretical models for understanding the bio-physical, behavioral and mental-emotional symptoms that are visible in the research literature about the consequences of trauma in the lives of victimized individuals. Jeremy Kauffman and other authors note the intersecting axis of thanatology with traumatology.[250] Without exploring all of the nuances of this intersection, it intuitively makes sense to me. One aspect of the traumatic experience – whether this experience is a life-threatening car accident, being present at the scene of a natural disaster such as a tsunami or category five tornado, war-time combat service, or encounters with interpersonal violence inside one's most intimate relationships of family and friends – is the awareness of the close existential proximity of death to life. This awareness is closely accompanied by the awareness of losses close to one – losses of loved ones, shelter, a sense of personal security, etc.

The APA DSM diagnosis of PTSD is basically a fear-based or anxiety-based model.

Three additional models have emerged in the past twenty years: a complex PTSD model, [251] a betrayal trauma model[252] and a shattered assumptions model.[253] A subset of the shattered assumptions model is an attributions research model. I have included this research model as a separate chapter because of its multi-dimensional aspects and because of its usefulness in understanding victim-blaming by others and victim-self-blaming in the aftermath of trauma.

Betrayal trauma models and assumption-shattering models bring promise to our studies of the religious and spiritual problems which are present in survivors of clergy sexual abuse. They are also useful in understanding survivors' responses to institutional betrayal and systemic or structural abuse.

This section briefly explores each of these three models. In each descriptive discussion of these models, I attempt to lift out the symptoms which are being identified and/or addressed. Rather than format lists of symptoms into paragraphs, I use bullets. Eventually, in an extended conversation about soul murder, soul wounds, soul loss, or soul death, it seems to me as if these various symptoms need to be grouped or categorized into broad groupings much as the DSM structures psychiatric symptoms into recognizable groupings.[254] Some of that work of identifying the symptoms of religious and spiritual sequellae to clergy sexual abuse and the abuses of institutional betrayal has begun but it is not complete. Bulleting these symptoms will allow symptom grouping to occur naturally and organically.

Chapter Twelve
Complex PTSD or C-PTSD

Many traumatic events are of a time-limited duration (car accidents, natural disasters, etc.). However in some cases people experience chronic trauma that continues or repeats for months or years at a time. The current PTSD diagnosis often does not fully capture the severe psychological harm that occurs with prolonged, repeated trauma. People who experience chronic trauma often report additional symptoms alongside of formal PTSD symptoms, such as changes in their self-concept and the way they adapt to stressful events.

The United States Department of Veterans' Affairs
National Center for PTSD[255]

Introductory Comments

In 1992, Harvard psychiatrist Judith Herman, among others, proposed adding a new diagnosis to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual – the clinician's Bible of insurance-reimbursable diagnoses.[256] In addition, other diagnoses have been proposed including Disorders of Extreme Stress Not Otherwise Specified (DESNOS) and Developmental Trauma Disorder for children and adolescents who have experienced chronic and repeated traumatic events.[257]

The types of situations which factor into this proposed diagnosis are these:

> ➢ Prisons
> ➢ Concentration camps
> ➢ Slave Labor camps
> ➢ Religious cults
> ➢ Brothels
> ➢ Institutions of organized sexual exploitation
> ➢ Abusive families
> ➢ Any situation where the relationship is one of coercive control[258]

Herman notes that the psychological sequellae of prolonged coercive control in the lives of its victims can appear to mimic every personality disorder and many types of personality disorganization.[259]

In her discussion of coercive relationships, Herman notes that the methods used by one human being to control another demonstrate consistency across various populations: spouse abuse, child abuse, systems of coercion such as civilian prisons, concentration camps, coerced prostitutes, and prisoner of war camps.

These extended patterns of abusive social control yield a wide range of perpetrator behaviors and an equally wide variety of clinical sequellae:

- ➢ Systemic and repeated infliction of psychological trauma
- ➢ Instillation of terror and helplessness
- ➢ Destruction of the victim's sense of self
- ➢ Foster pathologic attachment to the perpetrator
- ➢ Rigid enforcement of petty and nonsensical rules
- ➢ Unpredictable episodic violence
- ➢ Threat of death or serious harm to the self, to someone close to the victimized individual,
- ➢ The perpetrator introduces elements of terror
- ➢ The perpetrator seeks to destroy the victimized person's sense of personal authority and autonomy
- ➢ Deprivation of food, shelter, sleep, exercise, personal hygiene, and privacy
- ➢ Once in control, the perpetrator alternates abuse with small indulgences such as using the toilet or brushing one's teeth
- ➢ Prohibit any significant communication with others
- ➢ Seeks to destroy the victim's emotional ties with others
- ➢ Forced to betray previous attachments such as testifying against others who were once friends or family members

Symptomatic Sequellae

> *Complex trauma generally refers to traumatic stressors that are interpersonal. That is, they are pre-meditated, planned, and caused by another human, involving intrusion upon, violation, or exploitation. In general, interpersonal trauma causes more serious reactions in the victim than does traumatization that is the result of a random event or an "act of God" such as a disaster.*

Christine A. Courtois[260]

I am going to list these as Herman and other qualified psychotherapists identify them. In the list below there is, therefore, no ranking process other than simple identification of those symptoms which have been observed in the aftermath of coercive and controlling behaviors which have existed in the victim-survivor's life for an extended period of time:

- ➢ Very high levels of distress
- ➢ Symptoms in a wide variety of domains: somatic, cognitive, affective, behavioral and relational

- Somaticization including hypervigilance, agitation, and anxiety attacks (Tension headaches, back pain, pelvic pain, gastrointestinal disorders, tremors, choking sensations, and nausea: Herman notes that nonspecific somatic symptoms are extremely durable, persist over long periods of time and may increase in intensity with the passage of time.)
- Insomnia
- Exaggerated startle reactions
- Depressive disorders
- Phobic responses
- Paranoid disorders
- Dissociative disorders (Noting that people in captivity become extremely skilled in the art of altered consciousness, Herman notes the following: dissociation, voluntary thought suppression, minimization, outright denial, the induction of trance states, alterations in time awareness, disturbances in memory, mind-fragmenting abilities, paralysis of initiative.)
- Sexual disorders
- Suicidality
- Self-mutilation disorders
- Addictive disorders (alcohol and other substances)
- Debased self-image
- Guilt-ridden self-ruminations
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Loss of faith
- Humiliated rage
- Fear of retribution during captivity and after captivity
- Traumatic origin depression
- Prolonged changes in relationships similar to those seen in borderline personality disorders
- With increasing isolation, the victims become more and more dependent on their abuser for life, basic needs
- Traumatic bonding such as a battered woman or a child abused by a religious cult
- The sense that the perpetrator is still present even after liberation
- A brooding preoccupation with the perpetrator long after the relationship has been severed; can also become a preoccupation with abstract concerns such as the evil in the world.
- Feelings of emptiness, confusion and worthlessness outside the abusive relationship
- Attachment disorders (After escape it is not possible to reconstitute relationships of the sort that existed prior to captivity).
- Oscillations in attachment – formation of intense but unstable relationships
- Find it difficult to be alone but are very wary of others in social environments
- Terrified of abandonment; oscillates with terror of being dominated
- Oscillation between abject submissiveness and furious rebellion
- Problems in respecting other's boundaries

- Repeated violations in the course of a lifetime (Parental child abuse or incest, rape as an adolescent, battered as a partner, etc.)
- Profound changes in personal identity (all structures of the self: body image, internalized images of others, personal values and ideals, an internalized sense of purpose and coherence, losing the sense that one has a self, the sense that one is not a self at all. I raise here the question of perceived soul murder by victims)
- A malignant sense of the self as totally contaminated, guilty, evil
- Disorderly and fragmented sense of the self and the formation of fragmented alter selves
- Intrusive memories, flash-backs
- Self-mutilation and repetitive injuries
- Passively abusive of others – watching as others are harmed
- Abusive of others

In summary, according to the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs National Center for PTSD we can begin to group these diverse symptoms into a more formal taxonomy which can be used to teach and guide clinicians.

Individuals subjected to prolonged or repeated instances of traumatic violence and abuse may experience difficulties in the following areas:

- Emotional Regulation
- Consciousness'
- Self-Perception
- Distorted perceptions of the perpetrator
- Relationships with others
- An individual's personal system of meanings
- In the case of abuse by clergy, spiritual teachers, gurus, and religious institution managers, I would add that there are changes in one's religious and/or spiritual identity and practice. These changes have an individual dimension but they also have a communal dimension

The Veterans' Administration notes that in clinical contacts with survivors of prolonged abuse, affected individuals may mask their symptoms as a way of survival. Thus, they may choose to avoid thinking about or talking about traumatic histories because to do so is to overwhelm the self. They may also attempt to self-medicate by alcohol or others substances. They may engage in self-mutilation, other forms of self-harm, or make multiple suicide attempts. Finally, they may be judged by others or blamed by others for having weak and ineffective personalities.

Out of the FOG

Out of the Fog [fear, obligation, guilt], is an online blog begun by and managed by a community of volunteers and other individuals who have *experienced a relationship with a family member, spouse or partner who suffers from a personality disorder.* Their home page states that *people arrive at our site feeling a range of emotions including fear, anger, confusion, guilt, a sense of isolation, feelings of hopelessness, and powerlessness.*[261]

They define complex posttraumatic stress disorder [C-PTSD]: *C-PTSD is a condition that results from chronic or long-term exposure to emotional trauma over which the victim has little or no control and from which there is little or no hope of escape such as in cases of:*

- ➤ Domestic emotional, physical, or sexual abuse
- ➤ Chronic emotional, physical, or sexual abuse
- ➤ Entrapment or kidnapping
- ➤ Slavery or enforced labor
- ➤ Long term imprisonment and/or torture
- ➤ Repeated violations of personal boundaries
- ➤ Long term objectification
- ➤ Exposure to "gas lighting" [to manipulate someone by psychological means to question their own sanity] and by false accusations
- ➤ Long term exposure to inconsistent push-pull splitting or alternatively raging and hovering behaviors
- ➤ Long term care of mentally ill or chronically sick family members
- ➤ Long term exposure to crisis situations

The blog's authors remind us of an important principle: *Each person is different and has a different tolerance level for trauma.*

Therefore, behavioral or emotional manifestations of C-PTSD will vary from person to person. Some individuals may:

- ➤ Feel un-centered and shaky as if at any moment they may have an embarrassing emotional breakdown
- ➤ Feel unloved and unlovable
- ➤ Feel as if they are not good enough for others
- ➤ Feel compelled to move away from others – distancing themselves from human interactions
- ➤ Afraid to form human friendships because potential catastrophe looms
- ➤ They may be unable to accomplish simple tasks in the workplace or in the home

➤ They may be unable to focus on the task at hand and cannot therefore successfully compete in the job market

The Out of the FOG blog groups and categorizes some of the symptomatic behaviors of individuals suffering from C-PTSD. These are observed and self-reported patterns of response to complex and long-lasting situations of trauma.

➤ Rage turned inwards: Eating disorders, depression, substance abuse and addictions, truancy, acting out, promiscuity, co-dependent relationships and Doorman's Syndrome [trying to please someone who can never be pleased, selecting poor partners,
➤ Rage turned outwards: Theft, destruction of property, violence, becoming a control freak
➤ Hypervigilance: seeking positions of control and power, choosing to become a fixer such as a therapist
➤ Putting the self in danger in one's occupation or in ones choices of recreation
➤ Avoidance: Choosing to withdraw from relationships with others – in order to avoid risk of rejection, accountability, criticism, or exposure
➤ Blaming: Finding other individuals to blame for a problem rather than seeking to find a solution to the problem
➤ Catastrophizing: Automatically assuming a "worst-case" scenario; inappropriately catastrophizing moderate problems or issues
➤ Establishes Controlling relationships with others – seeking to be controlled; these are often relationships with narcissistic others, anti-social others or people who "act out"
➤ Denial: Believing that a painful and traumatic event did not happen
➤ Depression
➤ Escape into fantasy worlds
➤ Fears of abandonment
➤ Relationship hyper-vigilance
➤ Personal identity disturbances with inconsistent self-views
➤ Learned helplessness
➤ Low self-esteem
➤ Panic attacks and phobic responses
➤ Perfectionism
➤ Selective memory and selective amnesia
➤ Self-loathing
➤ Tunnel vision

Religious or Spiritual Issues

I hypothesize, from my reading and personal reflections, that in cases of religious or spiritual abuse, individuals may simply avoid all contact with religious institutions and or the hired employees and personnel of such institutions, for example, priests, ministers, members of religious orders, spiritual teachers, or other individuals hired by and connected to religious organizations. Some of this avoidance may be phobic in nature, for example, to avoid acute anxiety attacks which occur when the formerly abused individual gets into proximity with or encounters religious symbols or personnel. Some of it may be due to a loss of trust and faith in the propositional teachings or the people of a specific religion and its spiritual practices. Some may be due to irreconcilable rage at the betrayal of the Self by the abusive religious other. Some may be due to a pragmatic decision to seek safety outside the boundaries of the institutional church. Finally, some may be due to inconsolable grief about what has happened to the Self – a kind of psychic and spiritual death desperately in need of a resurrection.

In such situations, not only the human messengers or carriers of a specific religious or spiritual message are distrusted. For many individuals, their sense of faith or trust in the transcendent or the immanent deity is damaged as well.

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Chapter Thirteen
Betrayal Trauma

Betrayal trauma occurs when the people or institutions on which a person depends for survival significantly violate that person's trust or well-being. Childhood physical, emotional or sexual abuse perpetrated by a caregiver are examples of betrayal trauma.

Jennifer Freyd[262]

Introduction

The phrase betrayal trauma was coined in the 1990's to describe the relationship between experienced betrayal and human experiences of trauma. In addition to the fear-anxiety theoretical (PTSD) model for understanding the long-lasting effects of trauma, DePrince and Freyd have proposed a betrayal model.[263]   They state: [w]e *suggest that fear, shattered assumptions, and betrayal are all important core insults stemming from the most damaging traumas.*[264]

As the impact of betrayal trauma has been studied, researchers have begun to posit that in situations of social betrayal there is a social utility for victims in *remaining unaware of the abuse when the perpetrator is a caregiver. The theory accounts for a memory failure in ways which can be empirically tested, and it stresses a reaction that had not been focused on to any large extent in research.*[265]

The more important the abusing individual is to the abused individual whom she or he betrays (in this case the sexual abuse done by ordained clergy and other religious leaders) *and* the more dependent the victims is on that abuse-perpetrating individual for survival, the more traumatic the betrayal. Survival needs in small children, for example, affect their response to caregiver sexual or physical betrayal. Freyd notes that for a small child who depends on an abusive parent for survival, withdrawing from the abusive parent – emotionally or physically – may reduce that child's ability to survive.[266] They hypothesize, therefore, that the clinical phenomenon of dissociation is the personality's mechanism for isolating awareness of the abuse in the service of the individual's survival needs.

As we have already seen in Benkert's and Doyle's work on religious duress and in Winell's work on religious trauma syndrome, religious individuals in highly authoritarian religions are extremely dependent upon their religious elders (priests, bishops, ministers, elders, spiritual teachers, etc) for social inclusion in this world and for salvation in the afterlife. Spiritually and religiously, dependent individuals (children, teenagers, and vulnerable adults of all ages) in these religious institutions (generally the laity but also seminarians or others dependent on the religious institution in any way) fit the betrayal theory model.

Fear and/or Betrayal

Inasmuch as predatory sexual abuse events involve elements of both fear and betrayal, Freyd's work provides a two-dimensional theoretical model in which researchers can explore fear/anxiety/terror as one axis of the trauma model and betrayal as a second and intersecting axis. Such a model enables researchers to ask, in given situations of trauma, whether fear or betrayal is at the core of an individual's traumatic response.[267]

DePrince and Freyd note, correctly I think, that when we consider the clinical issues presented in situations compromised by betrayal trauma, we must expand the therapeutic conversation to include the context of the trauma; in short, we must also look at the contextual situation of betrayal as a factor in our understanding of the traumatic event(s) and their living sequellae in a human being. They state, [*a*] *betrayal framework highlights the need to examine the historical and cultural contexts within which traumas occur in order to understand betrayal at a social level….Without considering the individual in this historical context, psychologists may fail to recognize the ways in which current trauma is exacerbated by the effects of the intergenerational transmission of trauma. Psychologists also risk pathologizing the individual instead of critically examining the socio-cultural factors at play.*[268]

Noting the *soul wounds* present inside Native American contexts, the authors cite research done by Duran, Duran, Brave Heart, and Horse-Davis which concludes that, understood in its historical context, generations of trauma inside Native American communities form the socio-cultural context inside of which today's contemporary Native Americans live. Understanding this context is, therefore, essential to understanding the trauma (and implicitly the trauma response) when abuse occurs in the present historical moment.[269]

When we consider clergy sexual abuse inside Christian communities, their historical theologies and worship practices form the social container or cultural form inside which events of abuse occur. To understand events of clergy sexual abuse and episodes of institutional cover-ups, it is essential to understand the constantly oscillating cultural forms or constellating archetypes as socio-cultural-religious contexts in which the acts of abuse occurred. These kinds of abuse have a long cultural history and that history affects every person touched by their presence inside religious institutions and denominations.

I have theoretical and clinical problems with the diagnostic phrase *soul murder,* I think that the diagnostic phrase *soul wounds* more accurately captures and nuances these realities of post-trauma realities – the invasion of the entire personality by acts of violence. By introducing this phrase, Freyd and her associates implicitly, albeit not explicitly, make space for an examination of spiritual wounds to the self as an aspect of the sequellae to trauma. In their book, *Blind to Betrayal,* Freyd and Birrell include case studies of many kinds.

Their examples include current clergy abuse phenomenons as one of these many forms of betrayal.[270]

In a pastoral counseling clinical setting I met an elderly woman who had been diagnosed as a chronic schizophrenic. Her psychiatrist regulated her medications. Therefore, I was seeing her in a supportive role rather than in an active treatment role. One day after a very long silence, she said to me in what appeared to me to be a moment of mental clarity, "what do you think about sex?" We hadn't been talking about sex and so I simply reflected the question back to her. She then proceeded to tell me about the day of her marriage and the honeymoon. Her new husband and his best man repeatedly raped her on the wedding night. The next morning she woke to the news of the first atomic bomb dropped in Japan. She fused both events in her dissociated memory of that night and retreated into a life-long psychosis as a way of managing what to her was an apocalyptic betrayal in her very young life.

While she was abused and betrayed by a husband and his best friend, her story always reminds me of any rapist's massive betrayal of trust - especially when it is perpetrated by known others on whom an individual depends for safe personal intimacy, healing, and salvation. If a pastoral counselor, a priest confessor or a spiritual director sexually abuses the individual with whom he has assumed a professional relationship, it is as if a close member of that individual's family and friendship network has been sexually abusive. But an added component in these kinds of abusive relationships is that the dominant-violent person in the relationship is assumed to be a spiritual person – one capable of mediating a human relationship with the divine presence or anthropomorphic God in the heavens. God, as a Father figure, is, therefore, a complicit – albeit rather abstract presiding factor over the abusive situation. It is not too far-fetched to talk about these forms of religious leader abuse as spiritual incest.

The omnipotent and omnipresent and omniscient God, who sees all, hears all, and who knows all, was in the room when the rape occurred and did not intervene.[271] This God who notes when a sparrow falls did not notice the victim's distress and did not come to her or his aid.[272] To understand God in this way makes him a facilitating observer and/or co-participant in the rape.

In the context of understanding the traumatic response to religious abuse in its many forms, this understanding of the relationship between context, the individual, and the formation of unique soul wounds is an essential contribution of betrayal trauma theory to our study of the religious and spiritual sequellae of (1) clergy sexual abuse of the laity or junior members of the clergy; (2) the abuse of

institutional cover-ups of sexual abuse by members of the clerical administrative or managerial castes; (3) the secondary abuses of denial and victim blaming from the surrounding religious community when confronted with clergy sexual abuse; finally, (4) the abuse of the police-forensic community which does not

believe victims' reports, fails to investigate, and refuses to prosecute perpetrators.

In the current pandemic reality of clergy and spiritual guru sexual abuse of the laity or spiritual seekers, several types or forms of abusive behavior have become visible. The first of these is a physical sexual assault in the form of rape, groping, or other invasive forms of touch. In most of these situations – but not all – the act of betrayal is premeditated. In these forms of physical abuse, the layers of trust betrayed include the physical body, the assumptive self, the emotional self and the spiritual reality we commonly call the soul.

A second form of these assaults is institution-related acts of uncontrolled sexual harassment. Generally these kinds of abusive behavior are verbal or visual. Unwanted sexual content is introduced by the perpetrator into ongoing social encounters in the workplace, the classroom, the confessional, or other locations. The social self is, therefore, betrayed. Inside situations saturated with religious or spiritual content or context, the soul too is betrayed.

The third assault is the administrative-spiritual assault of corrupted religious institutions such as churches during cover-up activities. Such administrative or managerial behaviors seek to protect the institution at all costs – including denial, lying, minimization, characterological attack behaviors as well as outright criminal behaviors. Here the layers of trust betrayed include trust in religious leaders as reliable guides to salvation. Another layer of trust betrayed is in propositional faith behaviors.

A fourth layer of betrayed trust lodges in the response of other spiritually-dependent members of the religious or spiritual or religious community – members of the laity or other spiritual seekers. This kind of betrayal involves community members who attack victims or shun them. Here the layers of trust betrayed include a loss of belief in the gathered community of spiritual seekers as a beloved community.

Betrayal Blindness[273]

> *Betrayal blindness is the state of being consciously unaware of the interpersonal abuse committed by a trusted or depended upon other. This blindness may be as extreme as a complete loss of memory of episodes of abuse or more minor such as the tendency to overlook infidelity.*
>
> Carly P. Parnitzke Smith and Jennifer J. Freyd[274]

In recent work, Freyd has introduced the term *betrayal blindness.* Individuals, couples, children, and all members of organized or informal groups may each and all utilize betrayal blindness in order to preserve relationships, institutions, and social systems on which they depend. She gives the examples of adultery in

a marriage, child abuse by one's marital partner, inequities in the workplace, and inequalities in society at large as the breeding grounds for the development of betrayal blindness.

Freyd elaborates:

> *Betrayal blindness is the unawareness, not-knowing, and forgetting exhibited by people towards betrayal….This blindness may extend to betrayals that are not traditionally considered "traumas" such as adultery and institutional betrayal. Victims, perpetrators, and witnesses may display betrayal blindness in order to preserve relationships, institutions, and social systems upon which they depend.*[275]

To me, it seems very logical in the context of this monograph to add issues of betrayal blindness to our considerations of religious and spiritual abuse inside religious communities. In situations where members of the religious clerical caste or institutional leaders' caste have sexually abused children, teenagers, and vulnerable men and women, there is individual betrayal. Inside the apparently uniquely individual aspects of sexual abuse by clerics is the reality that they represent both their institution and the god they serve.

In the church's subsequent mismanagement of its abusers, there is another aspect of manifested institutional betrayal. In both individual abuse and institutional abuse, clergy or religious perpetrators are seen by victims as representing God and His power in the world. They are seen as essential mediators between God and the laity. God is, therefore, involved in the church's institutional betrayal of clergy-victimized individuals.

When members of an institutional religion – whether it's the managerial caste or its laity caste - refuse to believe victims' stories of abuse, this refusal represents yet another form of institutional betrayal – this time inside the community served by that institution. Refusing to accept and acknowledge appropriate accountability, instead they caste doubt upon the victim's lived experience, behavior and character. We know this as forms of secondary victimization. These forms of betrayal trauma can be personally, socially and spiritually devastating to victims and their advocates.

God, in some way or another, becomes complicit in the abuse act itself and in the abusive management style of the religious or spiritual-teaching institution. Not only has the victim's trust in human beings been destroyed. In many situations trust in the divine presence and goodness or God has been destroyed.

Many years ago in a clinical setting, a woman said to me, *I was always taught as a child that if I prayed God would keep me safe.* When I discovered a rapist in *my bedroom in the middle of the night, I prayed for God to help me but He didn't. What I was taught as a child was a lie.*

It is quite likely that an outcome of betrayal in a religious context results in the shattering of deep-seated socio-personal assumptions about the world in which the presence or absence of God has been an important narrative in shaping the way individuals understand their betrayal.[276]

While Freyd and her associates do not elaborate on spiritual abuse, I believe it is yet another form of institutional betrayal. Abusing individuals and abusing institutions also betray the larger encompassing community which surrounds the abusing individual or institution. These initial betrayals and their impact on the religious commons spread like ripples after a stone has been dropped in water – always spreading outward from the place where the initial impact of the stone was felt by the water.

Presbyterian minister Laurie Ferguson provides me with an example here to illustrate the problem:

> *When lay church leaders heard there was an allegation of sexual misconduct against their minister, the most typical collective responses were a refusal to listen, hostility, dismissal of evidence, and then, if the identity of the victim became known, ostracizing the victim, the victim's family, and at times anyone who stood with them…The response of the laity was total – complete – denial.*

> *This primary defense was rigidly overused, not just by individuals, but also by congregational collectives. The defensiveness led to splitting, scapegoating, selective amnesia, and repetitive retraumatization. Congregations "refused to know" and in this sense often functioned much as the Roman Catholic hierarchy when confronted with sexually abusive priests.[277]*

Institutional Betrayal

> *When trust is betrayed, we all fall apart, though each of us in our own way.*

> Sandra Lee Dennis[278]

The term *institutional betrayal* refers to wrong-doing perpetrated by institutions upon individuals dependent in some way or another on that institution. Types of betrayal include:

> ➢ Failure to prevent wrong-doing by individuals, for example, sexual assault by a member of the clergy; in a certain sense this is a type of institutional passivity.
> ➢ Failure to respond supportively to victimized individuals when sexual assaults have already occurred; again, this is a type of institutional passivity.

> ➤ Denial, dehumanizing, depersonalizing, economic reprisals, lying, attack behaviors, character assassination and other forms of secrecy to protect an institution which has failed to prevent wrong-doing and which has failed to respond appropriately after the fact; this, in contrast to the above failures represents an aggressive and usually hostile effort to actively suppress information at all costs.

Ordinary Human Responses to Betrayal

> *It is important that we come to respect the impact of betrayal and its consequences if we encounter it in our lives or the lives of others. It very likely will affect the degree to which we can give ourselves in trust in other situations in our lives. It can even have an effect on what we call the capacity of individuals to trust that life is good and to trust that they can make their way and find what they need from their lives. Those who cannot trust cannot grow and thrive.*

Jennifer J. Freyd and Pamela Birrell[279]

In general in social interactions, individuals respond to betrayal by (1) confrontation or (2) by changing the nature of the relationship, moving away from further interactions with that individual. However, if we human beings are dependent in some major way, as a child is with a parent, the social processes of confrontation or withdrawal do not benefit human survival needs. Thus, betrayed individuals begin to use a wide variety of mental mechanisms in order to cope and to survive.

> ➤ Individuals block, for example, the usual mental mechanisms of confrontation and moving away which control human attachment behaviors – behaving in ways towards the betraying individual that continue to elicit care-giving and survival-essential attachment processes.
> ➤ The clinical hypothesis is that there is a social utility in remaining unaware of abuse if the abusive person is a needed care-giver on whom the individual is dependent. Freyd hypothesizes that detecting betrayals is, in some situations, counter-productive to actual survival. Thus in some situations survival may be dependent upon betrayal blindness or betrayal unawareness as a survival mechanism.
> ➤ Current research protocols suggest that there is a strong correlation relationship between betrayal and the elicitation of dissociative symptoms. Thus, Freyd and others conclude that betrayal is a psychologically toxic dimension of interpersonal events and relationships. The more one is dependent on the betraying and abusing person, the more toxic the relationship becomes.
> ➤ Inside situations of real or perceived dependency, individuals simultaneously know or recognize that they are being betrayed and do not

recognize or know that they are being betrayed. This is called *the knowing and not-knowing phenomenon.*

Interim Conclusion

De Prince and Freyd write:

> *If a child is being mistreated by a caregiver he or she is dependent upon, this is by definition betrayal, whether the child recognizes the behavior explicitly or not. Indeed, the memory impairment and gaps in awareness that betrayal trauma theory predicted were assumed in part to ward off conscious awareness of mistreatment in order to promote the dependent child's survival goals....While conscious appraisals of betrayal nay be inhibited at the time of trauma and for as long as the trauma victim is dependent upon the perpetrator, eventually the trauma survivor may become conscious of strong feelings of betrayal.*[280]

The Experienced Impact of Betrayal

> *[W]e can know and not know something at the same time. Part of our knowledge may be consciously available, but part may be hidden from awareness most of the time.*
>
> Jennifer Freyd and Pamela Birrell[281]

The inner experience of individuals who have been betrayed by individuals they trusted or by institutions they trusted presents the betrayed individual with a complex mix of emotions and thoughts.

- ➢ A sense of shock, disbelief
- ➢ Affects our human capacities of love and our ability to attach to others
- ➢ Internal feelings of numbness, helplessness
- ➢ Internal feelings of rage
- ➢ Internal feelings of terror
- ➢ A sense of the world becoming unglued
- ➢ An internal shattering of the self
- ➢ An external shattering of the world
- ➢ A lost sense of the internal "me"
- ➢ The dismantling of personal attachment patterns
- ➢ Eruption of primal and unconscious fears
- ➢ A shattering of the ego
- ➢ Physical symptoms such as changes in weight or insomnia
- ➢ Intrusive painful memories
- ➢ Loss of connection with family and friends
- ➢ Hypervigilance
- ➢ Feelings of helplessness and powerlessness

- ➢ A sense of abandonment
- ➢ Primitive defenses of splitting, psychic numbing, terror and rage
- ➢ Triggers an ontological crisis – a crisis of being
- ➢ Loss of faith in human nature
- ➢ Loss of faith in the goodness of life itself
- ➢ One stops feeling safe in the universe
- ➢ Withdrawal, psychic numbing, self-medicating by addictions, depression

Dennis notes: *Betrayal is ultimately an existential/spiritual crisis as well as a mental/ emotional crisis.*[282] We eventually will need individually and collectively to return to that conclusion as we make our way through the religious and spiritual issues which are relevant to the exploration of religious and spiritual problems in the aftermath of (1) sexual abuse by clergy and (2) by institutional mismanagement of clergy sexual abusers.

To summarize, in these complex situations of multiple betrayals, the abused individual faces multiple challenges to healing:

- ➢ A loss of trust in a previously trusted religious or spiritual leader
- ➢ A loss of trust in a previously trusted religious institutions as truthful and/or meaningful in its teachings
- ➢ A loss of trust in other members of the laity as a trustworthy community
- ➢ A loss of trust in the divine presence as a protective presence in the lives of the faithful
- ➢ A loss of trust in the self's ability to act as a guarantor or personal safety inside dangerous physical and spiritual human situations
- ➢ A loss of trust in God

Thus we see in instances of clergy sexual abuse, the psychological, emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual aspects of the self are attacked and damaged. When that damage is compounded by corrupted secondary institutional patterns of pathological and criminal clericalism, the damage to individuals' assumptive worlds is an added wound for victimized individuals to carry and to heal. It seems to me as I review these issues, that what gets damaged is an individual's internal rudder or internal gyroscope for navigating life. To use a physical analogy, it is as if one is experiencing spiritual vertigo or an involuntary loss of control of ones psycho-spiritual balancing systems.

As I am reading about these complex and densely interconnected sequellae to clergy sexual abuse, it seems intuitively logical to me that a soul wound (a deeply personal spiritual wound), can be the result of personal *and/or* institutional betrayal. To use another metaphor: betrayal trauma interrupts the human being's internal power grid and before the lights come back on, the damage to the grid (a uniquely personal grid which intersects with the entire cultural matrix of power grids) must be properly assessed and then repaired. The more damage which

has been done to the body/self/spirit of the individual, the more physical, emotional, social and spiritual diagnostic and repair work is essential.

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Chapter Fourteen
Shattering of the Assumptive World

A sense of trust involves not only the development of trust in others, but also the development of trust in oneself.

Ronnie Janoff-Bullman[283]

History and Context

We all need order in our lives to enable us to function and to be healthy.

George L. Kelling[284]

In the past two or three decades, three distinct theoretical models have emerged to explain some of the devastating consequences of traumatic life events. Each seeks to explore and to explain some aspect of the human trauma response. These are the fear-anxiety model of PTSD, the betrayal trauma model and the shattering loss of the assumptive world model. These theories function as heuristic models which have been developed within different scientific and clinical disciplines. They are an effort to explain complex post-traumatic behaviors and deeply troubling inner experiences in the lives of trauma survivors. In my mind at least, they are, therefore, complimentary rather than competitive models. Each explains and prioritizes some aspect(s) of the human trauma response. Clinicians and others seeking to understand the aftermaths of trauma in the lives of individuals and communities after trauma should be able to access and utilize each of these when appropriate.

One of the best aspects of model-making theories is that when we begin to group observed behavior into clusters of observable or self-reported behavior they can then be studied by a wide variety of research methodologies. Each theory seeks to explain human behavior in ways which can both support and be supported by empirical research. While a short range goal is to gain a better understanding of human experience and human behavior, the long range goal is to develop effective or helpful evidence-based therapeutic interventions.

Hans Selye's mid-twentieth century work on stress hormones provided medical and biological scientists with a platform for examining the body's physical responses to as well for clinical research into the short and long term consequences of negative stress. The autonomic nervous system, the role of the neuropeptides in regulating emotion, and the physical structures of the brain – most specifically the structures of the limbic system, began to be understood in new ways as medical and biological scientists sought to understand the human trauma and stress response.[285] While Selye's ground-breaking work is now outdated, recent books can help scholars and lay individual begin to understand

he complex biological, bio-chemical, and neuromuscular mechanisms that underlay the human stress response and the human trauma response.[286]

As I have begun to think about the religious and spiritual sequellae of these various forms of abuse – forms which are rooted in an individual's life history and his or her past religious and/or spiritual experience, it seems to me that professionals interested in soul wounds, soul loss, soul death, soul theft, and soul murder need to understand each of these three theories about traumatic stress in some depth. The body's spirit or soul does not exist in isolation from the body. Such an in-depth exploration and understanding is, however, beyond the scope of these individual introductory chapters.

What is perhaps even more needed is the further development of theo-pastoral-clinical heuristic models which can then be tested and extrapolations made within the healing sciences and religious communities. Such models can and should be based on survivors bearing witness to their own inner spiritual sense of themselves and to their own accounts of their levels of religiosity. They should also be based on the observations made by victim helpers and advocates such as attorneys, therapists, whistle-blowers, family members, and others over the past thirty-five to forty years.

It is my personal belief that we need foundational representations, or if you will, narratives as our beginning place. We need the living narratives of those who have experienced and survived traumatic events – a direct and intimate narrative from lived experience. We also need the lived narrative stories of witnesses to traumatic events in the lives of others – a reflected narrative.

In these narrative stories, I believe, lies the grounding phenomenological structure for our individual and collective examination of these matters. We need the personal, unabridged, uncensored, and unedited narratives of survivors and witnesses so that we can learn about their own unique and deeply personal processes of coming to understand and manage the religious or spiritual sequellae to the trauma of clergy sexual abuse in their own lives.

In matters as complex and as diffuse as the inner life of the soul as it relates to religious belief, religious practice, and spiritual experience, we need, therefore, self-reports as well as directly observed behaviors. We need many different forms of empirical research. Until we structure these kinds of research projects, much of our knowledge of these matters stays inchoate and intuitional - therefore subject to personal and cultural biases.

Every researcher into the human condition – either intuitively or by formalized academic training – knows that pre-existing models help us to structure our knowledge and our knowledge-acquisition processes. Every model has strengths and flaws. Yet each model allows us to systematically engage with questions of human experience and meaning.

The Shattered Assumptions Model

> *People need a sense of meaning, understanding and safety regarding the world, the people in it and their role in the world.*

Roger M. Solomon[287]

The shattered assumptive world model originated in the academic-research discipline of psychology rather than in the research and treatment disciplines of medicine and psychiatry. It emerged in proximity with the medical-psychiatric diagnosis of PTSD and with Freyd's betrayal trauma model.

Janoff-Bullman published her influential book, *Shattered Assumptions* in 1992.[288] Since then many research studies have explored aspects of this theory and its usefulness in understanding the human trauma response. In 2002, Kauffman edited a collection of essays in which these three theories are placed in dialogue with each other.[289]

This model, probably not coincidentally, is the most difficult of the models to summarize. Some of this difficulty is probably due to the counter-intuitive nature of its own foundations in the previous clinical and theoretical work of 150 years and to the nature of its own theoretical assumptions about the nature and importance of childhood development to individuals' life-long maturation. Some of this difficulty is also due to the wide variety of life experiences which are lodged inside the post trauma experience and the behaviors it seeks to describe.

Roots: Looking Back into History

From Charcot (1825-1893) to Janet (1859-1947) to Freud (1856-1939) and now into a new century, many clinical practitioners have stumbled across their client's experiences of early trauma as somewhat determinative of their later life pathologies. The puzzle of the individual's human trauma response is slowly being excavated – much like archeological digs in remote and somewhat hostile environments. Clue leads to clue. Eventually puzzle pieces seem to fit together in a coherent picture of post-traumatic experience. Research bytes by research bytes, researchers and clinicians have begun to solve some of these troubling realities in the individual psyche and in the collective psyche of the commons.

The theory of shattered assumptions as a long-lasting problem in human trauma survivors is rooted in nearly 150 years of studies about the psychology and physiology of the human stress and trauma response – whether this is Victorian era hysteria and fainting disorders among middle and upper class women or whether this is an examination of shell shock during World War One or whether this is an examination of the life experiences of Jewish concentration camp survivors or Japanese survivors of the nuclear holocaust.

Root: The APA *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*

> *In trauma, individuals confront their own mortality and recognize their fragility as physical creatures. They recognize that what has happened does not readily fit their long-standing fundamental, comfortable, and comforting assumptions about the world. In short, trauma challenges both the physical survival of survivors and their most basic assumptions in his or her conceptual system.*

Charles A. Corr[290]

The American Psychiatric Association released its first copy of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* in 1952. It included a diagnostic category of Gross Stress Response. This was a response to the psychological damage witnessed in veterans after the end of World Two. It included symptoms of anxiety and withdrawal. The second revision of the *DSM* removed this diagnostic category. There was, therefore, no diagnostic category which allowed returning veterans to be treated for combat-caused traumatic neurosis. At the conclusion of the American-Vietnam war, clinicians increasingly realized that veterans were returning home with severe mental health issues and could access no federally funded veterans' resources to help them. In 1980, the DSM – 3 included the diagnosis of post traumatic stress disorder.[291] Each revision since then has included more tweaking of this diagnosis in response to clinical research and therapeutic interventions.

It was during this same era when the traumatic effects of rape, incest, and domestic violence became recognized as having similar effects.[292] Among practicing clinicians and body workers it is now generally assumed that while war trauma can include both men and women, it is more likely to be seen among a male population. The traumatic after effects of affinity sexual and physical violence are more likely to be seen among women and their pre-majority children.

Root: American Feminist Theory and Activism

The American feminist movement of the 20th century moved clinical and legal awareness of women's and children's experiences of rape and domestic violence or abuse into the public domain from the private domain where it had long been hidden and denied.[293] Close on the heels of that public information about rape and domestic violence, we began to learn about children's traumatic experiences of physical and sexual violence.

One of the first major theoretical aspects of this movement was to re-capture the history of Freud's own decision-making work in which he decided women's narratives of sexual violence in childhood were fantasies.[294]

For example, in the mid-1970's Burgess and Holmstrom began publishing information about women's post-rape recovery process and proposed the term *rape trauma syndrome*.[295]   By the early–to-mid-1980's Judith Herman and the Harvard continuing education program for health sciences professionals were presenting conference programs about sexual violence and the human trauma response.[296]

In 1977, Herman and Hirschman published their ground-breaking work on father-daughter incest in the feminist journal *Signs*.[297] By the mid-1990's Herman had published her equally ground-breaking work *Trauma and Recovery.* In this book she proposed an additional diagnosis, *Complex PTDS*, to account for situations in which individuals were exposed repeatedly to traumatic events.

Clergy Sexual Abuse Emerges from the Institutional Shadows

> *We need to stretch our understanding of "assumption." It encompass all that we have come to take for granted as we have learned how to be and to act in the world in the presence of those we love.*

Tom Attig[298]

It is probably no sociological accident that awareness of the issue of clergy sexual violence emerged in tandem with these other social movements of the twentieth-century. In his public lecture on the Goshen College campus in the fall, of 2014, Roman Catholic Dominican Father Thomas Doyle metaphorically described awareness of clergy sexual abuse inside the Catholic Church as a giant submarine inside the church's millennial history. Over the Christian centuries clergy sexual abuse the phenomenon periodically emerged into view only to re-submerge and become invisible.[299] In this lecture and in many of his publications, Father Doyle, a Catholic canon lawyer, documents the historical presence of clergy sexual abuse and many other kinds of clergy sexual immorality very early in the Christian centuries.[300]

As was the case in domestic violence, rape, and child abuse, the Catholic Church, indeed the Christian Church as a whole, has had a long and mostly hidden history of these kinds of clerical and religious abuses. Only in this new century have we begun to talk about the lasting spiritual wounds these kinds of individual and systemic abuse create for victimized individuals.

What was new in the twentieth-century was the emergence of victim advocacy groups such as SNAP along with a growing political determination of Catholic laity to speak in the public commons that which had been hidden inside the privacy of the commons' institutions: the church, the home, educational institutions and the workplace.[301] As Doyle and others have noted, Catholic lay people – most especially abuse survivors – began to take control of the clergy

abuse narrative and the clericalism narrative as they pushed for truth-telling in multiple law suits and depositions over the past twenty-five or thirty years.

I am writing these words on the Monday after the movie SPOTLIGHT was named the best picture at the 2016 Oscar awards ceremony in Beverly Hills. The movie reprises the 2002 *Boston Globe* investigation of a massive cover-up of sexually abusing priests in the Boston diocese – coverage which won it the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for investigative journalism.[302] These very public revelations about corruption at the highest levels of the United States Catholic Church have changed the nature of our discussions about abusive personal experience inside religious institutions.[303]

To summarize: what was not new were women's and children's experiences of sexual violence in the private realm. What was new was victims' determination to speak in the public realm that which they had experienced inside the private realm of their personal lives.[304] What was new was the emergence of informed helpers and advocates for survivors – women and men who also were willing to act as whistle-blowers.[305]

The mid-century shattering of silence about the presence of sexual violence inside American secular and religious cultures made possible the scientific study of sexual violence as a causal factor in the human trauma response. In my personal opinion, it is no accident that radicalized and politicized womanist and feminist women such as the Redstockings, the publishers of the Boston Women's Health Book Collective *Our Bodies, Ourselves,* the editors of *Ms Magazine*, the editors of the professional journal *Signs,* the women of color founders of Kitchen Table Press*,* and the feminist nurse and physician leaders of the mid-century women's health movement led the way in pushing for public reforms in legislation and in health care.[306] From the very beginnings of this social change movement, feminist scholars in the human sciences such as anthropology, psychology, social psychology, and sociology were marching in tandem with their activist sisters – creating models and research methodologies or protocols to assist women to understand their lives in a patriarchal culture.

By the end of the twentieth-century, feminist thealogians in all of the major Christian denominations were beginning to critique the religious establishment as an ideological source of women's oppression and therefore as complicit factors in the world-wide epidemic of violence against women and children. In many denominations, issues of women's ordination took center stage. In others, however, the issue of sexual violence and domestic abuse formed the center of the feminist theologians' critiques of the religious hierarchy and its patriarchal management of the religious institutions it controlled.

The backlash for women activists seeking to change a culture for women and their children was intense, focused and well-funded. For example, the 1993 Re-imaging Conference in Minnesota created controversy for the women who

planned the conference and for the women who attended it.[307]   As far as I've been able to tell, five Mennonite women theologians and pastors were in attendance. I was not one of them. After the conference's conclusion, powerful Mennonite men insisted that the President of Goshen College discover if any institutional money had been provided to faculty or administrative women who attended the conference. I was one of the women who were targeted in this accusation-inquisition. Called to his office to explain myself, I simply informed the President at that time that I had not attended the conference and, therefore, I had not spent even a penny of the college's discretionary travel money for this purpose. The reality of my non-attendance seemed to deflate my accusers who had been certain I must have attended the conference. The women who had attended and those of us who knew their names simply closed ranks and these Mennonite women were protected from our anonymous accusers by their ignorance of which specific women to target in their attacks.

The socio-political context of rape, incest, battering, and child sexual abuse is one of the cultural containers of the human trauma response in the human commons. It is now widely recognized that one cannot study the human trauma response in women and their children outside of understanding (1) its prevalence and (2) its embeddedness within the ideologies and customs of a mail-dominant, violence-promoting culture. The denominational churches willingness – perhaps even eagerness – to weed out the dread feminists from its institutions has the consequence of depriving victims of sexual abuse helpful allies in their efforts to confront their personal and institutional abusers. As a consequence, abuse thrives in the shadows of these church organizations. Victims are blamed and accused; perpetrators roam freely.

The Role of Basic Assumptions

> *The essence of trauma is the abrupt disintegration of one's inner world.*

> Ronnie Janoff-Bulman[308]

An assumption is a proposition taken for granted or accepted as true without factual proof, a supposition; a thing accepted as true or as certain to happen, without proof, a supposition, an expectation, a belief, a hypothesis**.[309]**

Janoff-Bulman and other authors identify three basic assumptions or foundational assumptions which guide people's action in their everyday life experiences. These foundational assumptions are formed in an infant's and child's earliest learned experiences – inside their earliest experiences of life-sustaining care received. All that is needed for these assumptions to form is "good enough" parenting of the infant's primary caregivers.

- ➤ The world is benevolent
- ➤ The world has meaning

➢ The self is worthy

These are the foundational assumptions which guide our lives – allowing us to trust others and to trust ourselves. Because they are formed at such an early stage of human development, we rarely think of them or are aware of them. Janoff-Bullman states it this way:

> *Our fundamental assumptions about the world and ourselves do not exist at the level of our hierarchical conceptual system. Rather they are our most abstract, global beliefs about ourselves and the world…Our positive illusions at this level afford us the trust and confidence that are needed to engage in new behaviors, to test our limits.*[310]

Later she comments that people with the most positive underlying assumptions about the world, even if illusory, are the individuals who are the best at *reading themselves, their environment and are more sensitive to environmental cues.*[311]

It is not that we humans do not know the world is full of dangers for we do. But these basic assumptions protect us because we bracket our knowledge of danger and assume that because we have a good character and because we are circumspect in our behaviors, danger can be kept at bay and we will not encounter violence or other forms of danger such as natural or human-caused disasters. This personal sense of our immunity from danger enables us to explore our world and form trusting relationships with others.

We can know, for example, about the risks of car accidents even as we use our cars on a daily basis. Each day without an accident reinforces our personal sense that a devastating car accident will not happen to us. When we experience a deadly car accident first-hand, this assumption is challenged. Part of our traumatic experience is the damage the car accident does to our sense of personal security. In essence, our assumptions about personal invulnerability are challenged.

We can know about the presence of a tornado belt in the United States and continue to live in the statistical likelihood of encountering a tornado and simply believe that our lives and our homes and the lives of those we love will remain untouched by a tornado's presence. When our home is destroyed by a tornado and a loved one dies in its violent physical path, we must deal not only with the reality of that which *now is* that confronts us. We must deal as well with our pre-existing beliefs or assumptions that we are immune from such a deadly consequence of nature's violence.

As we begin, it is must be made clear that children who experience "not good enough" care develop other foundational assumptions. For them the world will not necessary be benevolent, just, or safe. They may have difficulty believing

they are worthy human beings. As noted above, they will have more troubles navigating life.

The Shattered Assumptions Model of Post-traumatic Responses

In the immediate aftermath of traumatic events, victims experience the terror of their own vulnerability. The confrontation with real or potential injury or death breaks the barrier of complacency and resistance in our assumptive worlds, and a profound psychological crisis is induced. What generally begins as a threat to victims' physical integrity becomes an overwhelming threat to their psychological integrity as well. Suddenly survivors become dramatically aware that "bad things can happen to them."

Ronnie Janoff-Bulman[312]

In the aftermaths of traumatic events, survivors encounter intense fear and anxiety. Janoff-Bulman hypothesizes that there are two roots of this fear and anxiety. The first of these is that the survivor has encountered in real time a threat to their physical survival. The second is that their previous conceptual world is severely disrupted by what has happened to them. The universe is no longer a safe place and they are no longer able to see themselves as invulnerable to the dangers which others have experienced or may in the future experience.

In addition, during their encounter with life-threatening events, individuals may become cross-sensitized to other stimuli that are linked with these traumatic events such as a certain perfume smell or the sight of guns or knives. Certain sounds or certain smells will activate the individual's psychological alarm system even in the absence of danger.

Instrumental avoidance learning becomes visible in the post-trauma era of a survivor's ongoing struggles to come to terms with what has happened to him or to her. Individuals learn to avoid coming into contact with these secondary aspects of the trauma experience – the smells and sounds which they associate with their encounters with life-threatening events. It is a stage in victim's recovery to recognize that they believe or feel that they are individuals who feel helpless in a hostile or dangerous world. One consequence is that not only is the outer world perceived as dangerous; the inner world is experienced as dangerous as well.

It is important to note that no matter how extensively an individual seeks to protect herself or himself from the triggering phenomenons, there is no perfect safety zone. Physician friends of mine tell me about triggering dissociative responses or panic attacks during routine physical examinations. I once knew a woman who told me about a very specific flashback when a nurse attempted to drape her for a gynecological examination. This was the first time the adult self

remembered a specific sexual attack when she was a child. She said to me, *the nurse touched me on my thigh and it all came back in a flash.* A mother of several children, this was not her first physical examination. It was not her first gynecological examination. What was specific was the nurse's non-abusive touch in draping a sheet - a touch that by coincidence was on the exact location of her abusers restraining grip on her inner thigh.

One major post-trauma-event task of survivors, according to Janoff-Bulman, is to begin to rebuild or to reconstruct a viable, non-threatening inner world and this reconstruction includes re-constructing a life-supporting inner assumptive world which can guide the individual's day-by-day ongoing life. The now-shattered and disintegrated assumptive world has been destroyed by the traumatic events and can no longer guide the individual, so-to-speak, on automatic pilot. Rather, the individual survivor of trauma must begin the arduous task of constructing an inner assumptive world for present and future decisions. *Survivors know all too well that bad things happen and that bad things can happen to them. They know the world is not a safe haven, that they are not protected, that they are fragile beings.*[313]

Thinking About Human-Induced Trauma

Inasmuch as clergy sexual violence *and* institutional systemic violence both induce the human trauma response, I want to do a close reading of Janoff-Bulman's work here.

Human-induced victimization confronts survivors and their advocates with questions about evil. According to Janoff-Bulman *evil* is a linguistic term that describes human interactions. Note this is not an ontologically derived term from the gods. Rather, in her work, evil belongs to the world of human beings. It involves other human beings who betray others by not being trust-worthy. Becoming aware of evil involves coming to terms with the ruthlessness of the perpetrators of violence against them. It involves issues of basic morality. As survivors are faced with making sense of what happened to them in acts of physical violation or in acts of systemic violence, they will need to confront the reality that their pain and their terror were not acts of God but were humanly caused. They will thus, in this way, need to confront existential questions about the presence of human evildoing inside the human commons.

As victims seek to come to terms with their encounters with violence, some of the following issues are likely to emerge:

  ➢ Why questions will emerge from others: *Why was this individual targeted for victimization?*
  ➢ Why questions will emerge within the self: Why did s/he do this to me? Why was I chosen by the perpetrator?

- Questions about trust will likely surface: Can I ever trust others again? Can I ever trust myself again?
- Questions about personal safety will likely surface: Am I safe in this relationship? Am I safe in this location? Am I safe as I move about my world in everyday activities?

Personal Responses to this Model for Understanding Trauma

As I read Janoff-Bulman and other authors on this complex issue of assumption shattering, I am aware that for children and teenagers raised inside religious families who practice their religion, there are other assumptions that are an ordinary aspect of their daily life. These may not exactly be core assumptions as Janoff-Bulman extrapolates from decades of research but I would suggest that they are powerful assumptions which guide an individual's spiritual life. My thinking here is intuitive and has not been tested by formal and empirical research protocols. Thus, what follows are my hypotheses in light of my reading about clergy sexual abuse phenomenons during the past 8-10 years.

- Assumptions about God that are received in early childhood tend to last a lifetime. Ancient scriptures tend to support this view. For example, Proverbs 22;6 in the King James translation of the Hebrew Scriptures claims, *Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he won't depart from it.*
- In early childhood, religious figures are often seen as God figures and can, therefore, do no wrong. Roman Catholicism magnifies this magical thinking by teaching that each priest is an alter Christus and that each pope is God's explicit and holy representative on earth. Protestant traditions are not immune from these kinds of teachings although they are more likely to be implicit ones rather than explicit ones. These views about the special holiness or the innate spirituality of religious leaders tend to pervade religious institutions. Thus, the men who went to seminary in my college years were seen as more religious and more spiritual than the men who chose other careers to follow after their undergraduate college graduation was complete. When I look back, in the wisdom of old age, I realize how ridiculous such an assumption was. Some of these seminary-trained men went on to be interpersonally controlling and spiritually abusive individuals. Some went on to become sexual abusers.
- The more authoritarian the religious institution and its leaders, the more that obedience to human leaders is emphasized as a sign of religious faithfulness to the divine.
- Disobedience to human religious figures is, therefore, often conflated with sins of disobedience against God.
- Religious institutions which utilize and promulgate theologies about the angry God tend to create exaggerated senses of guilt and shame in the religious commons. These feelings enable religious leaders to take advantage of the laity.

➤ Religious institutions and religious leaders which emphasize the demand for human obedience to human institutions and to human leaders often circumvent an individual's abilities to think for him or her self; to question the human leaders as both fallible and mortal.

My teacher and mentor Howard Clinebell often talked with his seminary classes about pathological religion. I see my list above as exemplifying pathological religion. The end result of pathological religion is spiritual immaturity and, perhaps, spiritual death. Spiritual immaturity tends to predispose one to magical thinking. Magical thinking breeds false or incomplete or misguided assumptions about the nature of the world, the nature of human beings, and the nature of reality itself.

In the aftermath of sexual abuse or institutional abuse, the individual must not only confront the loss of an assumptive world about this very real socio-cultural-physical world we all live in. They must also confront their pre-existing concepts of the gods and of the spiritual-religious world they inhabited before the acts of violation and violence occurred.

Thus I hypothesize that the spiritual and religious sequellae of physical, sexual, emotional, psychological abuse inside religious systems will provide unique challenges to victimized individuals. Some of these challenges will be religious in nature – having to do with the institutionalized aspects of their faith systems. Some will be spiritual in nature – having to do with their assumptions about their God and his/her role in their violation.

As we begin to study these religious and spiritual sequellae in depth, I predict that these will be even more troublesome aftermaths of violation than those aftermaths already studied under other heuristic theories and methodologies. In light of the shattered assumptions model, I hypothesize that we will be able to find several areas of such shattering in the spiritual and religious histories of abused individuals and in the spiritual and religious histories of whistle-blowers and survivor advocates.

The Need for Religious and Spiritual History Taking

> I have learned that I was on a path of emotional and spiritual self-destruction as long as I let the anger control me and allowed it to overflow into just about everything I said and did. What we have accomplished over these past thirty years was not the result of uncontrolled anger but the result of hope, patience, and hard work. When I was asked to assist the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Children, I had to confront my own cynicism and the negativity I had that was directed at everyone and everything that made up the hierarchical dimension of the church. In doing that I concluded that living with these attitudes was counterproductive, causing me to lose sight of what I should be about

which is certainly not engaging in a hostile battle but doing what I can to help survivors, families and their loved ones who may one day find it [the church] helpful, supportive and compassionate.

Thomas P. Doyle[314]

One thing that has become noticeable to me in my reading is that nowhere have I seen mentioned the need for spiritual directors, religious counselors, or other spiritual advisors to take a spiritual and a religious history. This, to me, seems like a no-brainer. Those of us inside our various religious communities need to begin to think together what taking a religious history might entail; what taking a spiritual history might entail. The medical community has long recognized that a good medical history involves asking questions about violence and violation. Obstetricians and gynecologists, for example, want to complete a sexual history as part of their medical examinations of late adolescent and adult women.

No reputable physical medicine clinician will treat a human client without taking a medical history; no reputable therapist or other psychotherapist will treat a human client without taking a psycho-social history. The absence of such a history-taking process by *soul healers* is, therefore, notable. If we don't know what we are dealing with, it is difficult to reach out in effective ways to those who have been violated by their churches and spiritual centers. If we don't know what soul wounds look like, it is quite likely we don't know ways of assisting individuals to heal their soul's wound.

One place to begin, therefore, is to listen to the stories of survivors and to the language they use to describe their spiritual and religious responses to the church's violence and betrayals.

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Chapter Fifteen
Attribution Theories and Just World Thinking[315]

Sexual abuse [by clergy] *is the unintended smoke screen, the primary symptom of a much deeper and more pervasive problem. The real problem is the institutional management of the story.*

Thomas P. Doyle[316]

Many Christians don't know how to distinguish between likeability and trustworthiness. They confuse the two categories, assuming that if someone is courteous and nice, they must also be trustworthy. Moreover, some Christians behave as though the problem doesn't exist, and some look with suspicion on the reports of abuse. They believe children are lying and are more prone to take an adult's word. Sexual predators know that these dynamics operate in churches, and they know they can get away with a lot on account of it.

Deepak Reju[317]

As human being we make attributions when we seek to attach meaning to our own behavior or to the behavior of others. *She was angry because she was bad-tempered or he was angry because something bad just happened to him.* In other words, attribution theory seeks to attach a causal explanation – or to make sense of or to make meaning to explain events. In our efforts to make sense of our world – particularly when we are confronted with something that challenges our basic understandings of the way people behave, we attach a cause and effect relationship even when there is none.

There are essentially two basic types of attributions which we make when confronted with behavior – our own or others – that challenges our working assumptions about the world.

> - Internal or personal attribution: we look for internal clues – such as character or intelligence or personality style
>   - We tend to look for correspondences, for example, a friendly person (character) tends in our expectations to exhibit friendly behaviors; we tend to infer that a person's behavior matches his or her personality, character, or other. Freely chosen behavior is, therefore, seen as dispositional in character. With internal or personal attributions, we tend to make inferences based on characteristics such as mood, ability, personality, disposition or character.

- ➤ Extrinsic, external or situational attribution: we look for clues in the external world such as environmental factors.
  - o In situations of accidental behaviors we tend to make attributions that credit situational factors and tend to see these as having situation specific external causes. Thus, the cause of behavior is external to the personality, character, or other personal traits of the individual in question.

- ➤ Attribution Error: an attribution error is made when we fail to take into account environmental or situational factors. This is most common when we attempt to make attributions about others' behavior.
  - o Individualistic cultures tend to value individuals, personal goals, and independence; thus when making attributions, people tend to attribute a person's behavior to internal factors such as character. One interesting variable is that these cultures tend to attribute success to an individual's internal factors while attributing failure to external factors.
  - o Communal cultures tend to value conformity and interdependence thus when making attributions, they tend towards crediting an individual's behavior to external factors. Thus success is attributed to external factors while failure is attributed to internal factors.

Rape Research and Observers' Beliefs in a Just World

Good things happen to good people;
Bad things happen to bad people.

In 1965 Lerner[318] and in 1966 Lerner and Simmons[319] introduced the concept of the "just world" in which they hypothesized that there is a commonly shared cultural assumption that the world is a just place. In a just world people get what they deserve and deserve what they get. Thus, the world is seen as fair. People in a victim status are seen by others, and often by themselves, as earning or deserving their life situation or condition in some way. The outcomes of social events are used by individuals to interpret their personal observations about the world.

In an attempt to maintain cognitive consonance, people strive to find an appropriate fit between what they do and what happens to them as a consequence of their actions. In a like manner they seek to find a fit between others' behaviors and consequences or outcomes of those behaviors. When outcomes indicate victimization and suffering, observers and victims alike seek the causal reasons. When requirements for the just world are not met and are not readily apparent, observers and victims tend to assign causality, blame or responsibility to the victim.

Attribution theories are one way in which psychologists describe and explain in individual's behavior. In creating explanations, individuals attribute some aspect of human behavior to situational factors or to some inferred dispositional qualities of the person. In some situations, environmental factors may also be included in making attributions.[320]

Walster described responsibility attributions following severe accidents.[321] As outcome consequences of an accident became more severe, people became motivated to assign blame to someone as responsible. *If causality is assigned to an unpredictable, uncontrollable set of circumstances, individual are forced to conclude that such an event might happen to them*.[322] Therefore, people assign causal blame to persuade themselves that they will, in the future, be able to avoid such disasters in their own lives. Observers, therefore, place causal blame on the victim. The victim, also, in an effort to regain a positive self-view, blames modifiable factors in her decisions, those which are most available to her self-control. Attributions would rarely be made by either to chance sine it is the most *elusive and uncontrollable of factors*.[323]

Shaver's work[324] indicated that people assign causality in order to maintain or enhance self-esteem. By assigning causal attribution to victims, observers appear to believe that they can avoid similar situations.

Sumptom and Gregson[325] identify attribution bias or error as a critical factor in attribution research. Attribution bias, or attribution error, represents a human tendency to perceive themselves and others as causal agents. Attribution error results from this general human tendency to underestimate the importance of environmental influences in causal human behaviors. While observers frequently make attributions to the personal disposition, or motivation of the subject, the actors more frequently make situational attributions.

In 1973, Jones and Aronson[326] worked on responsibility attributions in rape situations. They used Lerner's and Lerner's and Simmons' paradigm of a just world to analyze their findings. Utilizing a study methodology of written vignettes with variables written into the vignettes, they found that respectable women are believed to be more behaviorally responsible for their own rape than are less respectable women.

Since in a just world people get what they deserve and deserve what they get, it is less possible for observers to fault the character of a respectable woman. Instead, therefore, they fault her behavior. Because she characerologically did not deserve to be raped, something in her behavior must have been at fault. In addition, these researchers found that the more severe the consequences of the rape, the greater are the demonstrated needs of observers to attribute behavioral blame to the victim. In essence, the observer's questions about the victim's suffering are answered by making the victim herself the responsible actor. In this

way, observers attempt to alter the cognitive dissonance created by bad things (rape) happening to good people.

Calhoun, Cann, Selby, and Magee[327] describe research in which the victim's emotionality immediately following rape was used in observer's judgments about whether rape had actually occurred. Emotional expressiveness and emotional control were the variables studied by either written vignettes or by videotapes. With both media forms, the emotionally expressive victim was rated by subjects as suffering more, and therefore, as more credible. In the videotape stuffy the controlled victim was liked less and was judged as less aversive to the rape event.

The authors speculate upon the consequences of engaging in situational behavior which is judges by others as inappropriate. They identify social rejections and diminished credibility. In addition, an increased attribution of causal responsibility for the victimization is likely to be expressed. Thus, the non-expressive victim was judged as more causally responsible for her rape. The victims with emotional control violate an informal code: observers expect that rape will create an aftermath in which agitated behaviors are appropriate.

Expected to be upset, her apparent calmness signals doubt to observers. When she does not demonstrate her distress in a visible manner to others, she loses believability. Her behaviors, non-congruent with the expectations of others, cause her to be judged more harshly. She is seen as consenting to sexual acts or as being responsible for her own assault.

Krulewitz[328] examined the issue of emotional responses to rape. Acknowledging that many therapists look to the woman's causal role and to her emotionality after assault to make a judgment about her motives and to assess her degree of suffering, Krulewitz found that the type of emotional display after rape is more a function of the victim's personality type or style than it is of post-rape stress. Finding, in this study, a longer recovery period post-rape for women whose immediate post-rape behavior appeared calm, she asks therapists to recognize that the quiet, apparently calm victim may be more disabled than her more emotive fellow victims.

Kanekar and various associates in a number of cross-cultural research studies conclude:

> The moral responsibility of a rape victim appears to be involved in measures of blame and fault attributed to her for her own rape, while he causal responsibility has been operationally represented by the measure of perceived likelihood of rape as a function of her attributes, i.e. virginity.[329]

Field[330] identified three domains of rape (act, victim, and rapist) and three myths (all women want to be raped; women falsely accuse men of rape; and women provoke men to rape by their appearance). In his study he states that rape attributions are multidimensional constructs. Observers are often reluctant to believe that victims are blameless in a rape situation. Field believes that this is a self-protecting maneuver that protects observers from helpless feelings caused by their worries about being vulnerable to a similar attack.

In addition, when assailants are not available, observers seek causation in the victims. When the assailant is available but meets the observer's perception of personal normalcy, the victim is judged as blameworthy. The victim is judged when the observer is threatened, when there is no assailant to blame, and when the assailant appears to be a normal human being.

Discussing the question of rape victims as "used property" and, therefore¸ as less valuable, Field comments that a victim without bodily injury is seen as consenting; a victim with injuries is seen as refraining from consent. He writes:

> *Person-oriented crimes take on a game-like quality to people. The more rape is seen as a confrontation between equals, the greater the stigma attached to the loser/victim. The greater the equality, the greater the perceived reality of the victim for the offense.[331]*

However, Sorentino and Boutelier[332] utilized a college population to study the effects of victim similarity and dissimilarity to research subjects. Their findings indicate that observers devalue victims whom they do not share a common fate, but that observers are drawn to the victim when they do. They state, *all the world loathes a loser, except other losers.[333]*

In research with student nurses, Alexander[334] studied nurses and their perceptions of rape victims. She found a reciprocal relationship of nurses' perceptions and contextual issues present in the rape event. Nurses made perceptual judgments of rape victims based upon their assessment of respectability or their disrespectability. Indications of disrespectability were clothing styles such as halter tops or shorts, prior acquaintance with the assailant, divorced marital status, and the victim's failure to resist. Nurses attributed more responsibility to the victim for her own attack if she was perceived to be disrespectable, and they attributed more responsibility to her assailant if she was perceived to be respectable.

However, the nurses' own personal characteristics and her pre-existing values and expectation set were identified as more important factors in predicting blame attribution among these nurses that were characteristics of the rapist, the victim or circumstances of the assault. Relevant factors were the nurse's knowledge (based on previous contacts with many or few rape victims), the nurse's personal character style and the nurse's own locus of control. When the nurse had known

many victims; when she saw herself as vulnerable to attack; when she maintained a legalistic approach to rules; and when she strongly believed in her own ability to control her own fate, she more harshly evaluated a victim's responsibility for the assault.

Differentiating between fault and responsibility in their study of college age women, Pollak and Davis[335] found that college-aged women assigned more fault (blame) to women who failed to take precautions against rape than they did to the rapist. Most responsibility (a causal judgment about behavior) was assigned to the woman who failed to take precautions in situations identified as premeditated assaults by the assailant. In assigning fault, these college-aged women used information about both the victim and the assailant.

In their study of rape attributions, Krulewitz and Payne[336] examined the effect of rapist force, observer's gender, and sex-role attitudes. In their findings, all three of these factors influenced responsibility attributions. When high amounts of force were used by the rapists, observers were more certain a rape had occurred and more moral responsibility for the rape was attributed to the rapist than to the victim. In their research definitions, traditional sex role norms tended to reinforce the view that rape was normal male/female behavior in sexual relationships. Within this definition of gender relationships, the woman is seen as naturally passive, submissive, and fearful about sex while the man is seen as dominant, aggressive, adventuresome, opportunistic and proud of his sexual prowess.

In their 1979 study, Krulewitz and Nash[337] studied attribution processes. The comment:

> Attitudes about rape…can best be understood within the context of social sex-role scripting….The aggressive, rough, and dominant behavior of rapists is consistent with the male sex role stereotype of "masculinity" while the passive, helpless submission of the victim is characteristic of the "feminine" role.[338]

One outcome of rape is the cultural belief that the victim now fails to represent the female role where women successfully fought off their assailants, more severe attribution of responsibility was assigned to the rapist. The assailant was seen as more responsible for the rape attempt when it failed than when it succeeded. When the assailant succeeded and a rape act completed, more responsibility was assigned to the woman. Krulewitz and Nash believe that the rapist's success raises questions in observers about the woman's actual wishes for this violent assault event.

I find their research findings to be troubling ones. Even when the researchers told the subjects that a rape had occurred in the research vignette, many subjects were not sure that one had actually occurred. Women in these vignettes who did not offer direct, obvious physical resistance were less likely to be seen as raped. The observers seemingly required the woman to physically resist even in situations of violent and dangerous coercion. Thus, rape victims in this study were held partially responsible for being raped while in situations of non-competed assault held their assailant as being more responsible. Thus, the would-be rapist was judged more harshly when he failed to complete an act of rape than when he had actually completed it.

In this same study, women observers attributed less intelligence and more responsibility to the woman victim of rape if she physically resisted her assailant. Men attributed more intelligence and less responsibility if she resisted. Krulewitz and Nash summarize these confusing findings:

> *Males may view a resisting woman who is raped as hurt **in spite of** her resistance while women blame [a] resisting victim **because** she resisted [emphasis theirs].*[339]

According to these researchers women observers are faced with a dilemma. By the psychological processes of identification with the victim, they must hold to a belief that what happened to her is not a random event. And they must also identify what exactly caused this event so that they may avoid rape in their own future. Therefore, women subjects scrutinize the victim's behaviors in search of rape avoidance clues because to hold the victim responsible for the assault is to imply to oneself that potential control over similar situations is possible in one's own life. Women observers are caught in the bind created by sex-role assumptions of submissive passivity and by rape outcome thinking in which aggressive resistance is essential to avoid judgment by others as a willing consenting participant. Krulewitz and Nash summarize:

> *Finally, when a victim adopts any particular strategy, but is unable to prevent the completion of sexual assault, the present findings indicate that her own and others' perceptions of her will be affected not only by the strategy chosen but by the outcome itself. Rape attributions are made after the fact. Expected effective strategies before an assault may differ after the fact. Expected effective strategies before an assault may differ considerably from perceived or expected strategies in retrospect….people will evaluate a situation in a manner consistent with their own belief system. In a real sense, the perceptions of the victim by others can affect her further experiences after the assault.*[340]

The legitimate victim is "the really raped" victim in the victim's self-perception and even more in the perception of others. The victims who others believe "deserved it" or who "wasn't really raped" will likely be further victimized by these others because of those pre-existing perceptual fields vis-à-vis the question, *what is it that constitutes a real rape?*

Karuza and Carey[341] used a research protocol with videotaped vignettes. Subject-observers blamed victims in two modes: behaviorally and characterologically. When a victim's behaviors were seen as prudent, character blaming was done. When the victim's behaviors were seen as imprudent, behavior blaming was done. Karuza and Carey conclude that blame strategies preserved, within observers, a sense of invulnerability, assisting them to maintain self-esteem. This strategy also allowed them to believe in a just, orderly and meaningful world.

Attractiveness Research and Rape Attribution

Attractiveness research presents confusing and contradictory findings. Thornton[342] found no relationship of attractiveness to judgments about provocation. Victim credibility was not affected by attractiveness. However, in sentencing decisions, once the assailant was judged responsible for the assault, attractiveness in victims correlated with longer assailant sentences.

Calhoun, Selby, Cann and Keller[343] found, however, that attractiveness and responsibility were related. In their study, attractive victims were held to be more responsible for their attack.

Seligman, Brickman, and Koulack[344] found that the attractiveness of the victim did make a difference in observer's judgments. Unattractive women were judged to behaviorally provoked rape in some manner while attractive women were judged to have provoked the rape by virtue of their personal characteristic of beauty. Since no man would want to rape an ugly woman, in the observer-subjects perception, she was believed to have acted in a provocative manner. However, in the observer-subjects perceptions, since many men would want to rape a beautiful woman, her beauty alone was sufficient to trigger the attack.

Best and Demmin[345] created four written vignettes to test attractiveness and blameworthiness for a rape event. When the victim's behavior was held constant in the vignettes, attractiveness did not affect the responsibility judgment of the subjects. However, when explicit descriptions of violent behavior were not given, attractiveness was used to assign provocation to attractive victims. Rapists, however, were not equally blamed. Those who raped provocative victims were blamed less than those who raped unprovocative victims. The authors conclude, *People do not tend to regard the occurrence of rape as "situationally given" (given the circumstances, this was bound to happen). Rather, people are able*

and willing to assume that the occurrence of rape is "personally driven" (somebody is more at fault and, therefore, more to blame for this).[346]

In 1983, Jacobson and Popovitch[347] designed a photo-vignette study in which cross-purposes stereotypes were studied. The first of these is that beautiful is good and better than ugly. Therefore, ugly women are responsible when they are raped. The second is that beautiful women arouse uncontrollable passions in men and, therefore, are responsible when they are raped. The researchers report that beautiful women were believed to be partially responsible for rape attacks against them. The less certain people were about the details of an incident, the more heavily they weighed the attractiveness of the victim when making judgments. Thus, in judgments made by these observers, beautiful is not good; beautiful is raped and beautiful is responsible for rape when it happens o her. The woman's great beauty was used o excuse the rapist.

In addition, women judged as ugly were also judged as responsible. The researchers noted behavioral blame with ugly women. Too ugly and observers ask: *who would want to rape you? You must have asked for it by your behavior.* The woman's ugliness was used to excuse the rapist.

In these findings, women who are taped are in an ambiguous situation. Neither beauty nor ugliness relieves the woman of her own responsibility for being raped. In either situation, the rapist was likely to be excused.

Motivation Research and Rape Attribution

Burt[348] raised the question of rape myth acceptance. Defining rape myths as false beliefs about rape (for example, only bad girls get raped). Burt and Albin[349] studied sexual conservatism (judgments about appropriate sexual behavior), arousal, sex role beliefs,(sexual relationships are fundamentally and essentially exploitive), and acceptance of interpersonal violence (force and coercion are legitimate ways to gain compliance from others). Three factors emerged as rape supportive: acceptance of rape myths, adversarial gender elations beliefs and acceptance of personal violence.

They found that belief in rape myths led observers to question the reality of rape. Even when given the research definition of rape as coerced sexual intercourse, some of the observers did not think that rape had necessarily happened. Rape myth acceptance went hand-in-hand with questions about the woman's consent from the observers (did the woman want to have sex), attribution questions (what were her personal motivations in this event), and character issues (was she respectable).

Burt's and Albin's study found that acceptance of interpersonal violation was the strongest predictor of rape myth acceptance. The researchers concluded:

> If sex-role stereotyping is the precondition for targeting women as a potential sexual victim, accepting of interpersonal violence may be the attitudinal releaser of assaultive action. Excessive violence has long bee a theme in American life: rape is only one of its modes of expression…The combination of pressures of sex-role stereotyping and psychological availability of violence have helped produce a rate of rape that is highest of an industrialized country. When viewed from that perspective, it appears that the task of preventing rape is tantamount to revamping a significant portion of our societal values.[350]

Heilbrun's study[351] deals with presumed motives in rape perception. Three vectors are used to explain the limited convictions of rapists. These are the issues of victim credibility, assailant responsibility, and the need to decide if a rape event actually occurred. Variables in Heilbrun's studies included the rapist's age, rapist education levels, perception of the acts as premeditated, use of psychological or physical force, existence o a prior relationship of assailant and victim, and subject perception of the act as violent or sexual.

His findings suggest that the less discrepancy there is between commonly accepted stereotype of rape and the reported crime, the greater the credibility attributed to the victim's report. The way that people conceive of rape is affected significantly by their attribution of motive to the rapist. A pre-existing rape stereotype yields bias in making attributions. Heilbrun uses the theory of cognitive dissonance to explain these findings. When an individual is made uncomfortable by perceptions which challenge pre-existing beliefs, they attempt to bring discrepant cognitions into harmony. A pre-existent rape stereotype is called into dissonance when the reported actual rape does not conform to the stereotype. To restore cognitive consistency, the observers call the victim's credibility into question.

Rape Research and Victim's Beliefs in a Just World

Griffiths[352] work identifies issues which preoccupy rape victims during a rape event and immediately after the event is over. During a tape event victims must deal with their assessment of the life-threatening nature of the particular rape episode in which they are trapped. Many women experience terror which is induced by a variety of assailant actions. Some women cope with this by entering a "terror-induced pseudo-calm" in which shock and disbelief are their primary reactions. During the reaction of pseudo-calm the victim experiences distorted and heightened perceptions in thinking as she attempts to direct her own behavior towards self-preservation. Many victims control their panic by focusing on small details; attempting to recall advice from others about what to

do in a rape situation or recalling their own survival behaviors in other situationsof interpersonal violence. Griffiths comments that while frozen fright appears like consent to the rapist, and perhaps, after the fact, to others it is really a form of compliance used by the woman to stay alive and to survive. (Please note the footnote below for a comment about this trauma response information).[353]

Janoff-Bulman and Wortman[354] studied coping ability in paraplegics who had been disabled in accidents. This particular study is of great importance to rape research literature because Janoff-Bulman moved on from this study to a series of studies with rape victims in which she utilized research protocols developed in this study. Applying Lerner's just world theory to paraplegics, the researchers concluded that self-blaming was a good predictor of good coping while other-blaming was a good predictor of poor coping. While observers in the just world theory blame and derogate others in order to preserve their belief that people get what they deserve, **victims likewise engage in self-blame and self-derogation in order to preserve their own just world beliefs** (emphasis mine).

Their research about accidents causing paraplegia is provocative today for women seeking to understand women's responses after rape. Individuals who blamed others for the accident and who were engaged in the search for revenge or justice had the fewest coping abilities in the accidents aftermath. Victims who were injured in the course of self-chosen, enjoyable leisure activities in which risks had been accepted – before the accident, as part of the action – were coping the best. As part of their discussions of the accident, they blamed themselves. Of this phenomenon, the research team wrote:

> The person who coped the best was the one who saw the accident as following logically and inevitably from a freely chosen behavior. Apparently the ability to perceive an orderly relationship between one's behaviors and one's outcomes is important for effective coping. This concern is consistent with a need for control…. However, it is our feeling that the data may be more indicative of a need for an orderly and meaningful world than for a controllable one.[355]

They conclude that the need to search for the meaning of an accident is a salient victim reaction to an event of victimization. They identify several forms of sense-making which emerged from victims in this study: predetermination, probability, chance, God's own reasons, deservedness, Devil's interference to make God do wrong, re-evaluation of the event as positive (for example, a test to teach personal courage).

Of this need to seek meaning, the researchers stated: *What may be important is ascribing meaning to the accident in a manner that proves satisfying to the individual victims.[356]* In addition, the researchers note that after the event of victimization has occurred, the victims likely have a distorted sense of their own

causal powers. Failing to find an immediate cause for their suffering they may search through their life story for any prior causation.

In 1979, Janoff-Bulman began a series of studies with rape victims. In this research she describes two kinds of self-blaming done by victims: behavioral self-blame and characterological self-blame. While self-blaming has puzzled women in the anti-rape movements and clinicians in therapy situations, the Janoff-Bulman studies indicate that not all self-blaming indicates poor coping. In this particular set of studies, attribution issues are the critical issues in the victim's coping skill set.

When raped women engage in character self-blaming (I always was a poor judge of men's personalities), self-blaming is maladaptive. However, behavioral self-blaming (I should not have left the car door unlocked) is frequently adaptive. Janoff-Bulman analyzes this differentiated faulty attribution process in the following manner.

The woman who judges her character as deficient and as the causal precipitant in the rape event, evaluates and criticizes her own self-identity. This harsh self-criticism tends to lower self-esteem. By placing the locus of attribution in her own character, she establishes the future as one in which her own behavior offers little hope of personal control. By making a character attribution, she limits her options in the self-creation of her own future.

On the other hand, the woman who blames her own behaviors rather than their characters is searching to see how she got into a rape vulnerable situation. If a woman can determine ways in which she shares responsibility with the rapist, she can gains some future control over similar events. She is then able to reason that the event was not totally arbitrary, chaotic, or random. This enables the raped woman, in future situations, to exercise more self-control. If only her behaviors need to change, then the woman can regain personal security.

Since behavioral self-blame appears to be functional for rape victims, Janoff-Bulman advises crisis intervention teams and therapists to intervene very slowly and deliberately. Behavioral self-blame does not represent masochistic struggles of the woman, but rather represents her efforts to regain a sense of self-control over her future destiny. Suggesting to the woman that she was not responsible for her rape, in this immediate post-rape stage may, in fact be detrimental. It may be counter-productive for the woman in her development of future coping skills and a return to health.

In another research study about self-blaming, Janoff-Bulman[357] examined the types of self-blaming. In this study her research subjects were women who had been raped. In this study she focused upon self-esteem factors. The victim who cites a pre-rape behavior which can be altered is already attempting to regain self-control. Post-rape women who demonstrated high self-esteem levels also

demonstrated high levels of behavioral self-blaming. Victims who demonstrated low self-esteem levels demonstrated characterological self-blaming.

When she examined observer-subjects, high level self-esteem observers demonstrated both character and behavioral blaming of victims. Janoff-Bulman believes two phenomena are at work in these findings. For victims, the issue is regaining self-control once a sense of personal invulnerability has been shattered by an experienced rape. However, for observers the issue is maintaining a sense of personal invulnerability. This maintenance is accomplished by victim-blaming. Victimization threatens the victim *and* the observer albeit in different ways, and it crease victim blaming. However, it is very likely that the motivation for self-blaming in victims and for other-blaming in observers stems from two very different motivations.

Janoff-Bulman and Frieze[358] developed a theoretical perspective within which to understand the victim's psychological reactions to victimization. Disruptive negative life events are understood to create the necessity for life change, for rebuilding an *assumptive world.[359]* Basic assumptions held by the woman before she was raped have been shattered during and immediately after the rape. These assumptions include the woman's personal beliefs in her own invulnerability, her perception of the world as an orderly, meaningful place, and her self-view of personal control of her own world.

The psychological response to assumption-shattering is shock, confusion, terror, fear, anxiety, and emotional numbing. The authors remind everyone that the severity of these responses should remind everyone of the suffering and the distress experienced by victimized individuals. The victim's life patterns and cognitive arrangements have been altered by her experiences of rape. Her post-rape world is very different than her pre-rape world. It is marked by threats, dangers, and self-questioning. The loss of a conceptual system developed by the woman throughout her life means the loss of her internal guiding system. Her previous guiding system has been shattered along with the shattering or her inner assumptive world. She no longer has a guiding system with a viable and trustworthy set of expectations about human behavior.

By 1985 Janoff-Bulman and Timko[360] more closely studied victim-blaming by self and others. Discussing hindsight thinking, they concluded that in retrospect people know what to avoid. When observers blame the rape victim, they forget that prior to the rape event and victimization, no one knew the outcome.

Therefore, the victim acted without outcome knowledge. Thus, to understand the victim's perceptions of her own victimization, it becomes important to understand the event in its own context rather than in the outcome context of hindsight.

The research team asks if victim self-blame is a form of hindsight thinking that reflects an inherent survivor cognitive bias that must be acknowledged by rape center volunteers and clinicians. They write:

> *The relatively "automatic" nature of this hindsight effect augurs poorly for victims in terms of what they can expect from others. It is possible that victims themselves use outcome knowledge in reacting to their own victimization. Certainly, while acting and making decisions before the victimization, the future victim operates in the absence of outcome knowledge. However, following the victimization, victims may react to their own circumstances by over estimating the predictability of their own victimization, thereby engaging in an unwarranted degree of self-blame.[361]*

Miller and Porter[362] studied self-blame in victims of violence. They identify three types of self-blame. First, there is the blame for causing the violence; second, there is the blame for not modifying it; and thirdly, there is the blame for tolerating it.

Individuals can blame themselves as being the cause of violence or as being the occasion of violence or as having blameworthy characteristics. Commenting on their *counter-intuitive* findings, these researchers note that victims often exaggerate the extent to which they are responsible for their own fate. Like Janoff-Bulman and her associates, they recognize the positive correlation of behavioral self-blaming with coping abilities after an episode of experienced violation.

Several possibilities exist to explain this counter-intuitive finding. The victim has perhaps internalized, by psychological processes, the external society and its negative responses to victims. Or, perhaps, the victim is attempting to regain and control over her life. It is possible that she is operationalizing just-world thinking. Finally, it is possible that she is seeking to impose meaning on the non-comprehensible. The authors state their belief that any given event of victimization can activate a variety of causal questions and needs for meaning. The distinction between the even and effects of the event is needed in any given examination of victim self-blaming activities.

Causal questions, for example, can lie in negative outcomes. The question, *why did I fail to notice I was in danger* is one such question. Causal questions can ask about the timing of victimization. The question *why did I get raped tonight when I've never been raped before* is one example of such a question. Causal questions can raise comparisons with others as in *why me and why not her?*

Reminding their reader that the unique saliency of the causal question for the victim can also function as a clue to the observer-helper about unresolved issues in the woman's thinking about her victimization, the authors reiterate two

foundational questions for victims to resolve: *Why did violence occur? Why did violence occur to me?*

Conclusions

Social science research is grounded in empirical observation and experiments. The issue of knowing and proving underlies all such research protocols. Western science has moved towards proving and justifying. It has simultaneously moved away from discovering, revealing, and knowing. Thus, women in consciousness-raising groups might discover and thereby know much about rape in women's lives. However, their knowledge would not be accepted as scientific knowledge. Because of the absence of the so-called objective observer, women's knowing would be held to be idiosyncratic and subjective.

The scientific community indicates in its complexity that common-sense wisdom about rape and responses to rape's victims may be false wisdom. Efforts by women, who have been raped, to understand the necessary processes of recovery, include their own subjective attempts at sense-making after an event of sexual violence.

In the research situation they are faced wit the response of others to their victimization. Various concepts, sometimes contradictory in values, may be utilized to explain the event of rape in a woman's life. Social science research reminds the student6 of rape event and women's recovery that twenty years of self-study from a woman's perspective has only just begun to explain new understandings of the woman's response to her own rape event. Likewise, observers' responses are just beginning to be researched and scientific understandings developed. [363]

Both the subjective and the scientific approaches are needed to provide different personal and cultural understandings of rape's psychic and physical costs to the victimized woman and her social networks. Social science research has been mot helpful in its descriptive functions. Research protocols have provided several counter-intuitive findings which can guide clinicians and their clients in understanding the rape event and its location in an individual's life.

Looking Back: Twenty Five Years Later

Women's consciousness-raising groups became a vehicle for learning about rape. These groups were pioneered by a group of radicalized women in New York City, the Redstockings. They spread across the United States. A splinter group who broke off from the Redstockings, The New York Radical Feminists sponsored the first national speak out on rape at St. Clements Episcopal Church in Manhattan. About 300 people participated and the New York area media were present.

From these very modest beginnings, the American feminist anti-rape movement and anti-domestic violence movements were formed. These two separate movements tended to merge with each other as rape crisis lines and domestic violence shelters formed all across the United States. These movements continue to this day – with one aspect of its current work being the issue of affinity violence, sexual harassment and rapes on college campuses. Academic research protocols were an almost immediate consequence as social scientists and medical scientists sought to study what these movements were unearthing in terms of human trauma and its subsequent pathologies.

The formation of the American Women's health movement with its emphasis on women's reproductive freedom and women and children friendly health care was a parallel development. The meeting of the anti-rape movement, the anti-domestic violence movement and the feminist women's health movement meant that sexual and physical violence against women was very much on women's minds and hearts. In less than twenty years, the victim-precipitation model of rape was abandoned – a model which had been present for many years in medical, therapeutic, and criminology models.

I personally believe that the work on identifying clergy sexual abuse of women and children (and now we know vulnerable men as well) is deeply indebted to the American feminist women's movement. In the same way that the women's movement is indebted to the African-American civil rights movements of the 1880's and the 1960s, so too is this current American civil rights movements for children and vulnerable adults inside authoritarian religious communities indebted to the women's anti-rape movement and the women's feminist health movements during the last half of the twentieth-century.

I have been part of these three movements since the 1970s. I have witnessed our knowledge expand about the harmful consequences of these forms of violence in women's and children's lives. I have also witnessed our culture's continuing reluctance to believe the victims' stories of violation.

My dissertation literature review, in mid-career for me, has served as a template of my own understanding of these complex phenomenons of victim blaming as (1) done by the victim herself; (2) done by those who are friends and family to victims; (3) by perpetrators and (4) by bystanders and witnesses.

I moved to a posture in public addresses and writing that in all situations of sexual violence it is the perpetrator who is solely responsible for his, and sometimes her, decision to initiate sexually or physically or verbally violent forms of interactions. Until we as a society get very clear about this, socio-cultural blaming of victims will continue.

My sermon and lecture illustration was always this;

> *A naked woman is walking down an isolated alley at midnight. The sky is dark and moonless. She is raped.*
>
> *The person responsible for her rape is the rapist. He is solely responsible for his decision to rape the woman. He is solely responsible for the act of rape.*

I have always been amazed at the individuals – male and female – who choose to argue with me in public about this claim. In many situations, I was directly challenged by audience participants. Men, in particular, frequently sought me out after my lecture or my sermon to argue that I was wrong about this claim. I came to believe that they were telling me more about themselves and their personal lives than they knew.

Nevertheless, I still believe this: the rapist is responsible for his decision to rape. The minister who abuses a child or an adolescent or a vulnerable adult is responsible for his decision and for his actions. Each and all of these violence perpetrators need to be held accountable for his decisions and his actions.

As we begin to think about religious and spiritual aspects of these forms of victimization, we can build upon the work of every freedom and justice movement. While the human being seems to be infinitely malleable inside culture, nevertheless, our bodies and our brains set limits on us. We cannot move outside of those essential limitations on our freedom and on our responses to the world around us.

Whatever the soul is, it is not disembodied. It is bound by its embeddedness within a human body and that human body is embedded inside a particular culture.

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Section Four

Building Blocks

Section Four Introductory Notes
Conceptual Building Blocks

In the preceding chapters, I have mentioned some of these building blocks. The chapters in this section describes each one in a bit more depth or, at the very least, identifies the building block's basic structure, composition, or expression in situations of human trauma.

No building block, in and of itself, constitutes an entire heuristic theory of trauma or of physical, psychological, social, or spiritual sequellae to trauma. Yet each building block adds to our conceptual understanding of the way trauma interacts with a human life in devastating ways.

Some of these building blocks, such as the Stockholm syndrome, have a body of research to describe their puzzling presence in human culture and in the human psyche. Others such as the just world thinking paradigm provide us with a glimpse into phenomenons experienced by victimized individuals inside a wide range of human victimization.

It is quite likely that there are additional building blocks. What I have included here are those that I personally know about and have studied in my professional life to date. Thus, this listing of short chapters is idiosyncratic and in no way should be considered inclusive of all such building blocks.

Chapter Sixteen
The Stockholm Syndrome[364]

Introductory Comments

From August 23 -28, 1973, several four bank employees were held hostage in Stockholm, Sweden. The four hostages – three women and one man – were strapped with dynamite and held inside a bank vault until rescued by Swedish police. During these days the captives became emotionally attached to their captors. After their release, several of them defended their captors and reported fearing their rescuers. One of the women later became engaged to one of her captors. Another woman established a defense fund to assist in criminal defense trials.

The term Stockholm syndrome was coined by Swedish psychiatrist and criminologist Nils Bejerot (1921-1988). United States psychiatrist Frank Ochburg (1940 -) who was a pioneer in the psychiatric diagnosis and treatment of trauma, helped to define the psychiatric parameters of the diagnosis.

Susceptibility to the Stockholm syndrome

In the years since this episode, clinicians have identified the following populations of individuals as susceptible to the Stockholm syndrome.

- ➢ Abuse and battered children
- ➢ Abused and battered women
- ➢ Incest victims
- ➢ Prisoners of War
- ➢ Cult members
- ➢ Criminal hostage situations
- ➢ Concentration camp prisoners
- ➢ Controlling and intimidating relationships
- ➢ Doyle and Benkert suggest adding to this list, survivors of repetitive and extended clergy sexual abuse[365]

It is now believed that bonding with one's assailants and captors is a survival mechanism for the captured and abused individual. When encountered after a rescue, it is now almost universally recognized as having contributed to a victim's survival.

Situational Factors in the Development of the Syndrome

- ➢ The presence of a perceived threat to ones physical or psychological or emotional survival and the belief that the abuser is both capable and willing to carry out his threats of violence

It is important to note that criminal or anti-social abusers can threaten the captive's life or the life of important others such as family members or friends. A history of violence on the part of abusers leads the victims to believe that life-threatening violence is immanent. Victims believe – and may be specifically told this – that only by cooperating with their abuser will their own life be spared or the lives of others such as their children.

The abuser may overtly threaten or provide indirect hints and threats such as *I have a friend who knows how to make people disappear.* The abuser may threaten revenge if the victims seek to leave or to be rescued. In addition, violence against material items in the environment such as the destruction of furniture or dishes provides an implicit warning about potential human violence.

➤ The presence of a perceived small kindness from the abuser

Caught inside the narrative of personal violence, victims look for evidence of hope, a sign that the situation might improve. When an abuser shows some small sign of kindness, the victims see this small sign as a positive or hopeful one. Allowing the victim to live counts here as a small kindness in the mind of the abused individual. Providing food and water counts. Allowing individuals to use the bathroom counts. These small actions persuade the victim that the abuser is *not all bad* and may, in the future, correct his or her abusiveness.

In addition, the victim may rationalize the abuser's behavior in an attempt at empathy. *I know he just hit me but he has had a very troubled childhood* is one form of this rationalizing process. The abuser may blame the act of abuse on stress inside the relationship or inside the social environment such as job stress.

➤ Isolation from other's perspectives than the abuser's

In order to survive, victims begin to see the world through the eyes of their abusers. They seek to fix things which might yield an outburst. They enter a stage of hyper-arousal in which they seek to control the other's violence by becoming pre-occupied with his needs, desires, or wishes.

Abusers typically seek to isolate their abuse victims from others. In this way they solidify their control over their victims. In some situations, victims take on aspects of guilt and responsibility for the situation.

➤ A perceived or realistic inability to escape from the situation

When one is trapped, the survival instinct kicks in and individuals seek ways to survive. Bonding emotionally to their abusers is one such strategy.

Symptomatic Behaviors

Note: the length of time one is held hostage or abused is a significant variable or factor in the development of this disorder. The specific forms of abuse are also a factor. The age and development status of the victim are also important.

> ➢ Positive feelings towards one's captors, abuser, or controller
> ➢ Negative feelings towards one's rescuers – family, police officers, friends, or other authorities
> ➢ Support for abusers, their behaviors, and their reasons
> ➢ Positive feelings for their abuser
> ➢ Supportive behaviors of helping their abuser
> ➢ Lack of desire to be rescued or even an inability to cooperate with those seeking to rescue them

As noted above, Benkert and Doyle raise the question of whether the Stockholm syndrome applies to some children and adolescents who are abused over a period of years. This is a question which can and should be addressed by therapists and members of the legal community. It is a very important question because in adult life, formerly abuse victims may blame themselves for the acts of abuse. In addition, they others inside their family networks or friend networks or church communities may blame the victims for not leaving.

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Chapter Seventeen
Traumatic Grief Syndrome[366]

For some, the sources of grief constitute the loss of already established assumptions and beliefs about self, home, family, and society. For others, the assaults on their integrity began when they were so young that they had no time to develop a coherent assumptive world before their lives were shattered.

Sandra L. Bloom[367]

Shear and Smith-Caroff note that ordinary bereavement and loss may present individuals with a personal crisis.[368] This is because close relationships afford a sense of personal security, financial security, social status, self-esteem, self-confidence or a sense of self-importance. They may provide people with a sense of wholeness or of balance. People with whom we have formed close interpersonal relationships help us to trust ourselves and our opinions about life. They support us in times of personal trouble or when others attack us. These authors note that *grief is the price we pay for love.[369]*

In ordinary or healthy grieving the following may be observed:

  ➢ Intense sadness
  ➢ Social withdrawal
  ➢ Difficulty in concentrating
  ➢ Intrusive thoughts about the dead individual
  ➢ Yearning or longing for the person who has died
  ➢ A strong desire to talk about the dead individual
  ➢ A sense of an aching void as if part of the self has been amputated

When death is sudden and accompanied by violence additional behaviors may be observed

  ➢ Shock, disbelief and psychic numbing
  ➢ A sense of deep anxiety
  ➢ Depression
  ➢ Physical illness
  ➢ Preoccupation with disturbing thoughts and images
  ➢ Intense and unfamiliar emotions and thoughts, for example, revenge fantasies or a deep sense of horror or irrational fears
  ➢ Re-experiencing the trauma of the death

These authors note that Horowitz, et al. have created a template for diagnosing complex grief reactions or traumatic grief.[370]

- Unbidden memories or intrusive fantasies related to the lost relationship
- Strong spells of severe pain or strong emotions related to the lost relationship
- Distressingly strong desires or wishes for the dead person to be alive and present in the here and now
- Feelings of being lonely and empty
- Avoiding people, places, activities, or relationships that remind the individual of the dead person and the lost relationship
- Sleep disorders
- Loss of interest in work
- Loss of interest in recreational or avocational interests
- Persistence of symptoms for more than six months

Quoting Prigerson and associates, they note a similar cluster of symptoms.[371]

- Searching, yearning and a preoccupation with the deceased
- Crying
- Disbelief about the death
- Feeling stunned by the death
- Lack of acceptance of the death
- Mood disorders
- Sleep disorders
- Mental functioning disorders
- Self-esteem issues

In their summary of their research, Prigerson and co-authors, suggest that it would be helpful to future research and understanding of these issues to group symptoms into separation distress disorders and traumatic distress disorders. Their grouping looks like this:

- Separation Distress Disorders include:
  - Intrusive thoughts of the deceased
  - Intense yearning for the deceased
  - Searching for the deceased
  - Feelings of loneliness

- Traumatic Distress Disorders include
  - Feelings of purposelessness and feelings about the futility of the future
  - Numbness, detachment, or an absence of emotional responsiveness

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- Difficulty acknowledging the death
- Feelings that life is meaningless and empty
- Feeling that a part of oneself has died
- Excessive anger, bitterness or irritability related to the death

Especially troublesome etiological factors in the development of traumatic grief syndrome ate:

- Pre-existing personal vulnerabilities such as low self-esteem or a history of psychiatric disorders such as chronic depression or psychotic thinking
- Sudden, untimely deaths associated with violence such as murder or suicide
- Multiple, simultaneous or time-related deaths

An inventory, Complicated Grief Assessment, has been created to help clinicians measure the presence pathological or complex grief responses to loss.[372]

Personal Commentary

Child neglect represents particular challenges for adult survivors because they must grieve for things they never had and thus never had the chance to lose.

Sandra Bloom[373]

To my knowledge, no one has done this kind of theory-research work about the phenomenons of soul loss and soul grief as experienced by the survivors of (1) clergy sexual abuse, (2) religious institution abuse, and/or (3) religious community hostility and abandonment in the wake of clergy sexual abuse revelations. In particular, I note an absence of research and theory construction in the fields of pastoral care and pastoral theology. Those of us who have worked with survivors of sexual and domestic abuse have intuitions about the religious and spiritual consequences of traumatic grief for children, adolescents and adults who have been victimized by others' acts of violence and violation. But there are few resources available to help clergy, therapists, and survivor advocates to understand the crucial role of traumatic grief in the symptomatology of survivors.

Inasmuch as these victim experiences of sexual violation and institutional clericalism represent the presence of emotional and spiritual losses in their personal lives, grief work is an essential element in the healing process.

It seems to me as if one element of recognized and experienced betrayal is a sense of internal death and dismemberment. That which we were before we were betrayed dies in us and something else is reborn. The assumptions which we lived by before we were betrayed are often shattered and we must re-build

our inner assumptive world in light of the betrayals we have experienced in our lives and relationships with others – individuals and institutions.

As we continue, therefore, to examine soul murder, soul death, soul theft, soul loss, or soul wounds, a working knowledge of the normal processes of grief is essential. Also essential is a working knowledge of trauma-complicated grief.

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Chapter Eighteen
Cognitive Dissonance

My spiritual odyssey has had many moments of emptiness, doubt and even despair. As I experienced the very subtle yet real disintegration of the fear based-belief system I had once embraced I began to find a sense of freedom to look for spiritual answers and spiritual security wherever my questions led me. With this freedom has come a feeling of hope that I had never before experienced in my life. My hope is not rooted in ecclesiastical personages or structures nor is it rooted in rules, customs, or rituals. It is grounded in my belief that the Higher Power is really a life-giving and life-sustaining power of love and that all that is good, and loving and comforting about the Higher Power has been embodied in Jesus Christ.

Thomas P. Doyle[374]

Introductory Comments

Dissonance is felt when people are confronted with information that is contrary to their beliefs. Refusing to change one's beliefs, dissonance can be resolved (1) by misperceptions, (2) overt rejection of the information, (3) seeking support from others who share one's beliefs, and (4) seeking to persuade others that one's beliefs are correct. [375]

Cognitive dissonance is a concept first identified and subsequently intellectually dissected by Leon Festinger. It is the state of having inconsistent thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes as these relate to behavioral decisions and attitude changes. In particular, cognitive dissonance is the experience of mental distress or mental discomfort that individuals experience when they simultaneously hold two or more contradictory beliefs, ideas, or values. When an individual behaves in ways which are contradictory to these values, beliefs or ideas or when an individual is presented with new information that contradicts these values, the end result is mental discomfort and cognitive dissonance.

In Festinger's theoretical work, he focused on the study of how individuals strive for consistency in their life and their decisions. When situationally challenged by incongruence in the inner world or in the outer world, individuals strive to find a place of consistency.

> - Congruent or consonant relationship of two cognitive functions
>   - Wanting to maintain a stable weight, therefore eating a single piece of fruit rather than two large dips of ice cream for a snack

- ➢ Irrelevant relationship of two cognitive functions
    - o Wanting to maintain a stable weight and deciding which shoes to wear to work

- ➢ Dissonant relationship of two cognitive functions
    - o Wanting to maintain a stable weight while eating a daily ice cream fudge sundae as a snack.

Festinger and those who followed him hypothesized that the amount of dissonance, and therefore psychological distress, experienced were correlated with (1) the importance and number of cognitions and (2) actions involved – thus when more important values or beliefs or attitudes are challenged, the more one experiences inner dissonance.

If, for example, one believes that clergy are needed for one's eternal salvation and if one also believes that a trusted clergy person is God's voice on earth *and* one is subsequently raped by this clergy person, there is an immediate disconnect of learned and held values and beliefs with one's own personal experience.

In a similar way, when an individual has believed all of the teachings of his church regarding these matters of clergy and salvation and when he then witnesses institutional abuse and predator-protection by their institutional supervisors, this individual's inherited belief structures about leader and institutional goodness come into conflict with his direct personal experience about these matters of predation and protection. It is quite likely that this individual, newly informed, will feel internal pressures to blow the whistle and internal pressures to remain silent. This psychological and cognitive disconnect between what he formerly believed and what he is a witness to create a situation of cognitive dissonance. Whatever he chooses to do about these matters, his future life and belief systems will be changed by his direct personal experience – perhaps in subtle ways and perhaps in dramatic ways.

Religious Dissonance

> *The betrayal by the clergy and the lay community is a powerful step in the complete disintegration of the victim's religious world and spiritual system. In spite of the assault some victims retained some faith in the community and looked there for support. The conviction of abandonment by God is deepened when the Christian community isolates and ostracizes the victim.*

Thomas P. Doyle[376]

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In a religious context, (1) if I believe that every sexual imagery, thought, fantasy, and action is evil and sinful; (2) if I consistently encounter sexual imagery, thoughts, fantasies and actions in my inner and outer life; (3) if I think I am going to hell because of my experienced inner reality of an active sexual fantasy life or am engaged in active interpersonal sexual behavior – there is psychic state of uncomfortable incongruity; (4) if, in addition, my religious community teaches that I will die in hell for these thoughts and that only a priest can forgive me, the stakes are raised considerably; (5) if and when a member of the religious establishment – a priest or a minister – sexually abuses me, the stakes vis-à-vis my eternal salvation are raised even higher. It is quite likely that thr discongruity of my propositional faith beliefs with my experienced reality will increase the intensity of internal dissonance and emotional, religious, and spiritual trauma.

I think it was Professor Margaret R. Miles who said about this kind of theology that whoever controls a person's sexuality has gained control over that person. I agree with her. Part of a survivor's task or trauma-healing work is to reclaim and repair her sexuality – making it her own. In the process of doing this reclamation and healing work, survivors will need to repair their inner world views about the relation of their sexuality to their salvation. They will need to become realistic in their expectations of religious leaders. In their journey to healing many will discover that magical thinking about the church and its teachings need to be re-visited in light of personal experience.

When who I think I am (or even who I want to be) is challenged by my contradictory behaviors or by my contradictory experiences in the real world, I enter a state of cognitive dissonance. One example I saw frequently as a college teacher was around the issue of classroom cheatings. On college campuses which have an honor code that identifies cheating as unacceptable classroom behavior, students who do successfully cheat often have very guilty consciences. It was not uncommon to have confessions of cheating – sometimes anonymously and sometimes with an identifying signature – come into my campus mail box. It was clear that while most college students did not engage in classroom cheating, some young adult students (1) believed that cheating was wrong and (2) engaged in cheating behaviors. By making a confession, these students attempted to rebalance what they believed with what they had actually had done.

- Some students, when caught cheating, rationalized that everyone cheated at some time or another
- Some students denied cheating even when the evidence was quite clear that they had plagiarized someone else's work or bought term papers on the open computer market
- Some students confessed to the person whose work they had taken as their own – anonymously or in person
- Some students confessed to the teacher or to the registrar – anonymously or in person

- Some cheating students most likely were silent and never acknowledged even to themselves that what they had done was wrong and harmful
- Others knew it was cheating and didn't see it as a personal problem at all

In these examples, we see an individual attempting to reconcile his or her behavior with the college's honor code and with the expected patterns of behavior for all students. In my years of witnessing these varied responses, I came to believe that students who cheated harmed themselves much more than they harmed the honor code or they harmed their peers whose work they had stolen. In addition, they were setting an integrity or lack of integrity template in motion that would guide them in the post-graduation world. .

According to Festinger, there are several ways that individuals can reduce the inner stress of cognitive dissonance. I abstract his work below. For example, an individual "addicted" to eating donuts and who wants to maintain a stable weight may:

➢ Change the behavior that conflicts with a cognitive belief (I did not eat a donut this morning since I desire to maintain a stable weight).
➢ Justify behavior which contradicts the cognition/belief (It's OK to cheat on my diet today because it is my birthday).
➢ Justify behavior by adding new conditions or beliefs (I can eat this donut because today is my work-out day).
➢ Ignore or deny information that conflicts with factually accurate cognitions (Donuts are healthy foods and they don't cause weight gain)
➢ Change the cognitive belief (My weight is perfect as it is.)

Clergy Sexual Abuse Cognitive Dissonance

Victims of clergy sexual abuse (this is particularly true for small pre-pubescent children in whom magical thinking processes are still developmentally appropriate) are faced with an incongruity of major proportions. An individual who is supposedly trustworthy and who is seen as a human god has sexually assaulted them. An individual who represents their god's face and presence on earth has sexually violated and physically harmed them. Since, as Benkert and Doyle have demonstrated, individuals freeze it is clear to me that experiences of religious duress in situations of clergy sexual violence is related to or correlated with cognitive dissonance.[377] Some adult resolutions of these issues can include:

➢ Distrusting what one was taught about religious clergy (they are just like all criminals)
➢ Continuing to believe what one was taught about religious clergy and transferring the blame to God (God has abandoned me)

- ➢ Behavioral self-blame (Something I did or am caused this holy man to sin)
- ➢ Characterological self-blame (I must be an evil person or this would never have happened to me).
- ➢ Situation or other blaming (My parents should never have consented to me becoming an altar boy in the first place.)
- ➢ Magical thinking (The priest paid attention to me; I was special.)

As victim advocates or survivor advocates and helpers such as therapists, lawyers, and family members encounter the stories of clergy sexual abuse, they too can experience the discomforting need to re-think their own pre-existing beliefs and world views. Victim blaming is quite common.

- ➢ That child was sexually precocious and seduced the pastor. (This is a form of character blaming)
- ➢ That child should never have been allowed to go on that field trip with the pastor. (This is a form of behavior blaming)
- ➢ The child is lying; the pastor did no such thing. (This is a form of betrayal denial).

I believe that religious communities are faced with the same cognitive dissonance dilemmas as individuals are. Learning that a beloved pastor is accused of sexually abusing children, adolescents, or vulnerable adults, the entire community enters a time of liminal space. In this transition space from not knowing to knowing, entire communities are faced with the need to integrate this information into their ongoing communal lives. Just as individuals do, they become stressed in similar ways as individuals are stressed on learning this information. During this liminal threshold, the community must make sense of new information about a pastor or other trusted individual inside the community. During this difficult time, entire communities may splinter because some individuals will believe the accusations and allegations and others will deny their truthfulness and many, perhaps the majority, will continue to believe that *our pastor could never have done such a thing. He is such a good man. The accusers are lying to make trouble.*

In his 2008 SNAP Conference presentation, Father Thomas Doyle discussed of the spiritual and religious trauma experienced by clergy sexual abuse victims, I abstract his work below. In this speech he noted the following aspects of clergy-victimized Roman Catholic lay individuals:

- ➢ Despair from loss of God; the rupture of their relationship with God is final
- ➢ Toxic guilt and immobilizing fear
- ➢ Spiritual confusion
- ➢ Spiritual isolation

- Attribution of their sexual assault to God with the belief that they have been sexually assaulted by God
- Loss of spiritual security
- The spiritual disruption of a previously believed faith
- Disillusionment with the institutional church
- Disillusionment with the concept of a loving God
- The spiritual bond of the victim with God and with the church is wrapped up in the experience of betrayal by the predator and by the church which protected him or her
- The loss of and absence of communal spiritual support in ordinary situations such as death, illness, financial reversals, etc.
- Intense emotional states such as anxiety, fear, anger[378]

Case Example

In my thirties before I understood any of the personal or systemic or structural dynamics of the many forms of clergy sexual abuse of the laity, I witnessed from a long distance away my first encounter with clergy sexual abuse. In my home town, a thriving and growing Protestant church was confronted with the reality that its charismatic, church-building, and much loved and trusted pastor was accused of having sexual relationships with a number of newly divorced women from the congregation during the months or years that he provided post-divorce pastoral counseling to them.

I was not a member of this congregation but two very good friends of mine were and I occasionally worshipped there with them. On receiving formal complaints about the minister's behavior, the board of elders consulted with their denominations supervising bishop. The bishop did an investigation. He determined that the pastor was guilty of the accusations. The minister was removed from ministry and de-frocked.

The congregation split and then split again until this once thriving community was in splinters. Members of the laity needed to come to terms with this information and the bishop's action. The internal debate among congregants was heated and impolite. Some people simply did not believe the facts they were given. Some people blamed the women. Some people supported the bishop. Friend fought with friend and many long-term friendships ended because people could not, and therefore, did not believe what they were being told. The accusers were blamed as trouble-makers, as seducers. The board of elders was blamed for allowing this narrative to surface and the bishop was blamed for his role in the investigation of complaints. This once-thriving and growing institutional congregation almost died. An interim minister was assigned to what remained of this now-struggling-for-its-life congregation. His task was to help the remaining members of the congregation to begin a process of coming to terms with the reality of their situation and to begin their individual as well as their communal healing. But

much had been lost in the fight over whether or not to believe the individuals who had brought the allegations of abuse to the bishop's attention. The congregation lost almost one-half to two-thirds of its members. Its financial issues in the wake of this episode were overwhelmingly huge. My friends never returned to church attendance nor did they transfer their membership to another congregation or denomination. In essence, they were in religious and spiritual exile from their cradle faith tradition. They were, therefore, religiously homeless.

If and when, years later, one encounters individuals who lived through this congregational ordeal in that historical moment of time, what I have found is that they don't want to talk about this year of their lives at all. If they do talk about it, their residual anger comes right up to the surface.

I have attended religious and educational services at this congregation in recent years and it always seems to me as if a residue of resentment, depression, and lack of trust remains visible. In addition, a certain group of people are missing – individuals who were teenagers when these events of congregational discord and dissolution took place. Today, there a is a small number of very old people – mostly aging women, a much larger number of families with young children but almost no individuals in mid-life.

Clericalism and Cognitive Dissonance

> *It was a long conversation and when I left the house, I almost walked into a bus. I simply couldn't believe it, and yet I knew that what she was telling me was true.*
>
> Sally Butler[379]

Individuals, ordained clergy and lay persons, who encounter cover-up behavior inside their religious denomination, may also experience severe cognitive dissonance as they gain information. This happens, in my experience, most often when one is an insider and trips over the information of wrong-doing inside ones own institution or denomination. Not having any prior information or any intuitions of institutional wrong-doing, therefore, when individuals begin to see or hear evidence that an institution is engaging in the systemic violence of lying, covering-up abuse, and insisting on insider secrecy, these individuals reach a Rubicon crossing moment of personal decision-making. The question they face seems simple but it is emotionally and cognitively very complex: will they become a whistle-blower or will they become complicit with the secrecy pact?[380]

No matter what individuals and entire communities decide, in their moments of decision-making, they face issues of inner congruency/inner discongruity and inner integrity/lack of integrity. No matter what they decide to do about this newly discovered and partially or incompletely understood troubling information about abuse and abuse cover-ups, their lives will be permanently changed. Once one knows, what is one to do with this knowledge? Once one intuits wrong-doing,

how does one proceed? How will individuals and communities proceed across this very specific Rubicon (abuse allegations against their pastor) and what is the destination they seek? What is the destination they will find?

I have come to believe that personal integrity begins in our lives as a very delicate plant – a tiny seedling. The manner in which we tend this fragile plant will determine its robustness in our nature as we mature through the various stages of our lives. Along the way, we may forget to water the plant; we may forget to give it the sunlight of truth. Or we may keep tending it allowing it to become a flourishing aspect of our lives and our decisions. Making a personal commitment to truth-telling is one of the ways we nurture our own integrity. Avoiding the toxic secrecy of the dark alleys where betrayal denial hides is another.

Confronting clergy sexual abuse and institutional corruption, we have several options.

> Knowing what we know, we can simply refuse to act – seeing the act of clergy sexual misbehavior or institutional cover-up actions as none of our business
> Knowing what we know, we can deny or minimize its importance
> Knowing what we know, we can seek to forget what we know
> Knowing what we know, we can count the cost of openly confronting what we know and decide that confrontation is too personally costly
> Knowing what we know, we can quietly leave the system
> Knowing what we know, we can begin to act and to protest the wrong-doing (probably hesitantly at first); we begin to confront the wrongs which we see. We become, therefore, a whistle blower.

However people of good will decide this matter of action or non-action for themselves, their direction of their character formation is forever changed.

The Traumatic Turning Points of Cognitive Dissonance

> *There comes a turning point when you just do the right thing….no matter what.*

> Sally Butler[381]

As I have been reflecting on these complex topics of religious trauma and spiritual trauma, it has seemed to me that the believing witness's responses to what she or he knows are both significant and long-lasting. They create a template for future action.

While he and I professionally organize our thinking about these matters in very different ways, I have found Father Thomas Doyle's experiences and response to

sexual abuse and to systemic abuse to instruct me *and* to mirror some of my own experiences. I am instructed by the wisdom he has gained in the years since 1983 and 1984 when he first encountered the survivors of child sexual abuse and their parents. In his professional written record since then, he has noted his growing disbelief in the institutionalized responses to survivors and their parents. He has also noted his growing spiritual disenchantment with his childhood, adolescent and young adult faith.[382]

As a consequence of his experiences with survivors and their families, he notes in various speeches that we do not know much about the nature of religious trauma and we do not know much about the nature of spiritual trauma. Consequently, we do not know much about the nature of healing in these complex, densely constructed interior narratives about faith and the absence of faith; about healthy souls and deeply wounded souls.

But then he goes on to categorize what he does know and what he has observed and it is clear there is a wealth of semi-organized information about these mattes.

In 2008, he noted

> ➤ The first level of healing responses should be to work with survivor's self-destructive belief systems: to shed the magical thinking aspects of thinking and believing that clergy are representatives of the divine and, thus, participate in some way in the divine identity on earth. In other words, they are incapable of sinning.
> ➤ The victim's dependency on the clergy for salvation needs to be challenged and replaced with a sense of personal spiritual autonomy.
> ➤ The ordinary lay image of God needs to be de-mythologized and a re-imagining of God needs to be constructed.
> ➤ Survivors need to move towards an image of the Higher Power that is non-judgmental and non-vindictive and not under the control of institutional organizations and their clergy.
> ➤ Acknowledgement of the survivor's residual anger at the church is essential.
> ➤ Individuals may need help in distinguishing between religiosity and spirituality; disentangling the distinction between institutionalized religion and personal spirituality.
> ➤ Helpers need to affirm that institutions are responsible for the abusive environments in which abuse happened and they need to be assisted to understand the issues of structural or systemic abuse by institutions even when weak apologies such as *mistakes were made* attempt to cover over the negligence of the institution.
> ➤ Victims need to discover, unearth, or create an authentic spirituality for the guidance of their individual and collective lives.[383]

Resolving the Cognitive Dissonance and Moving On

In the course of reviewing what we know from the social sciences about cognitive dissonance and in the simultaneous self-reflection that I have done in this manuscript, I am personally convinced of several realities:

➢ The first is a firm inner belief that there is no such thing as actual soul murder. What we have is a powerful metaphor of extreme alienation or estrangement of the self from the self that occurs in trauma.
➢ The second is that spiritual healing is possible in the aftermath of even the most brutal and malicious betrayals.
➢ The third opinion that has emerged is that we do not yet have a good enough working lexicon or taxonomy in which to transmit what we (the aging activists of our respective generation) know about these religious and spiritual sequellae of individual clergy and institutional criminality to new generations of survivors and survivor advocates. Thus, in the fields of pastoral theology and spiritual direction we have no spiritual or theological corollary to psychiatry's PTSD diagnosis. It is hard to treat something if you don't know exactly what it is or what it looks like or what are its manifestations.
➢ The fourth is an extension of the third. I believe that that today's aging advocates contain much of the wisdom we need and this wisdom is contained inside our memories and inside our own journeys from institution-caused or facilitated denial and disbelief into belief and then into advocacy. It is time for these stories to be harvested and it is time for us to begin to create the lexicon of healing work. We need to harvest what we know about that reality in our own lives and in the lives of others. We need to begin to answer the questions that we ourselves have raised. What happens when an individual's internal spiritual rudder and external religious gyroscope have been destroyed by clergy predators and by abusive institutions? What are the religious sequellae and what are the spiritual sequellae. What have we learned about healing these sequellae that can be used to help victims survive and then begin to thrive?

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Chapter Nineteen
Double Bind Communication Patterns

In 1956, anthropologist Gregory Bateson and his associates published the first theoretical description of a pathological communication-relationship pattern between two people which resulted in intense psychic distress for one of them.[384] The research h team of Bateson, J. Haley, J. Weakland and D. Jackson named this pattern the double-bind.[385] One of the places where they observed the double-bind pattern was in family systems of schizophrenic adolescents. Their double-bind work has been a significant factor in creating awareness of the interactional and interpersonal nature of pathology in human systems.

Characteristics of the double bind, according to include three major components.[386] First, there is an intense relationship in which the message receiving individual (victim) feels it is vitally important to discriminate what sort of message is being communicated by a second person (victimizer). Secondly, however, the receiving individual (victim) is caught in a situation in which the message sender (victimizer) expresses two contradictory injunctions. Both injunctions carry negative sanctions for the victim's failure to make the appropriate response. The receiving individual (victim) is prohibited from leaving the field of the contradictory messages. Denied the opportunity to leave the field of contradiction, the receiver (victim) is faced with having to decide how to respond to two contradictory messages with two incongruent behavioral injunctions or demands[387]. In addition, the receiving individual (victim) is prohibited from making a meta-communicative statement to her victimizer about her dilemma.[388]

Experienced philosopher-therapist Eugene Gendlin in an on-line seminar talked about a new client who sat down in his office and asked, *Am I in control of these sessions or are you?* This is a perfect example of a double-bind communication. If the therapist replies, *I am,* she has taken control in an authoritarian way. If the therapist replies, *You are,* he has also taken control in an authoritarian way. If he asks a clarifying question, he has also taken control of the conversation. Gendlin talked about the reality that he didn't know how to answer the client, in short, he was stuck. Maybe hours later or years later he figured out that the only possible response that kept the space un-declared and neutral was to put his hands up in the air and say *you got me!* Such a neutral comment breaks open the bind and allows the therapist and the client to explore its structure as well as its comment.

P Watzlawick[389] commenting on the work of the Bateson group, adds that in double-bind situations the recipient (victim) of the bind feels "on the spot" because of his impaired ability to clearly differentiate between the two contradictory messages in a meaningful manner. Therefore, the individual cannot respond appropriately. The usual response of people in high intensity or high contact situations is to respond with defensive maneuvers.[390]

Bateson, in a letter to Weakland in 1954, wrote about the double-bind as a form of paradox.

> *Such seems to be the case when an organism is both punished for some action and punished when he shows by avoiding this action that he has learned it would be punished. To make this abstract example more vivid, we refer to the very unpleasant experience of receiving punishment of cringing.*[391]

The double-bind was described as a relational conflict between levels of messages as well as between levels of learning. Haley writes, *The fuller description [of the double-bind] included the idea that when one person communicates two levels of messages to another when these levels both qualify and conflict with each other, the person is faced with an impossible situation* (Haley, 1976, p. 68). In this situation the recipient (victim) cannot respond to either level of message without violating a prohibition attached to its alternate level. "The bind becomes complex when the 'victim' cannot leave the field of command upon his impossible situation.[392]

Bateson (1972) abstracts the primary negative injunction into two styles: If you do so and so, I will punish you *and* if you do not do so and so, I will punish you.[393]

The secondary injunction is sent on a different channel of communication than the first. Bateson says that the secondary injunction is usually sent by nonverbal means such as posture, tone of voice, meaningful actions, and the implications of the verbal injunction may "all may be used to convey this more abstract message

The relationship of the sender (victimizer) to the recipient (victim) is seen as reciprocal and circular. In any intense situation of great personal consequence or one that exists over an extended period of time, the recipient of double-bind communication patterns experiences great stress and frustrate at the presence of a communication bind in a relationship of consequence to her.

An example given in class by one of my psychoanalytic child psychiatry teachers is that of a mother who verbally says to her young child, y*ou never let me hold you anymore.* The received message is *I want to hold you more often.* Later when the child wants comforting and asks to be held, the mother pushes the child away and says *can't you see I am busy now?* Seeking his mother's comforting the child is punished by her rejection and refusing to seek his mother's comforting, the child is punished by her criticism. Using a professional mannequin, my professor demonstrated a "come close" verbal message while simultaneously pushing "the child" away from her arms - all done nonverbally. Two messages were sent on different channels – one verbal and one nonverbal.

I once knew a client who reported on an interaction with her own mother sometime in early adult life. The two women were talking and the mother said, *I feel as if I don't know you anymore. You never tell me about what you are thinking and feeling.* Sensing her mother's invitation to more interpersonal intimacy, the young woman decided that night at the dinner table to tell her mother about something that had happened in her life that was distressing to her. As she narrated the story to her mother, her mother became enraged and started blaming the young woman for her immorality and her inappropriate social behavior. Eventually, the mother got up from her chair and started slapping her daughter's mouth to silence her or to punish her – my client wasn't sure which it was. Several years later the young woman started therapy and talked about this event as one of several. She said with great emotion: *It doesn't matter what I do or what I say, I am always in the wrong with her. I have now stopped telling her anything at all about my personal life. When she pushes me to tell her about my inner life, I just say, "Oh, mother- nothing new ever happens to me."*

M. Arden[394] comments about the double-bind theory that Bateson invented the concept of the double-bind to describe the confusions which can result when important but mutually contradictory messages are sent on multiple channels. She says that *when one person speaks to another, the message is usually conveyed in words but there are additional communications such as gesture, tone of voice, and the context of the event.* The recipient, of a message in order to reply appropriately, must make decisions about all of the various channels. My own personal feelings about these matters is that when messages are complex and confusing, I tend to trust the nonverbal clues more than I do the verbal ones because the mouth can lie but the body rarely does.

It is doubtful that Bateson would agree he had invented the double-bind. More likely he would say he recognized it. Whatever he would say, it is clear Bateson believed the double-bind theory of interactional communication to be a major contribution to human epistemology.

Within the framework of Bateson's own epistemology, he included the role of unconscious motivations in our sending and receiving communications with others. In the manifestation aspect of the double-bind, our usually automatic decoding of communication messages from others, are interrupted. The recipient (victim) is unable to make sense of the complete sensory and intuiting pattern which she has received on various channels. When that happens, people become unsure about the nature of perceived reality. Of this insecurity, Bateson commented, we then feel that our safe illusions about the self are shaken.

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Chapter Twenty
Developmental Trauma Disorder

I know that in my heart I am right about this.
If we can't protect little children, then we should close down

Sally Butler[395]

Repeated trauma during childhood and adolescence has developmental consequences in addition to trauma consequences. The developmental trajectory is negatively affected by prolonged and/or repeated experiences of victimization. Repeated and early encounters with abuse mean that the individual does not develop a robust sense of self and others. There is a serious risk of re-victimization throughout the life-span.

Some of the effects are especially pernicious in terms of a happy, healthy, and productive adult life:

- Attachment disorders
    - Inability to trust others
    - Boundary issues, including respect for other's boundaries and inability to establish appropriate self-boundaries
    - Difficulty in accurate perceiving others' emotional states
    - A lack of empathy
- Sensory-Motor disorders
    - Somaticization
    - Increased medical problems
    - Inability to integrate sensory-motor information
- Affect and emotional regulation
    - Difficulty in communicating personal needs, wishes, or wants
    - Difficulty in perceiving and appropriately responding to others' personal needs, wishes, or wants
    - Difficulty in identifying inner emotional states and in communicating these to others
- Dissociative Disorders
    - Amnesia
    - Depersonalization
    - Dissociation
    - Impaired memory for historical events
- Cognitive development disorders
    - Difficulty in regulating attention
    - Problems with cause-effect thinking
    - Language developmental problems
    - Disconnect between receptive and expressive communication patterns

- ➤ Self-concept problems
    - o Fragmented and disconnected personal narratives
    - o Disturbed body image
    - o Low self-esteem
    - o Excessive shame
    - o Negative self-concept

A variety of authors have noted some life-threatening (to self or to others) and/or life-altering consequences of repeated encounters with child abuse

- ➤ Suicidal ideation and suicide attempts and completed suicide
- ➤ Self-injury, both "accidental" and deliberate such as cutting
- ➤ Explosive or inhibited anger – may be a cyclical pattern
- ➤ Compulsive or extremely inhibited sexuality – may be a cyclical pattern
- ➤ Dissociative disorders
- ➤ Eating disorders
- ➤ Intrusive traumatic memories such as flashbacks
- ➤ A chronic sense of personal helplessness
- ➤ Preoccupation with the perpetrator(s) which can include revenge preoccupations and planning
- ➤ Idealization of perpetrator(s) as in the Stockholm Syndrome
- ➤ Loss of a sustaining faith system
- ➤ A sense of despair and hopelessness

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Chapter Twenty One
Survivor's Guilt Syndrome

Survivor's Guilt Syndrome constitutes a form of survivor's guilt. Survivors who have survived a traumatic situation when others have not can come to perceive themselves as having done wrong by surviving. Survivor's guilt can be found in the following types of situation:

➢ Combat
➢ Natural disasters
➢ Human-caused disasters
➢ Disease Epidemics or pandemics
➢ By being a family member or close friend of someone who committed suicide
➢ The Shoah or Jewish Holocaust
➢ Nuclear disasters and nuclear holocausts
➢ Terrorist attacks such as the one on the Trade Towers in New York City
➢ Airplane crashes
➢ Wide-ranging job lay-offs
➢ Ship or other public transportation accidents and disasters

There are several types of survivor behavior which seem to predispose individuals to survivor guilt

➢ Guilt about staying alive when many others died
➢ Guilt about what they did not do – to help others survive
➢ Guilt about what they did to in order to survive – such as crawling over others to reach survival
➢ Guilt about someone who died to help them survive
➢ Guilt about someone who died while they, themselves, were trying to help that individual survive

Obsessive Questions can include

➢ Why did others have to die while I live
➢ What could I or others have done to prevent these deaths
➢ Why do bad things happen to good people
➢ How could or why did God let this happen
➢ Did others suffer during the disaster before they died
➢ Why couldn't all of us survive
➢ Why am I here when so many are not here

Symptoms can include

- Intense feelings of guilt and shame
- Feelings of numbness
- Feeling helpless
- A sense of being disconnected from life
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Social withdrawal
- Sleep disturbances including nightmares and an inability to go to sleep, or to stay asleep
- Somaticization with many diverse physical complaints
- Mood swings
- Loss of a desire to succeed or to thrive in life
- Flashbacks
- Increased irritability or agitation
- Preoccupation with events
- Fear that there is no safety in the world
- Concerns about the meaning of life
- A sense of meaninglessness and purposelessness
- Regrets about the nature of previous relationship with the deceased
- Feeling immobilized
- Problems in getting along with others
- Unwillingness to discuss event(s) with others
- Use of alcohol and drugs to self-medicate
- Physical symptoms such as headache, stomachache, racing pulse, dizziness
- Preoccupation with taking one's own life
- A need to hurt one's self

In clergy sexual abuse situations where there were many victims of the same predator, the likelihood of a suicide emerges among the group of survivors. When such a suicide occurs, those who still live may experience various forms of guilt and survivor's guilt.

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Chapter Twenty Two
Attachment Disorders

How can I possibly believe in a God who allowed his holy priest to repeatedly rape a five year old boy?

Anonymous survivor

Introductory comment

Attachment disorders represent disorders of mood, social relationships, or behavior which represent failure of a child to experience "good enough" parenting. Such a definition recognizes that there is no such reality as perfect parenting. What infants and small pre-school children need is, therefore, "good enough" parenting.

Recognition of Attachment Disorders

In general, the term refers to an absence or distortion of age-appropriate social behavior with adults. Such a definition allows for the developmental stages of childhood and early adult life to influence the diagnostic issues for clinicians. What might well be appropriate social behavior in a toddler would not be considered normal with a six year old.

> *For example, in a toddler attachment-disordered behavior could include a failure to stay near to familiar adults in a strange situation or to be comforted by contact with a familiar person, whereas in a six-year old attachment-disordered behavior might involve excessive friendliness and inappropriate approaches to strangers.*[396]

Attachment issues arise for individuals when they are hurt, separated from loved ones, or perceive an active threat.[397] These issues were studied in England after World Wars One and Two when the custom was to separate children from their parents to rescue their lives during bombing raids. The very earliest work was done with children in orphanages who failed to thrive, in part, enough because they were insufficiently touched and held in physical contact with a caregiver.

More recently, it has been recognized that early neglect, maltreatment and abuse are also causative factors in the development of childhood, adolescent and adult attachment disorders. In my opinion, there is an intersection here with betrayal trauma theory – in which individuals are betrayed by those they know and trust causing the development of mistrust.

Etiology

Parenting which, for many reasons, is not "good enough" can include the following:

- ➢ Early experiences of neglect
- ➢ Early experiences of abuse
- ➢ Abrupt separation from care-givers between 6 months of age until approximately 3 years of age
- ➢ Frequent and inconsistent changes in caregivers
- ➢ Lack of caregiver responsiveness to the child's communication efforts
- ➢ Inadequate and/or inappropriate touching during infancy and the first two to four years of life

Personal Discussion

I was first introduced to attachment theory in my child psychiatry rotation as a 24 year old. Witnessing children with severe mental illnesses, developmental social relationship disabilities, and a history of being unable to attach to care-takers was a haunting experience for me. Some of these children did not elicit a caring response in adults. This absence had an uncanny feel to it. I found it almost impossible to be with them for extended periods of time. When care-taking adults sought to form a relationship with them or to comfort them, these children rejected all approaches.

I was so young and had so little experience with healthy children that these children terrified me as much as or perhaps more than I probably terrified them.

Reading Anna Freud's (1892-1982), John Bowlby's (1907-1990) and Rene Spitz's (1887-1974) work on early childhood pathologies provided me with a certain theoretical awareness that neglected and abused children often demonstrated severe relational pathologies as children and that unless they received appropriate and age-consistent help, their prognosis for a healthy adult life was deeply impaired.

Clinical Hypothesis vis-à-vis Spiritual Trauma

As I have been reading biographical narratives of individuals sexually abused by Roman Catholic priests and religious during their first ten years of life, it has seemed to me as if there may be a spiritual equivalent of attachment disorders in early childhood. Since an individual's sense of himself or herself as a religious person or as a spiritual person is nurtured in early childhood relationships with others, it has seemed to me that violence at the hands of a clergy person or a member of a religious order in early childhood might well interrupt and/or misdirect that individual's religious development and that individual's spiritual development.

One of the areas of further research, therefore, is in an examination of the life betrayal experiences of individuals' as these betrayals occur inside their religious and spiritual teaching institutions. We can safely assume, I think, that an individual's spiritual relationship with the sacred can be adversely affected by their encounters with abusive religious and spiritual leaders.

As we think about developing religious and spiritual diagnoses in the wake of religious and clergy abuse experiences, it seems to me as if the broad category of attachment disorders might well be suited to our methodologies of inquiry and research. This is particularly true since attachment disorders seem deeply rooted in the human capacity – indeed the need – for trust. Any action which attacks a human being's ability to depend on others or to trust others tends to lead to alienation, estrangement, and a sense of separateness from human beings *and*, and I believe, to an active distrust of the sacred. What we see in attachment disorders is a malformation of the ability to trust or its redirection into life patterns of paranoia, active distrust or passive relationship difficulties throughout the lifespan.

One way to uncover these issues is to take a relationship history as part of one's clinical practice – looking for repeated job failures, repeated marital failures or a nearly total absence of close interpersonal relationships.

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Chapter Twenty Three
The Rape Narrative: Issues of Obedience and Authority[398]

Introductory Comments

Within patriarchal cultures, rape serves as a powerful reminder to all women of men's willingness and ability to control women. Reflecting cultural myths which teach women and men that women are inferior and need, therefore, to be subordinate to men, the cultural form of rape conveys multiple levels of meaning. In events of rape, the woman directly encounters those multiple levels of meaning. Some become evident to her during the rape itself. Others occur after the rape has become part of her life history. Some of these narratives of survival become evident to the woman only when and as she seeks assistance to heal her wounds.

An initial response of women to rape is fear and terror. Afraid that the rapist will kill them, they involuntarily enter into an interpersonal transaction without knowing if they will be able to influence its outcome in any meaningful way. The presence of a rapist brings demands on the women's body and psyche that she will need to navigate in a situation in which she has almost no control or power.

In completed rape and other interpersonal actions of sexual violation, women have learned that they were powerless to protect their own body-selves from the rapist's physical assault. Without their consent, he entered their bodies, claiming them as his own to use as he wanted to use them. The raped woman has learned that the rapist insistence upon her obedience and her compliance to his demands is now implanted in her cognitive memory and in her body's memory. He behaviorally insisted that she become a compliant agent of his will rather than of her own.

The more physically able to dominate or the more interpersonally able to dominate or the more institutionally able to dominate: sexual predators take command of the interpersonal situation with those they intend to violate. Issues of dominance, power, authority, and control all factor into any sexual predation narrative. Rape is never a mutually negotiated action in the world. It is always an action of domination. It is a narrative of enforced compliance.

Rape operationally expresses a man's physical and psychological power over the woman. I believe it also demonstrates and expresses his cultural power over a woman.

Once a woman understands that she is not going to escape from the field of rape, she begins the process of dealing with herself and her new identity as a woman-who-is-victim. Perceiving herself as powerless and helpless to do more than attempt survival, she searches for her own route out of a dangerous interpersonal interaction. Often that route involves obedience and compliance behaviors. Powerless to stop the act of being raped, the woman seeks to protect her life by whatever means she has at her disposal. She does whatever she is commanded to do in the hope that she will not inadvertently trigger the rapist into mutilating or killing her.

Psychologist Peter Levine's new work describes the body's living response to attack and threat. In figure 4.2 of his book *Trauma and Memory,* he notes that as levels of threat increase, the body's pattern is to move sequentially through these stages:

- ➢ Equilibrium – our ordinary state of being as we move through the world on a daily basis
- ➢ Arrest and Alert – associated with curiosity as we encounter changes in our environment
- ➢ Stiffen and Orient – associated with focused awareness and intention, interest and preparedness to meet the changes in our environment
- ➢ Assess – associated with intense interest, friendliness or repulsion. Levine asserts that this assessment is influenced by our genetic memory banks, our evolutionary inheritance, as well as by our personal life histories
- ➢ Approach or Avoid – associates with pleasure or displeasure
- ➢ Fight or Flight – experienced as fear; if these responses are thwarted we freeze in place, immobilized
- ➢ Freeze – "scared stiff" and experienced as terror
- ➢ Fold and Collapse – associated with a deeply biological response pattern of helplessness, hopelessness, and horror
- ➢ Trauma[399]

I have found Levine's work to be immensely helpful in understanding post-victimization responses of women who have been raped. This has also helped me to understand the surrounding culture which tends to blame women for being raped. In the 1960's and 1970's you would find professional articles in the therapeutic disciplines and in the jurisprudence disciplines that stated:

- ➢ The woman did not fight back; therefore she both precipitated her rape and welcomed her rapist's actions (therefore blaming both her character and her behavior for the rape). The last major, professionally-acceptable victim-blaming work was Amir's work in the late 1960's and early 1970's.[400]

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- Since she did not fight back and signal her resistance, the rapist was not guilty of a violent attack (shifting the responsibility for the event of rape away from the rapist to the victim).

The women's movement and the feminist therapists who listened to women began to change that with the first anti-rape speak out in New York City In particular, Levine's current work on the freeze and fold responses have provided us with insight into the body's biological survival mechanisms in situations of intense threat. It was his early work on the freeze response that taught me to understand women's self-reported experiences of being physically unable to move or to resist.[401]

When we combine our growing knowledge of organismic responses to threat and danger with our growing knowledge of socialization factors for women towards submission and obedience, we find a devil's cage. In the first stages of Levine's model we are guided by our evolutionary history and we are guided by our learned history (our acculturation to our social roles). I believe that genes and memes continuously interact in our assessments as women of our relationship to our experiences of potential violence. Living in a world which promotes men's sexual violence against women, women live in a constant state of needing to assess their safety and their endangerment.

All the women I know – when hearing unexpected sounds in their environment – pause to do a quick safety check. Encountering unexpected social pressures to obey men there is a similar safety check.

Years ago I was on a much delayed flight into the complex Los Angeles airport where I was expecting to change planes for a short hop into the San Diego Airport. I was exhausted. The airline decided to bus us to San Diego because there were no available small commuter planes at this time of the night. I was assigned a seat next to a man I didn't know. As the bus neared San Diego I became aware that I was concerned for my personal safety. I don't know what I was picking up and I don't know what I was intuiting but my concern grew as the bus parked and he offered to walk me into the terminal. He was, I felt, way too interested in me. My dad, many years earlier had explicitly taught his teenaged daughter, *if you sense you are in danger, ask for help.* I refused this stranger's offer and as I exited the bus asked a married couple if I could walk through the nearly deserted terminal with them. Even though all of us were completely fried by the multiple delays of our journey, they were most gracious and immediately became protective of this young woman whom they had never met. They stayed with me until I caught a cab to my hotel. Arriving safely and situated in my room, my state of hyper-alertness immediately evaporated.

A central dynamic of rape is the rapist's (1) reading a woman's vulnerability and (2) his behavioral demand that the woman accept a powerless position n which she obeys him. The rapist defines the field of his interaction with this particular woman as one in which he hold most or all of the power. Only he establishes the rules of their relationship. His authority over the woman is absolute. No amount of prayer-like pleading from the woman will dismiss him from the work of her violation. It is essential for him that the woman knows that he is in control of their shared history – that he has all of the power and authority in his hands.

In many situations, the woman is bound to her rapist by the terror which he caused. She is also bound by the absoluteness of his demands for her submission and obedience.

Obedience: A Cultural Form of Mind-colonization

Starhawk writes about patriarchal systems of domination and their colonization of the minds of the powerless.[402] In her study of power and authority – based on observations she has made during acts of civil disobedience she notes that the jail one is placed in reproduces itself in the mind and becomes implanted their as a reminder to the woman of the consequences of her disobedience.

She claims that long before the implantation to the jail in their minds, culture has socially conditioned women to obey systems of authority and their male enforcers. While men are socially conditioned by culture to their status of entitled male rulers over women, women are conditioned to their status as servants. Any woman's status is partly derivative from the status of the man or men who control her. A woman who marries a high-status man may also exploit lower status women and men. Yet, in her primary identity as a woman as the dominant male's wife or partner, she is dependent upon him for her status and security. Starhawk writes:

> *The unspoken promise of the Master is that we will be taken care of….serve a man, and he will take care of you. You will not have to take care of yourself. The threat, the counterpart to the promise, is that if we fail to play our proper roles, we will not be cared for, and will be unable to care for ourselves.*[403]

Describing cultural values of authority and power directed against the woman's very self to ensure her obedience; Starhawk identifies a two-armed clamp: one arm is made up of threats of something worse if she disobeys; the second arm is made of promises if she obeys.[404] In situations of authoritarian control, the victim is controlled between the two arms of the clamp.

Patriarchal systems of control inflict pain and damage; restrict action and movement; withhold necessary survival resources; humiliate, and erode a person's sense of self-worth. Controlled by the rules of the situation in which she is embedded, the victim experiences the system's situational definition of reality as her own. In situations of coercive violence, victims believe what the authority insists is interactionally real because she has no external way of validating what is real and what is not real. The rules of the situation, defined by the victimizer, become reality for the victim who, in order to survive, must follow them.[405]

I want to extend Starhawk's observations to include the assertion that an act of rape colonizes women's bodies in addition to women's minds. Women, dominated by a rapist's demands for her total obedience in a violent situation she does not control, are dominated by him. Their very survival is dependent upon their acts of compliance with his implicit or explicit demands. Weather or not the rapist has a weapon women believe his threats of additional violence. In this way the rapist creates the interactional frame of their relationship. To survive and to protect the body-self as much as possible from further violence, the woman enters into his framing of the situation.

Even when essential for survival, such compliance behaviors, however, carry the high risk of psychic internalization. Enforced obedience, created by terror, begins to possess the woman. One of the resultant dangers of such possession, according to Starhawk, is the creation of an internalized acceptance of the rules and structures of obedience. One end result of this internalized acceptance is colonization of the woman's mind.[406] Once made physically complaint during situations of violent coercion, the woman now becomes psychologically complaint by virtue of the rules and structures of this violent interaction – rules and structures which she continues to obey after the rapist has exited her life. For example, the rapist may say to the woman as he leaves: *Do not call the police. If you do, I will return and kill you.* Many women in this situation do not report the crime of rape to anyone.

Once raped, the rape has colonized the woman's mind and body. Rape now lives in her mind as memories of rape live on in her body. The cultural faith of rape lies in men's authority over women. In this respect, rape shares the cultural faith of patriarchal Christianity, pornography and classical psychoanalysis: the faith that women are to submit to men. These over-arching cultural narratives insist upon the desirability or even the necessity of women's subordination to man's authority and wishes. The unanswerable question becomes visible: do these three cultural narratives individually or collectively authorize men to rape women?

The cultural context of rape – the cultural form or archetype – and the event of rape, in at least one respect, share a faith belief: The woman exists for the man. Their shared physical embodiment as human beings, fully human and fully sexual has been culturally mythologized so that they are seen as relating inside socio-cultural rules of domination and subordination. By the use of his sexual organs as a weapon, the rapist expresses his culture's underlying disdain of the woman and her embodiment as fully human. By his act of rape he expresses his contempt for her. He dehumanizes her. He becomes a human god because she is not allowed to deny him access to her body.

Rape not only teaches women to fear men's violence. It also teaches them to acknowledge men's power to command their obedience. The rapist does not only claim her body; he also claims her psyche, her mind, her will, and her soul. In terms of this manuscript we might say that he is guilty of soul theft as well.

Women, from a post-rape hindsight position, repeatedly make self-blaming comments about their own responses during a rape. This is not universally true but it is a very frequent response.

As I have reflected upon the demand or command (implicit or explicit) in situations of violent coercion, I have realized that the command itself has binding power. It is not only rape's violence which dismembers the woman's sense of self. The double-bind nature of the rapist's dominance over her life situation for her obedience does so also.

Once issues, behaviorally or verbally, the command, by its nature as a command in a situation of implied, implicit, or already present violence, evokes response behaviors. Obedience, psychic withdrawal, rebellion, or other response behaviors are secondary to the command. The powerful issuer of the command is the agent of action. The recipient of the command can only respond. She can not easily initiate action on her own behalf. In most rape situations, she cannot leave the interpersonal field of the command. During rape, a woman is not only terrorized by the explicit coerciveness of the situation; she is also bound by the demands for total obedience.

Obedience and disobedience, while appearing to be polar opposites, do not function in such a dualistic manner. Rather, once a demand has been forcefully established In a situation of coercion, it functions in a binding manner. While the recipient of the demand can choose to obey or to disobey, it is impossible to escape the demand's power by disobedience. It is impossible to unite obedience and disobedience in a behavioral resolution which negates the command of its power to bind the recipient to it.

Demands for obedience unilaterally control the recipient of those demands. Enacted obedience responses reflect the power of the demand to elicit behavior. In a similar manner, disobedience behaviors also reflect the power of the demand to elicit behavior. Vis-à-vis the presence of a demand for obedience, both responses (disobedience and obedience) bind the demand's recipient within the power field of the demand itself.

Whatever response the recipient makes to obedience demands, therefore, that response, by its nature as a response, has tied the recipient to the field of command. All responses, no matter what their nature or their outcome, reinforce the power of the one who has issued the demand for obedience and compliance. In situations of coercive violence, obedience and disobedience both function to reinforce the underlying cultural form or archetype of male dominance and female subordination. Obedient to the rapist's demands, the woman is tied to the rapist's dominating agency. Disobedient, she is also tied. Either choice further disempowers her. Like the physical restriction of rape on her body, the power structure of coercive commands in situations of violation and violence, also function to restrict her as well.

I understand the function of obedience in rape's colonization of women's minds to lay in the psychological results of coercive demand for compliance, i.e., obedience behaviors. As long as the woman is prohibited from safely leaving the field of these commands, she remains bound to them and by them.

Starhawk claims that cultural patterns expressed in communal life, are not accidental. Culture provides individuals with a language, not spoken, that creates and reveals an internal set of assumptions or expectations about how people should act. When a participant in culture enacts a behavior, that behavior reveals the pattern language of his or her culture. Communal patterns reveal a culture's deepest assumptions, structures, and power relationships. All living cultures, therefore, *have pattern languages…for all aspects of life….Each [is] true to itself and to its relationships with others.*[407] The pattern languages, constructed of cultural assumptions and expectations, are replicated in human consciousness. In situations of domination (power over), the external events replicates what is already within the human psyche.[408]

In my opinion, rape (including all forms of sexual coercion and sexual abuse) is a complex pattern language that reveals the internal faith of the patriarchy. It perpetuates the patriarchal culture and does not allow that culture to be challenged without threat.

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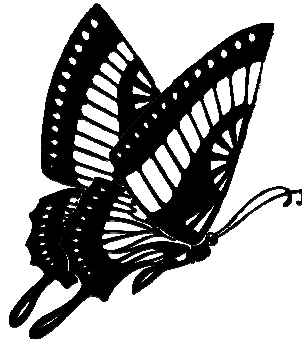
Section Five

Reframing the Questions

Section Five Introductory Comments
Reframing the Questions

Trauma happens when we can no longer bear reality.

Sandra Lee Dennis[409]

I am not certain which teacher in which clinical rotation taught me about the wisdom and empowering nature of re-framing. I just know that by the time I was teaching undergraduate and graduate students, I was helping them to learn this skill. Cognitive re-framing is a psychological technique of identifying and then actively disputing maladaptive thoughts. It is a way for individuals and communities to cognitively understand, view or experience events, experiences, concepts or ideas to find more positive alternatives. One of my former graduate students now regularly jokes with me that I am the *Great Reframer.* [410] In addition, in my understanding of many clinical situations in which reframing is needed, I am indebted to the clinical wisdom of Albert Ellis[411] and Maxie Maultsby.[412]

Reframing provides individuals with a way to view, interpret, and experience events in order to find more positive alternatives. I find it to be a helpful tool in interrupting negativity and in interrupting demands on myself or others to be perfect. Ellis' oft-repeated dictum that everyone is both mortal and fallible, for example, enables me to be more patient and compassionate with myself when I make dumb errors in judgment or to be more patient with others when they do this. It also helps me to be a more reasonable human being in multiple settings of my life. I am less and less demanding of perfection in myself and in others because of my awareness of human fallibility and mortality.

Cognitive restructuring, for example, enables us to consciously shift our perspective from one of negativity and powerlessness to one of empowered belief in the self and in the universe as inherently meaningful. Cognitive distortions are negative thoughts and perceptions which are not supported by rational thinking. Al Capp's Joe Bitfspk[413] is the perfect example here. A dark and gloomy cloud of disaster hovers over and follows him everywhere he walks.

In the section which follows, I work with some randomly selected issues which don't really seem to fit a monograph about the horrors of sexual violence and the difficulty survivors have in moving forward in life – except, to me, they do. An example of re-framing is Ram Dass' insistence in situations of human tragedy on the need for individuals to learn how to bear that which is unbearable.

In spite of all the theory I know about sexual violence, I continue to believe that there is no wound which can not be borne by the wounded ones. Short of physical death, the body-self's strongest inclinations are towards healing. But, and that is an important but, how we see our wounds in large part determines how they function in our lives as markers and as cairns. If and when we can put our life experiences and our wound in the service of others who are also wounded, we can begin to create meaning out of that which is meaningless.

Chapter Twenty Four
Reprise: This Matter of the Shields[414]

In Lynn Andrews' fictionalized book about her apprenticeship with a Cree Medicine woman named Agnes, she documents her journey as a European-American woman into the ancient medicine wheel teachings of the Amerindians.[415] Called in a vision by unknown spirits to find a magical wedding basket, Andrews goes in search of a woman-guide named Agnes Whistling Elk only to find that the ancient medicine woman has been waiting for her arrival in Manitoba. Andrews relates stories about the medicine woman's teachings about woman power. In these teachings about power, she confronts a spirit world of healing, unifying power along side oh her confrontations with attacking, negative power.

With the assistance of Agnes and Ruby Plenty Chiefs, a second powerful medicine woman, Andrews retrieves the vision's wedding basket from the sorcerer who had stolen it from the medicine woman and who had thereby bound its woman power to his own manpower. By her act of retrieval and its return to its rightful owner, Andrews begins to claim her own power as a woman. In this way she begins her apprenticeship to Agnes Whistling Elk.

In *Flight of the Seventh Moon*[416] Andrews records her initiation into the sisterhood of the shields, a time which Andrews later recalls as in initiation into her womanliness. *Flight* opens in a time of acute danger for Andrews as she encounters the sorcerer Red Dog in a luxury Beverly Hills hotel. In a vision she hears Agnes telling her, *you have no shields, no protection. You are wide open and asking for attack. If you don't want Red Dog to attack you, you must learn to make shields.*[417]

A bit later, still in California, Andrews receives the teaching that she, having begun to claim her own power, by her own actions, needs to learn to ask the spirits for protection and direction. She returns to Manitoba where Agnes again helps her. There she continues her apprenticeship. Both Agnes and Ruby tell her that she has not learned to conserve, hold, and use the power that she is beginning to attract to her as part of her journey into the women's circle of power.

Ruby creates a moment for learning when she hands Andrews a paper cup filled with hot tea. The cup is full of holes and hot tea spurts in all directions. The teaching follows immediately: *You are like a sieve. Your power is leaking out of you, pouring out. You are getting even weaker. You have no protection at all. You are open and inviting trouble by your attitude. All manner of things could hurt you right now.*[418]

In her instructions to the young woman, Agnes insists: *You must learn to be a woman of power....You must learn how to make medicine shields.*[419] By a series

of real-world events and mystical encounters, Andrews learns how to make the four shields which she later displays.

> *Carefully, I unwrapped my four shields and placed them in the four directions around me. I was proud as I did this. I concentrated on the symbols that I had put into each shield. My dreams and visions were an aspect of the very form and fabric of which they were built. The shields stood for the concept of who I am in my completeness. Together they were the ultimate medicine wheel, the map from my outer to my inner self. To conceive of them was to conceive of the mystery of my oneness. I had never set them out before. I was overwhelmed by their beauty and the manner in which they made me perceive myself.[420]*

One evening as Agnes and she are out walking, Red Dog becomes visible to her as a man standing on a hill above them. She attempts to point him out to Agnes. Yet, in her vision, he shifts position, becoming like a raven, calling to her from all sides. Agnes patted her knew and asked, *Are you sure you don't want him to be here?* Her negative reply to Agnes elicited further teaching.

> *There are many who coax their fears, and the fears are sure to follow….quit coaxing, Lynn, When you are hunting, one way to call your prey is to find a place in your mind that welcomes him. Your prey will become curious and come and you can have him. Your fears function in the same manner. It is the enemy luring you to your death. Quit coaxing and stay out of sight. Otherwise, you will draw your enemy and it might not go well for you…You are asking power to bring him to you and you'd better stop. You are bringing powerful forces to you that mean you no good.[421]*

As we saw in the beginning of this set of essays, Sally Gearhart's novel *The Wanderground* also advocates shielding as an essential act of women's power. This is especially true in Gearhart's story for women who have encountered a rape narrative in their own lives or in the lives of other women. In both stories, the shielding metaphor is used.

For Andrews the teaching is how to use her own power to avoid the sorcerer's attack. The teaching includes her personal development of an inner awareness of the need to avoid luring the sorcerer (predator) to herself as his victim (prey). She must learn to avoid creating an internal reality of fear where his power is able to find a home. From this internal space the sorcerer can lure her to her own destruction. She is taught that she can shield her body-self from Red Dog by responsible control of her fears.

In addition, she is taught the necessity of closing the "holes" in her self. For Andrews to learn this lesson, it is necessary that the medicine women guide her through a physical and psychic conditioning process of envisioning and creating

shields for herself. A physical visual metaphor, shields, is linked with a kinesthetic one (actual construction of animal skin shields) and a psychic one (the spirit guides who appear in nature to instruct the novice in the painting of the shields).

Brooke Medicine Eagle[422] comments that whole-body exercises accomplish powerful transformations which talking and catharsis may be unable to replicate. The careful construction of physical shields represents the inner psychic or spiritual ones also. Both the inner and the outer shields create and represent defenses against the give-away or loss of inner power – that giveaway which lures danger. Medicine Eagle writes of her own healing work with people: *The body can be "programmed" to carry out complex agendas in the larger world.*[423]

In *The Wanderground* the shields are psychic – without a material representation. They issue from an inner gathering of resources to bear the physical pain of remembering. In addition to a woman's internal processes of shielding, there is a communal process as well. By means of the remembering rooms with prepared guides, the woman creates a communal ritual of remembering that strengthens their shared life together.

For both women (Alaka and Andrews) the shields are constructed to empower the self so that the personal self, as well as the selves of others, may be protected. These visionary stories by women authors intuit the wisdom that in telling, hearing, and remembering stories of violence towards them, there is great potential for women's loss of power. However, by shielding, the potential becomes one of self-healing and the strengthening of one's power for assistance to others.

With the story-teaching of the shields in place, we are reminded that discussions about rape – and other forms of sexual and physical violence – are potentially wounding to women, and perhaps, to some men as well. The experience of actual rape wounds and scars the victim. The story of another woman's rape also wound and scars the women who hear it.

Shamans, in traditional cultures, understand that transformation is part of finding personal power and their journey to claim personal power is an internal one. It is a journey of the spirit within.[424]

Twenty Five Years Later

In this monograph I have sought to encourage whistle-blowers, victim advocates, healers, and therapists to consider setting time apart from their activism in order to begin to order what we know that we don't yet know into a different kind of knowing. I believe it is time to harvest our tacit-knowing and our felt-sense knowing. It is time to begin to harvest our accumulated wisdom so that it can become transmittable by means of explicit-knowing to new generations.

One aspect of this wisdom-sharing is to begin to tell our spiritual and religious journey stories to each other in a planned fashion. How, for example, have each of us individuals learned to carry the emotionally and physically distressing knowledge of hundreds of stories inside our own physical bodies, our emotional bodies, our energy bodies, and our spiritual bodies?

What have we learned in our work done on behalf of those who have been directly wounded and violated by actual rape and other forms of physical violation? What have we learned in our work about surviving institutional betrayal? In what way, if any, do our lived stories resemble the lived stories of those we seek to befriend, to help, and to provide believing shelter to?

In these short chapter essays I am, therefore, asking what we have learned about shielding our most intimate and most personal self so that we might be of service to others.

What, I wonder, might we learn about the care of others and their wounds if we began to entrust our own dark nights of the soul to the scrutiny and care of others who, like us, work inside the enchanted and toxic forest of religious leader sexual abuse of the vulnerable? What might we learn if we could share the pain of being attacked by our cradle faith traditions for seeking to embody the very best teachings they brought to us as children, adolescents and young adults? What if we not only talked about the inches of scar tissue we carry – for each of us carries such scar tissue in one way or another - but also talked about the spiritual quandaries we face on a daily basis as we seek in our work to serve others? What if we talked about the details of our own personal journeys to spiritual equanimity in the face of dense and well-structured individual and collective evil?

I am proposing that it is inside the lived narratives of our personal and professional lives that we can harvest useful and reliable information about soul murder, soul betrayal, soul theft, and soul loss. The only soul I can directly observe is my own. This is true for each one of us. The best way to learn about the spiritual damages done by religious abuse and sexual abuse done in God's name or in our denominational church's name is to interrogate the damage done to our own souls as we have sought to help others.

If we could trust each other with the betrayal narratives we have each experienced and which have scarred us, we might very well begin to understand the spiritual damages to the lives of others – those others whose own soul journey we have observed from the outside. If we could trust each other with the tiny small details of when Spirit moved us and healed a specific wound, we would learn about these issues (1) in deeply personal ways and (2) in collectively transferrable ways.

I wonder if part of our task as ordained clergy, pastoral counselors, and pastoral theologians is not to bear witness to the spiritual trajectory of our own lives – not

in dogmatic terms but in ways which can serve as an inspirational healing possibility to others who are still entrapped inside the evil enchanted forests of their abuse experiences.

Nurses and doctors are very aware that the patient who has no hope is the patient who is most likely to die. We are also aware of those remarkable patients who desire for life is so strong that they survive almost insurmountable odds.[425]

We do not yet know, because collectively we have not stopped long enough in our own work on behalf of others, to create the shields of personal power which are needed to move our work forward away from the religious and spiritual rapids and cultural forms or archetypes which swirl around our work and are continuously constellating in response to our work.

To do this work we need to make time for each other, time for reflection, and for individual and collective writing. We need individually and collectively to make room for our personal stories. We need, collectively, some solid-theory building about these questions of spiritual and religious damages to the human soul when the human body is sexually attacked. We need to do this so that our wisdom becomes visible to the next generation of activists and advocates and helpers. We need to do this, I believe, to bring the spiritual resources of our various faith traditions and our personal lives into view so that we can teach others about the paths we each took to find healing and courage and deep-knowing.

What was the moment of transformation of our own lives – that moment when we each resisted the security, the allurement of silence and complicity? In my life, for example, it was not a moment of heroic bravery. It was a small beginning response on behalf of a woman client who could not yet speak up on her own behalf. Recognizing the systemic aspects of her problem, I simply began to speak to the powers – naïve about them and naïve about their vindictiveness. Having begun, however, I simply continued the work. That work over the years has expanded and multiplied in ways I could never have foreseen in my mid-thirties when I made the first phone call to a religious college administrator about a sexual predator in his employment.

What have we each learned about integrity? What have we each learned about the mystical presence of Spirit? What have we each learned about courage? How have we tamed our personal fears of abandonment by friends, colleagues, and institutions?

What are the individual and collective roots of our powers in the world – our powers to look evil in the face and to survive? What are the shields we have each learned to construct so that we are not personally destroyed by the knowledge we carry and keep? What are the spiritual practices we have taught ourselves so that we remain disciplined and principled in our work? Another way to ask this: How have we learned to keep the heart chakra healing and

compassionately open to the pain and suffering of others? Who are we? How did we become ourselves?

What, for example, is the guiding polar star of our work? What idealism or belief structure has historically propelled our work? What now currently propels us into our repeated journeys into the enchanted forest in order to see if we can help others who are still trapped inside their lived and living experiences of being raped and abused in God's name? What happens when institutions trample upon the idealism and the healing work of the helpers? What are these deep-seated wounds of spirit that victim advocates and victim helpers must learn to recognize and to heal?

Perhaps, most importantly of all, what are the mistakes we have made along the life pathway to spiritual maturity – the mistakes that have helped us as individuals and as communities of healers and advocates to have compassion for our own lives as well as for the lives of others? What, I am asking do we know about the source of our healing powers in the world as we seek to serve others? How do we replenish our own souls in the midst of the work we do?

I hypothesize that one of the most profitable avenues of approach to these questions of religious wounds and spiritual wounds is to open our own inner selves in conversations about these matters – in a sense, interrogating our own wounds and our own scar tissue to see what we, ourselves, know first-hand about these matters. Once we have self-compassionately sought to open these inner wounds into the sight of compassionate others, we will be much less-threatened by the soul wounds of others.

Chapter Twenty Five
The Spiritual Nature of Wholeness

Betrayal calls us beyond the brokenness, however, to deeper soul work. It is a make-or-break event which will leave us either much better or much worse off than we were before this great divide in our lives. As the shock cracks through the heart's defenses, it opens us, not only to the primitive defenses and early traumas of our core. Betrayal opens us to mystical streams that flow towards us from the wounds. As we embrace the suffering, we begin to realize our own preciousness lies right in the midst of the rejection, shame, and pain.

Sandra Lee Dennis[426]

Facing Traumatic Life Events Head-on

Sexual abuse by a trusted human parent, friend, mentor, teacher, or pastor is traumatic at multiple levels of the human being: the body, the emotional self, the energetic self, the cognitive self, the social self, and the spiritual self. Institutional abuse is also traumatic at multiple levels – perhaps it is most felt by the spiritual self and by the interpersonal self. One of the metaphors which survivors use – or perhaps better said – one of the experiences which survivors encounter is the sense that their world has shattered and/or that something insides themselves has also shattered. Dennis notes multiple levels and meanings of this shattering.

➢ A break-down of the ego's sense of the self as itself
➢ A dismantling of ordinary behavior patterns in relationship to the self and others
➢ Feelings of loss and grief
➢ A sense of lost control over life
➢ A sense of lost connections with important others in our lives
➢ Eruption of unconscious and primal or infantile fears
➢ Hypervigilance
➢ Eruption of painful and intrusive memories
➢ Feelings of pervasive anxiety
➢ A deep sense of powerlessness and helplessness; a sense of being out of control of one's own life
➢ Feelings of abandonment
➢ A sense of incomprehensibility – an inability to take in and comprehend or process the traumatic events
➢ Loss of faith in the goodness of human nature
➢ Loss of faith in the goodness of life itself
➢ Inability to feel safe anywhere[427]

Noting that time alone cannot and does not heal betrayal trauma, Dennis advises her reader to seek out competent and qualified helpers. Without doing the needed trauma work, she comments that trauma survivors often adjust to their PTSD symptoms by narrowing their lives. Several variables exist as individuals seek to self-manage PTSD:

  - ➢ Acting out their inner rage
  - ➢ Acting out their inner desolation
  - ➢ Going into a lock-down mode
  - ➢ Denying the depth of the anguish and pain
  - ➢ Closing down whole aspects of their daily living

When trauma survivors do this, she notes: the pain simply goes underground. It can then re-manifest itself in addictions, chronic illness and a disengagement from life.

She, correctly, I think, identifies experiences of betrayal (whether these are caused by a predator's sexual abuse or whether they are caused by institutional attacks on survivors and their helpers) as opportunities for spiritual growth and maturation. There is something about shattering (her word) or separation, alienation and estrangement (Paul Tillich's language) that calls for the soul to lead the way to healing.

Dennis writes:

> *We are sitting on the edge of an abyss that is not going away. Betrayal is ultimately an existential/spiritual issue as well as a mental/emotional crisis. To heal betrayal trauma means passing through a dark night of the soul to the tenderness and wisdom of one's own heart. I have been amazed at the duration and the depth of the journey.* [428]

If we begin, as healers and victim advocates, to conceive of trauma-healing work as a deep and profound spiritual work, we begin to understand the soul's presence in the midst of all human healing. In the midst of our suffering, our soul does not abandon us.

Perhaps, however, the traumatized soul has been in forced into hiding by her victimizers but in the aftermath of trauma, its help must be sought. Soul retrieval work, Soul recovery work and Soul healing work will, I believe, go hand-in-hand with the self's growing ability to *bear that which was previously (i.e., before the trauma) unthinkable as well as that after-trauma reality we experience as unbearable.*

A Time for Re-framing

> *While spirituality has an emotional and intellectual component, for me it is primarily the practice of moving from alienation to integration; from the smaller self that insists it is apart from God to the greater Self that knows itself and everything else as a part of God. A practice is authentic if it moves you from self to Self; deepens your capacity for love; and triggers compassion, justice, respect, and love of life.*

Rabbi Rami Shapiro[429]

When I was actively engaged in nursing administration, my colleagues and I learned that we needed to discuss client pathology away from the psychiatric ward because clients and their loved ones eavesdropped while often misunderstanding what they heard. Words that we were using with a professional meaning got interpreted and mis-interpreted into lay language and lay concepts. In the process, our words were often distorted and came to mean something to our clients which we did not intend in our short-hand use of professional speech. If we were not careful, our language contributed to the maintenance of patient pathology rather than to the healing process.

The analogous equivalent is that clergy sexual abuse survivors and institutional betrayal survivors, in search of healing, will seek to overhear our honest words about them and their life journeys in our role as their advocates. They will listen closely to our speeches in search of their own path forward. They will read our publications in a similar manner. They will eavesdrop on our personal conversations with each other in public places. That which we need to speak to other professionals or to hear from them in order to help inform our own professional practices can be misheard and misrepresented in a survivor's overhearing.

I learned this during a speaking engagement in Canada. The sponsoring group had a nightly review session in preparation for the next day's work. In one of these sessions I voiced my discomfort – as a consultant-speaker – and suggested that speakers needed a different type of supervision and support than we were provided. A mid-life woman took offense at what I said, seeing it as an invalidation of her suffering as a survivor. I retreated into silence and active listening as she directed a quite considerable amount of rage my way. I did not raise this topic again inside one of these church-wide conferences. But I knew from years of clinical practice that individuals who seek to help traumatized people are themselves in great danger of traumatic transference or compassion fatigue if they are not adequately supported. The most secure way to manage this is by a compassionate supervisory process or peer consultation. I eventually got clear within myself that I could no longer (1) teach students every semester about these issues and (2) do an extensive church-wide consulting practice about them. My inner paranoia about becoming a victim was the inner felt-sense

that guided me. I eventually stopped my denomination-wide speaking and consulting practice in order that I could regain my sense of inner composure and remain helpful to the undergraduate students I taught.

This Canadian Mennonite lay-woman, a survivor of severe abuse in early adolescence, overheard my professional concern – expressed in a supervisory planning session – as oppressive to her own story and to her own life-experience. What I took away from this encounter was a renewed awareness that it would be helpful to victim advocates and professional helpers if we could talk confidentially and freely among ourselves about what we are observing (1) first in ourselves as we do this work and (2) in those individuals with whom we sought to be helpful. Unaware of the empathic barrier and the way it transmits information from one person to a second without words, this particular victimized lay woman had no way to understand that my question was meant to facilitate and support our collective and individual professional work on behalf of victimized individuals. She saw me, therefore, as co-opting her experiences and demeaning or trivializing them.

Literalizing Metaphors

In our collegial conversations during the 1980's, the Southern Presbyterian thealogian Nelle Morton instructed me that a linguistic metaphor takes off from one place in our psyche, lands in another, and in the process transforms us and our understanding. The power of a metaphor, therefore, is found in its freshness and it its applicability to the situation at hand. When a metaphor becomes a cliché, it becomes a dead metaphor. Cliché's as dead metaphors become calcified speech – totally incapable of transformative action in human life.

Consequently, I am profoundly suspicious of two phrases which I see repeated in professional discussions about clergy sexual abuse – in the various professions' public speech – about the survivors of sexual abuse. Both, in my mind, have a poetic and metaphorical meaning to helpers while both, in my observations, have a counter-productive literalized or calcified meaning to survivors of sexual abuse and violence. What we intend, as professionals, in using these metaphors, is to convey the devastating severity of abuse consequences in the lives of survivors. Our words, however, are often taken literally by the survivors of abuse. Consequently, they lose their transformative powers. They become part of the ongoing noise of these conversations about abuse consequences and issues of healing. They may, by their very pessimism, contribute to the resistant forces to healing in the lives of survivors.

I have an intuitive awareness, a deeply felt-sense perhaps, that our words as advocates, therapists and lawyers carry freight in survivors' lives. We often do not anticipate or understand the importance our words have for those who are seeking ways back to life. I think, therefore, that we need to re-visit two concepts that are seemingly accepted by survivors and by their advocates and helpers.

These two phrases are a way of stating quite strongly, in the political work we do (1) of advocacy and (2) of informing the non-informed public about the long-term damages of sexual violation. They are:

> ➢ *Soul Murder* – a phrase or metaphor about that which is an impossibility as long as the human body is alive
> ➢ *The wound which will not heal* – which is a prediction that can become self-reinforcing and which denies the body's own inclinations to move towards wholeness, towards goodness, and towards healing

Since I have not been victimized as a child, teenager, or adult by clergy sexual abuse, I cannot speak for the victims and survivors of such abuse. However, when I read their first-person accounts by close reading, I do not find these types of predictive or descriptive apocalyptic language. What I do find are accounts of devastating wounds that have taken many years to heal and many attempts to understand and to manage. What I do find is grief for the life trajectory which has been shattered and taken away by the acts of their abuser. What I do see are attempts by individuals to heal their internal sense of estrangement and alienation - a long-lasting side effect of trauma.

What I also observe is great anger-tinged grief at that which has been lost. In some situations, what I see is a highly evolved sense of the spiritual at work in a life – helping the victimized individual to move into a life posture of acceptance of their life as it now is as well as an ability to offer forgiveness to the individual or individuals who harmed them.

Inside various survivor movements, I see healing occur as individuals reach out to help other individuals who, like them, have been traumatized by these forms of violation. Even in the aftermath of the most vicious and malicious acts of victimization, what I see is a resilience of the human spirit as the individual seeks to find a way forward.

In short, what I see are multiple paths to healing and these paths are as unique as the individuals who pursue them. I believe that the spirit of healing is always in our midst and our task is to both seek its presence and then to cooperate with it rather than to deny its presence.

I would urge us, therefore, to listen more closely to the metaphors and to the language which survivors actually use – seeking to understand the meaning embedded in their own felt-sense and tacit-knowing bodily and spiritual metaphors. It is in the survivor's felt-sense and tacit-knowing languages about violation and desolation, that we will locate the spiritual and religious consequences of abuse. It will not be in the short-hand cognitive language we have created – as their professional helpers and volunteer advocates – to describe and deconstruct the damages we have observed.

I am personally convinced that one of the most powerful means to healing lie in the non-verbal and the non-rational. In my personal life, I have found that making poetry and making art help me to heal the deep wounds, the permanent griefs, and the lasting damages, i.e., my particular scar tissue, of the body and of the spirit.

In my particular life, the power of making music and chanting has been a powerful healing resource. I personally find healing as I chant Julian of Norwich's words: *All shall be whole; all shall be well; all manner of things shall be whole; all manner of things shall be well.*[430] Second only to the loving care of others who have sought to help me, my own creative abilities intuitively find representation in symbols and metaphors. As I listen to them, they help to guide me. Art, poetry and music, therefore, have always been powerful channels of healing in my life. In addition, I find embodied prayer to be very helpful to me. As I make prayer sticks, for example, I concentrate so that each knot becomes a prayer.

I have several friends who find their own pathway to healing from rape and sexual abuse inside the container of music and dance. As their body responds to the sounds, movement emerges and that movement is both freeing and healing. For each of these women, dance has become a moment of resurrection and strength to continue their healing work in the world.

There is something in felt-sense knowing or in tacit-knowing that represents the presence of the Great Healing Spirit whose presence can be felt but remains cognitively unknown and unknowable. Our task as advocates, therapists, and spiritual healers is to work with that Great Healing Spirit rather than against it. As individuals who are wounded by these painful narratives of abuse, violation and betrayal, we can actively lean towards the divine or the sacred as we seek to be open to its healing presence in us and among us.

In many difficult situations of my life, two additional aspects have come into play. My decision at age 56 to begin a daily practice of gratitude frames my ongoing life. My decision at the same time to begin a regularly focused spiritual practice of meditation also structures my abilities to cope when life gets really hard.

Beginning with a conference address by psychiatrist Maxie Maultsby when I was in my early thirties, I gradually learned to reframe my tendency towards negative and catastrophic thinking in the face of hardships and personal difficulties. The power to reframe our lives is one way to find meaning and purpose. As a survivor of childhood abuse, I am so much more than that abuse. All of my adult life I have been extremely reluctant to name myself as a victim of abuse. My natural spirit of defiance has been very helpful to me as a psychological and spiritual rudder. Since meeting Rollo May and his teaching that I have a right to belong here on planet earth because I am already here, I have pursued a path in which I actively search for wisdom, excellence and compassion. Sensing or encountering my woundedness, I seek for courage to bear my wounds with dignity. I search

for healing. Along the way I added integrity and resiliency to this mix. Learning about the spiritual practices of attentiveness, compassion and gratitude has provided me with a good inner gyroscope that allows my basic idealism to thrive even when I am most cynical. My abilities to pray, to live inside the deep silence of my doubts, to laugh, and to swear have all served me well. As an old woman, I know I have emotional and physical scar tissue from old traumas. I also know, however, that I have survived and have, therefore, a fountain of living wisdom as well.

If we use the physical body as the template for our understanding of these spiritual issues and these religious issues, what we see is that until the human body dies, its ongoing impulse is always focused towards more life. Individuals, for example, who have become quadriplegics in accidents or individuals who need to live in iron lungs after severe illnesses – these life conditions most of us find totally impossible to understand much less acknowledge as wholeness – what we see is the human being's capacity to transform almost any handicap imaginable into a journey towards personal wholeness and well-being.[431]

As we think about these complex issues of soul betrayal, soul loss, soul theft, or soul murder it is important, I believe, to realize that none of us are the healers. It is the life force itself that will bring the healing. But we can, by our prejudices, attitudes and actions, make healing a delayed and, therefore, a much more difficult process. Or we can actively search for ways to cooperate with the life force.

Some wounds are permanent. There is no doubt about that. But within the context of those wounds and their scars and permanent life changes, individuals can move free of seeing themselves as only wound and scar, as only victim. This is the power of the body-mind to create meaning and beauty and wholeness out of tragedy and suffering. This is the power of the human spirit to live free in spite of its handicaps and its wounds. This is the right of each human being to move into the open and to know beauty and healing.

Where there is sufficient and timely support – belief, if you will in the story of an individual's violation – then victimized individuals can begin to move toward a posture of bearing that which has previously been unbearable; learning to re-frame that which has previously been unthinkable – coming eventually to believe that there can be meaning harvested from suffering and that this meaning will grow into a sustainable fountain of post-victimization wisdom and well-being. Part of each individual's life journey in the face of evil is to search for that which is good, beautiful and whole. Part of the journey is to challenge the face of evil – not only for our own healing or for the healing of a friend or client but also for the healing of the cosmos.

Mercy work, justice work and accountability work are, therefore, significant aspects in the healing journey of individuals. They are also essential work in the healing journey of instituioins.

As I have observed my own life and as I have observed the lives of others, what I find is that the deepest living wounds are those which cannot be shared and acknowledged inside the human community – wounds and life histories which must be kept hidden inside the experiences of guilt and shame; scars which must be kept secret and silent because we believe that no one will compassionately receive them and provide sheltering care to their carrier. These are the night terrors that awaken us because we have no way of detoxifying them inside compassionate, believing, and non-judging communities.

As healers and as helpers, we must beware of our pessimism, our negativity, and our personal stash of rage and despair in the face of these evils of clergy abuse and a malformed, indeed, malignant institutional clericalism. I firmly believe that as healers and helpers we must be the hope-bearing individuals who stand in for the victims when they cannot yet hope. We must be the beacon light that proclaims there can be a life lived in wholeness after devastation and destruction. We must become the vessels of the spirit who hold survivor's grief as sacred. We must be the guardians of the spirit. We must be the active witnesses to the power and potential of healing.

We must learn, therefore, to monitor our own pessimism about healing in these matters and we must learn to re-frame our own cynical knowing so that we do not become the pessimistic barriers to another's healing. We cannot, as healers and advocates, be neutral about the meanings of violation. I agree with Judith Herman: as those who support others who have been victimized by physical violation and by institutionalized forms of structural violations, our work is endlessly political as well as personal. We must become advocates in the best sense of that word. And we must remain humble in our advocacy for while we may be vessels of healing and support, it is not we – or our work – that will do the healing. It is the life force, the human soul, which guides or carries the body-mind's impulses towards wholeness, wellness, and healing.

I like Emmett Miller's description of the game of curling[432] as a metaphor for the healer's work. In the game of curling, the polished granite puck is moved by sweeping, by lowering resistances on the ice. Once in play, the puck is never, itself, moved by shoving, forcing or pushing movements. It moves where the brooms have swept the ice. In like manner, the helping person is not the healer; the healer is the person who seeks to lower resistances and remove barriers to healing. I think this is particularly true of soul healing.

It is a certainty that each of us will one day die. The body will yield to the powers of death to claim our living bodies. But up until the final moments of a human life, the body-mind reaches for and struggles for wholeness. I personally believe it

struggles for a meaning. In some situations, we can overcome our pain. In others, we need to learn to carry our pain with integrity, with compassion, with dignity and with hope.

There is a very real place in life for becoming reconciled to the powers of death and to yield gracefully and graciously at life's end to those powers. But/and that said, the reality is that most survivors of sexual violence have many years to live before they die. The goal of our work should be to support in as many ways as possible their return to the full, embodied powers of their lives – their abilities to manage their wounds, to live in joy despite their scars, and to restore a sense of balance, purpose and meaning to their lives. In short, we need to be about the business of supporting the re-emergence of wholeness in lives which have been shattered by violation and victimization.

Soul healing work, therefore, is about the natural process of working with the body-self's own remembered sense of goodness and wholeness and with the body-self's instincts for its own healing. The spiritual work of healing, I believe, is a natural accompaniment to the physical body's healing, to the emotional body's healing, to the energetic body's healing and to the soul's healing. As any aspect of the human self begins to heal, there are subtle and almost indefinable inner shiftings that are very hard to describe in cognitive and academic language. The precise moment when healing begins to flow into a life is, I believe, a spiritual moment.

When I think about my mid-life therapy encounters with Dr. Miller, I can now recognize moments when an inner shift of perspective began to alter my own inner fears and my own inner pathologies. These were not the dramatic moments of recall – as important as those moments were to my healing process. They were the much more subtle moments when something wordless deep inside my bone marrow and my living tissues began to shift. As I slowly and wordlessly made my way back into life, not only my body began to heal but my spirit did so as well. I gradually moved from thinking I was dying into the full knowledge that I would live and that my life would continue to have meaning to me and to others.

As I grieved my losses, as if for the first time, I also found myself reaching for joy, for hope, for resiliency, for integrity, and for an inner life that was richly tapestried with emotionality and with commitment. My abilities to be content with who I was developed naturally as I let go of my angers, my insecurities, and as I sought to know more realistically who I truly was. More and more my life became centered in the is-ness of the moment rather than in the should-ness or the should-not-ness of inner judgments.

Reading the literature of physical and spiritual healing reinforced my therapy encounters with a gifted and highly intuitive healer. Living in the present moment as much as possible freed me from the past and opened me to the future arriving. Seeking the wisdom of deliberate silence allowed my natural abilities

and my trained abilities to merge and re-merge in new ways. My sense of personal intuition deepened. I stopped looking for God out there and began to recognize God embodied inside human life and inside human cultures.

While I believe transcendence is an important aspect of human spiritual knowing, I have become convinced that immanence is where we human beings meet the divine power of love and compassion – the power of healing in the midst of our alienation and estrangement from ourselves and from each other.

The Troubling Question of Spiritual Maturity and Spiritual Wholeness

In doing this writing for the past eight months, I have repeatedly asked myself what spiritual wholeness looks like. I have asked myself about what spiritual healing looks like. What does a healthy soul look like? How would we as pastoral theologians or pastoral counselors or secular therapists know or recognize a healthy spirituality or an intact soul if we stumbled over one in the dark?

I am very aware, for example, that individuals who write about moral development[433] indicate that at best we can know our own level of moral development and maybe capture mentally the level above us which we have not yet achieved. Therefore, I am somewhat hesitant to share in public how I define spiritual maturity and spiritual wholeness. I may be revealing much more about myself that I ordinarily would wish to do so. However, if none of us are willing to take the risk of exposing our own soul's immaturities, we will never begin to develop a diagnostic taxonomy of soul damage as a consequence of trauma.

Before we can begin to categorize spiritual wounds into a lexicon for healers, we need, therefore, to have some sense of what spiritual health looks like. Before we can create a lexicon of the soul's *sick unto death* wounds, we need to have some sense of what an intact, healthy and functioning soul feels like or looks like.

I am going to hypothesize – with the hope that others will courageously join me in this conversation because I am simply one person with one life journey to understand. To be truthful: I have no idea if I have a healthy soul; I have no idea if I have a healthy spirituality. All I can confess to is that this is what I search for in my daily encounters with life and inside the living presence of others who enter my life as family members, friends, colleagues, people who serve me in some way such as my nurse-podiatrist, former students and total strangers.

Components of Spiritual Maturity
   Signs of a Healthy Soul

➢ Ability to tolerate and manage our pain without destroying ourselves of others
➢ Gaining a sense of perspective about human suffering in a global sense as well as in an individual or personal sense
➢ Present moment awareness
➢ Integrity
➢ Compassion towards the Self
➢ Compassion towards others
➢ A active search for mercy *and* justice
➢ An ability to forgive the self
➢ An ability to forgive others
➢ A willingness to be accountable to others
➢ The ability to apologize
➢ The capacity to love others
➢ The willingness to be loved
➢ The capacity to befriend
➢ The willingness to be befriended
➢ Resiliency of spirit in times of trouble
➢ Flexibility and a growing ability to tolerate or even revel in the unknown
➢ Committed service to others
➢ Ability to discern between good and evil
➢ Radical honesty
➢ Curiosity about life
➢ Active and conscious management of one's emotional life
➢ Commitment to excellence rather than perfection
➢ A radical or committed leaning toward the divine
➢ A generosity of spirit
➢ A welcoming spirit of inclusivity – seeing the neighbor all around us
➢ Seeking, searching, and doubting; holding all knowledge as tentative
➢ A willingness to encounter life as it is lived and as it is experienced
➢ Deep gratitude to life itself for life; gratitude for breath
➢ Some practiced form of a spiritual discipline

As we ourselves – the healers and the advocates - seek spiritual wholeness, it is important to recognize, I think, that the goal is not attaining some lofty mountaintop experience. Our goal is not sainthood. Rather, our goal is to learn how to become effective and compassionate helpers of others - those who most need our help. As we slowly learn to detach from our illusions, from out attachments to *my way or the highway*, and from our automatic enraged responses to injustice, our destructive addictions and attachments, more authentic freedom for compassion and service enters our life.

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Appreciation

Rachel Lapp and Matthew Murschel carefully photographed the majority of the therapy masks. Floyd Saner helped with digital photography and also photographed several of the later masks.

Carl D. Krall has created and managed Enduring Space for me. Without his help none of my work would be visible. I am very grateful to him for his help and kindness to me.

William D. Lindsey read an early draft of chapter six in order to help me think through the wisdom of an autoethnographic approach in which my personal life experiences help to frame my questions of soul betrayal, soul abuse, and soul murder.

Ever author writes for someone or somebody.

> ➢ In the case of this manuscript, I kept asking myself what Marianne Benkert, Thomas Doyle, Robert Hoatson, and Richard Sipe would think about this work; what they would say in reply to the questions I am raising; to the hypotheses I have raised.
> ➢ I kept wondering what Cameron Altaras, Barbra Graber, Martha Smith Good, Carolyn Heggen, Sylvia Klauser, Stephanie Krehbiel, Joyce Munro, Carol Penner, Lisa Schirch, and Sylvia Shirk would critique in my work, how they might answer these troubling questions, and/or how they might respond to the hypotheses I am raising.
> ➢ I thought of SNAP's survivor-activists and survivor-advocates and wondered how they would speak to these questions and hypotheses. How would they hear the questions I am raising for their helpers and their advocates? How would they address the issue of soul wounds inside their own personal experiences?
> ➢ I thought of the many individuals who have written to me after reading the John Howard Yoder volume of *The Elephants in God's Living Room* and wondered if this current work might address some of the anger, the sadness, and the emotional-spiritual pain I sensed in their letters.

While there are female activists in the Roman Catholic Church's abuse scandals, the authors who have taught me the most about the structure of their church are formerly ordained men who have become advocates for the adult survivors of child sexual abuse by priests, bishops, and cardinals. These are the individuals who have deconstructed the malformed and malignant clericalism of their denomination.

While there are isolated men who have done sexual abuse advocacy inside the Mennonite Church, the primary activists have all been women. To gain an accurate sense of soul wounds, soul betrayal, soul theft, soul loss and soul

murder, I have needed to have conversations about these matters with members of the Catholic Church and with members of the Mennonite Church. I am aware that many – probably all - Protestant Churches also have activists and advocates and knowledgeable and concerned individuals. But in writing this manuscript I focused on what I know inside my own denomination and on what I have learned from Roman Catholic activists and writers. I am, therefore, grateful to everyone who has written about this topic. I am in their debt as their student.

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Dr. Krall is the author of

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Section One Endnotes
Introductory Comments
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[6] Raab, D. (2013). Transpersonal Approaches to Autoethnographic Research and Writing, *The Qualitative Report* 18 (42), p. 1.
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[7] Polanyi, M. quoted in Smith, M.K. (2003). Michael Polanyi and Tacit Knowledge in *The Encyclopedia of Informal Education.* Retrieve from http://infed.org/mobi/michael-polanyi-and-tacit-knowledge/. *Tacit knowledge* is the pre-logical form of knowing. It consists of, according to Polanyi, of a wide range of conceptual and sensory information and images that can be brought to bear upon at attempt to make sense of something. Diverse and multiple bits of tacit knowledge can be brought together and utilized to form a new model or anew theory. In addition, his work on the structures of knowledge included an emphasis on the need for scientists to work within extended communities of dialogue. I believe we are in a stage of tacit knowing as we begin to work with the concept of a spiritual and religious set of diagnoses after sexual abuse by religious leaders and religious clergy. We need to form new models and new structures for doing research into these complex topics.

[8] Conjoined: being, coming or brought together so as to meet, touch, overlap or united

[9] Compassion fatigue, traumatic counter-transference and secondary traumatic stress all refer to the same reality: it represents a lessening of compassion over time among those who respond to the needs of others. In its extreme form it can be recognized by symptoms of hopelessness, a decrease in the sense of personal pleasure or joy, constant anxiety, insomnia, nightmares, a pervasive

sense of personal negativity and other personally debilitating internal emotional or spiritual experiences. Individuals may be plagued by a sense of personal incompetency and self-doubt.

[10] Gearhart, S. M. (1979). *The Wanderground.* London, UK: Persephone Books, p. 15.

[11] Ibid, p. 19.

[12] Ibid, p. 21

[13] Ibid, p. 22.

[14] Ibid, p. 23

[15] Ibid, p. 24.

[16] Ibid, p. 23.

[17] Ibid, p. 24.

[18] Betrayal trauma: Betrayal trauma occurs when the people or institutions on which a person depends for survival significantly violate that person's trust or well-being.

[19] Institutional betrayal occurs in institutions in which individuals trust the institution and are dependent on it in some significant way, for example, salvation in this life and the after life. Institutions betray these individuals by their corporate failure to prevent or to respond appropriately to wrong-doings by individuals – thus causing traumatic experiences.

Chapter One Endnotes
A Personal Ethnography of One Soul's Journey
Pp. 20-49

[20] To see an ongoing feminist-inspired Mennonite discussion about invisibility, see these following blog postings;

- Krall, Ruth: http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com/2016/03/ruth-krall-considered-response-to.html
- Krehbiel, Stephanie: http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com/2016/03/stephanie-krehbiel-on-ruth-kralls.html
- Nafziger, Tim: https://themennonite.org/mennonites-can-learn-jesus-delta-force-veteran/

> Schirch, L. (2014). Afterword (pp. 377-395). Weaver, J. D. (Ed.). *John Howard Yoder: Radical Theologian.* Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing.

[21] Nouwen, H. J. M. (1972). *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary* Society. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company.

[22] Fox, M. (2011). *Christian Mystics*: Day 18. Novalto, CA: New World Library.

[23] Meyers, R. (2012). *The Underground Church" Reclaiming the Subversive Way of Jesus.* New York, NY: Jossey Bass, chapter five, pp. 115 -139.

[24] There are many authors and many theories about the assumptive world. The fields of thanatology and traumatology intersect in their work. See chapter fourteen for a discussion of shattered assumptive worlds and human pathology after traumatic events. In my reading I have encountered very little clinical information about shattered assumptive worlds in situations of clergy sexual abuse and religious institution clericalism.

[25] Meyers, Ibid, p. 114

[26] Ibid, p. 121.

[27] Ibid, P. 122

[28] Ibid, p. 2.

[29] Merton, T. http://www.coraevans.com/blog/article/conversion-stories-thomas-merton-and-me?gclid=Cj0KEQiA_fy0BRCwiLaQ5-iFgpwBEiQA884sOQ_Kbl-tpsdTchgDfQ-jtak4DjxMHdvR8UJ8OBjtNgwaAoQZ8P8HAQ

[30] Hoatson, R. (2014). In Michalczyk, S. A. and Michalczyk, J. J. *A Matter of Conscience: Confronting Clergy Abuse.* Boston, MA: Etoile Productions.

[31] The first time I witnessed an Episcopal priest smoke a cigarette in his clerical black shirt/white collar after-mass, I was not quite scandalized but was certainly intrigued. Smoking was a sin among Mennonites and my Lutheran father did not smoke, so I was socially unaccustomed to smoking as a cultural pattern among people who were religious. Several of my dad's non-religious siblings and their spouses and my cousins did smoke so I was accustomed to the idea that good people could be smokers. I was in mid-childhood so I had already learned that people had different ideas about religious behaviors. I simply bracketed what I saw that Sunday morning and didn't feel a personal need to ask questions of my parents about this ministerial anomaly in my personal experiences of the world to that point in time.

[32] Recently I sat down with a pencil and added up the years since my baptism. I first counted the years when I was regularly attending church services and actively participating in Mennonite worship rituals, I realized that for those 36 years, I was a person sitting in the pews – keeping my doubts and questions to myself. The answers the church was promulgating often did not begin to address my questions as a member of the American Civil Rights struggle and the American war in Vietnam anti-war protest generation as well as the years of the emerging drug culture. For 35 of those years, however, I avoided regular attendance at worship – sometimes for years at a time. I simply did not find adequate reasons, as an adult single professional female concerned about the world's violence and victimized individual's need for healing, to attend. Most of organized worship was, I perceived, irrelevant to my personal and to my professional life. I often visited churches – usually to hear a renowned ordained preacher or lay preacher such as William Sloane Coffin or Vincent Harding. I understood intuitively that something was missing in my life, an organized community of believers who I could trust with my doubts and with my life narrative as it was actually lived. After I moved to and lived abroad in Central America, I began to attend Spanish language Catholic Church services because (1) I knew exactly what was going to happen and I was not going to be asked to say or do something I did not believe; (2) in Catholic lay thinking and spirituality the Virgin Mary was a female divinity figure – no matter what Catholic officialdom and orthodox theology thought about her position in the heavens; and (3) as a non-Catholic I needed to make no commitments – all I needed to do was show up to be included. I could comfortably remain the stranger. I could pray in the quietness of the sanctuary after mass and no one was intrusive and judgmental about my tears.

[33] In my early forties in a black church in Watts, I heard Sweet Honey in the Rock sing *On Children.* As I listened I wept tears of ageless grief in the dark church. This became my theme song whenever I encountered my mother's stash of continuously simmering anger at me. It was many years later when I realized that the words were taken from Gibran's *The Prophet.* Retrieve from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ti0rzHq_0xU

[34] Taylor, J. *Shed a Little Light.* To hear this song, retrieve from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crKDDS5D_os. See also https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bsKTzFwv16w

[35] I have deliberately reversed the academic aphorism: *when the student is ready, the teacher appears.*

[36] Authority. (April 18, 2007). Mary Malone. Retrieve additional interview material from http://www.hisdarkmaterials.org/cittagazze/viewtopic.php?f=6&t=6474&start=0

[37] Yates, W. B. (1920). *Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold* taken from his famous poem, The Second Coming.

[38] Keen, S. (1994). *Hymns to an Unknown God: Awakening the Spirit in Everyday Life.* New York, NY: Bantam Books.

[39] (1) Smith, H. (2010). *Tales of Wonder: Chasing the Divine: An Autobiography.* New York, NY: HarperOne; (2) Smith, H. (1958/1991) *The World's Religions.* New York, NY: Harper One.

[40] Nepo, M. (2000). *The Book of Awakening; Having the Life You Want by Being Present to the Life You Have.* Newburyport, MA: Conari Press.

[41] (1) Nhat Hanh (2001). *Anger: Wisdom for cooling the flames.* New York, NY: Riverhead Books; (2) (1987). *Being Peace,* Berkeley, CA: Parallax; (3) (1993). Call Me by My Own True Names; (4) (1993) *Love in Action,* Berkeley, CA: Parallax; (5) (1987). *Interbeing.* Berkeley, CA: Parallax; (6) (1981). *Peace is Every Step: The path of mindfulness in everyday life.* New York, NY: Bantam. (7). Naht Hanh with Daniel Berrigan, (2001). *The Raft is not the Shore: Conversations towards a Buddhist-Christian Awareness.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

[42] Nouwen, H. J. M. (1972). *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in* Contemporary Society. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company.

[43] (1) Fox, M. (1996). *Confessions: The making of a post-denominational priest.* San Francisco, CA: Harper-San Francisco; (2) (2000). *One River: Many Wells: Wisdom Emerging from Global Faiths.* New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher; (3) (2003). CD: *Radical Prayer: Love in Action.* Boulder, CO: Sounds True.

[44] Krall, R. E. (2013). *The Elephants in God's Living Room*, vol. 3, *The Mennonite Church and John Howard Yoder.* Retrieve from www.ruthkrall.com.

[45] Kanagy, C. and Mennonite Church USA. (2006). Mennonite Church Profile Research. *More than 1 in five women in Mennonite Church congregations experienced sexual abuse or violation, most while they were children or teens. For men, the incidence of abuse experienced before the age of twenty is 5.5%.* For additional information see http://dovesnest.net/CAN

[46] Taylor J. (July 29, 2015). *Shed a Little Light*. Retrieve from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bsKTzFwv16w

[47] Fox, T. (August 1, 2015). SNAP Conference Address: *NCR Facing the Abuse Crisis Alone. Alexandria, VA.*

[48] Doyle, T. P. (July 13, 2008). SNAP Conference Address: *Survival of the Spirit While Mired in the Toxic Wastes of the Ecclesiastical Swamp.* Dialogue # 17. Retrieve from http://www.awrsipe.com/Dialogue/Dialogue-17-2008-08-11.html.

[49] Sipe, A. W. R. http://www.awrsipe.com/

[50] Levine, P. A. (2015). *Trauma and Memory: Brain and Body in a Search for the Living Past.* Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

[51] Matthew 25:40. *Whatever you do for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you were doing it for me.*

[52] Wink, W. (1992). *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.

[53] Miller, E. E. (1997). *Deep Healing: The Essentials of Mind/Body Healing.* Carlsbad, CA: Hay House

[54] Bonhoeffer, D. (1997). *1944-1955: Letters and Papers from Prison.* New York, NY: Touchstone/Simon and Schuster.

[55] Meyer, R. R. (2013). (1) Undone: Faith and Resistance to Ego. *(The Yale Lyman Beecher Lectures, number one).* Retrieve from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8gkZddBY9A&list=PLbQINmUy3n7Yzm9pO4gO1BnZFAr14j5Ng&index=4; (2) Meyer, R. R. (2013). Undone: Faith as Resistance to Orthodoxy (*The Yale Lyman Beecher Lectures, number two*). Retrieve from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_sH9XXyMOY&list=PLbQINmUy3n7Yzm9pO4gO1BnZFAr14j5Ng&index=5; (3) Meyer, R. R. (2013). Undone: Faith as Resistance to Empire. (*The Yale Lyman Beecher Lectures, number three*). Retrieve from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60PI4zp5ePE&index=6&list=PLbQINmUy3n7Yzm9pO4gO1BnZFAr14j5Ng

[56] (1) Meyer, R. R. (2010). *Saving Jesus from the Church: How to stop worshipping Christ and start following Jesus.* New York, NY: Harper; (2) (2015). *Spiritual Defiance: Building a Beloved Community of Resistance* (The Yale Lyman Beecher Lectures). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press; (3) (2012). *The Underground Church: Reclaiming the Subversive Way of Jesus.* New York, NY: Jossey-Bass.

[57] Luke 10: 25-37

[58]   Lindsey, W. D. (February 1, 2016).   Quoting one of his graduate school professors. Retrieve discussion from http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com/2016/02/the-interesting-story-of-megan-phelps.html#comment-2489820219

[59] Rohr, R. (March 27, 2016). *Bias from the Bottom: Blinded by Privilege.* Retrieve from https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/#trash/153b813a260b28c8

Chapter Two Endnotes
Knowing that Which We Cannot Speak
Pp. 50 - 67

[60] Victoria Cubberley posted on Susan Mathew's Blog, Catholics4Change. April 12, 2016. Retrieve from https://catholics4change.com/2016/04/12/a-survivors-poem/

[61] Krall, R. E. (2012) *The Elephants in God's Living Room, Clergy Sexual Abuse and Institutional Clericalism.* vol.1. *Theoretical issues.* Enduring Space. Retrieve from www.ruthkrall.com; Krall, R. E., (2014) *The Elephants in God's Living Room,* vol. 4. *Bearing the Unbearable: A Collection of Conversational Essays.* Retrieve from www.ruthkrall.com

[62] Mendelsohn, M., Herman, J. L., Schatzoa, E., Coco, M., Kallivayalii, D., and Levitan, J. (2011). *The Trauma Recovery Group: A Guide for Practitioners.* New York, NY: Guilford Press.

[63] Weisell, A. C. (1998). Retrieve from http://www.focusing.org/fot/cornell_focusing_technique.html

[64] Doyle, T. P. (August 29, 2015). *Report of Thomas Doyle, J. C. D., C.A.D.C. in the Case of John Roe 2 vs. The Catholic Diocese of Honolulu, the Society of St. Sulpice, and the Catholic Foreign Mission Society (Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers).* Vienna, VA. Retrieve from http://www.bishop-accountability.org/legal/John_Roe_2_v_Honolulu_Diocese/2015_08_29_Doyle_Report_in_John_Roe_2_v_Honolulu_Diocese.pdf

[65] Gendlin, E. (1993). Three Assertions about the Body (21-33). *The Folio* 12 (1). Retrieve from https://www.focusing.org/gendlin/docs/gol_2064.html

[66] Otto, R. with translation by Harvey, J. W. (1958). *The Idea of the Holy.* London, UK: Oxford University Press.

[67] Meyers, R. E. (2010). *Saving Jesus from the Church: How to Stop Worshipping Christ and Start Following Jesus.* New York, NY: Harper/One.

[68] Embodiment.org (undated). Gendlin. Retrieve from
http://www.embodiment.org.uk/topics/gendlin.htm

[69] Ibid.

[70] Rome, D. I. (undated). Your Body Knows the Answers: Using Your Felt Sense to Solve Problems, Effect Change, and Liberate Creativity. *Daily OM: Nurturing Mind, Body, Spirit. Retrieve from:* http://www.dailyom.com/library/000/003/000003471.html

[71] Embodiment.org, op. cit.

[72] Wikipedia, Focusing. Retrieve from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Focusing

[73] Gendlin, 1993, op.cit.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Rowe, S. (May-June, 2015). Your Body Knows the Answer: An Interview with David Rome. *Spirituality and Health Online.* Retrieve from
http://spiritualityhealth.com/articles/your-body-knows-answer

[76] Polanyi M.   Michael Polyani and Tacit Knowledge. Infed.org.   Retrieve from
http://infed.org/mobi/michael-polanyi-and-tacit-knowledge/

[77] Polanyi, M. (1967/2008). *The Tacit Dimension* (1967, pp. 24-25). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

[78] I*nfed. Michael Polyani.* Retrieve from http://infed.org/mobi/michael-polanyi-and-tacit-knowledge/

[79] Eby, D. (undated). *The Psychology of Creativity: Redeeming our Inner Demon: An Interview with Steven A. Diamond.* Retrieve from
http://talentdevelop.com/interviews/psychcreat.html

[80] May, R. (ca 1975). Personal Conversation, Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. The daimonic in May's thought is not the demonic which is merely destructive. The daimonic is an essential aspect of creativity in which there is always an element of the destructive in search of the creative. That which destroys and that which creates are both rooted in human potential. That which is creative in a given human life represents, therefore, the capacity to channel and to express the daimonic in creative ways rather than in self-other destructive ways. Creativity, humor and sexuality, therefore, in their creative aspects emerge out of the shadows and out of the dark places of the human psyche.

[81] Wikipedia. *Tacit Knowledge.* Retrieve from
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tacit_knowledge

[82] Ibid.

[83] Krall, R. E. with Lisa Schirch and William D. Lindsey (2016). The Johari Window (pp. 16-25) in *Living on the Edge of the Edge: Letters to a Younger Colleague* (forthcoming). Enduring Space Press.

Chapter Three Endnotes
Activism in a Mennonite Voice
Pp. 68 - 71

[84] Redacted from an August 2, 2015 speech given at SNAP's annual conference in Alexandria, VA. A video version is available from Digital Conference Providers, Inc. Westmont, IL.

[85] Krall, R. E. (2014). Chapter Two: Sexual Violence is the Kudzu of Christianity (pp. 26-29). *The Elephants in God's Living Room, vol. 4, Bearing the Unbearable*: A Collection of Conversational Essays. Enduring Space: www.ruthkrall.com

[86] Klassen, W. (1973). *Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant*. Canada: Conrad Press.

[87] https://www.mwc-cmm.org/

[88] Huber, T. (January 26, 2016). Lancaster's Distancing Shrinks Roll. (Mennonite Church Statistics) in *The Mennonite World Review.* As of January 1, 2016, these numbers have been revised downward. The Mennonite Church USA (MCUSA) membership numbers declined by 17% due to the Lancaster Conference, Mennonite Church, decision to break ties with the Mennonite Church USA over issues of full inclusion for sexual minorities. The estimated MCUSA membership is now 78,892. Lancaster Conference has approximately 18, 838 members and 163 congregations.
Retrieve from http://mennoworld.org/2016/01/26/news/lancasters-distancing-shrinks-roll/

[89] Kanagy, C. 2006 Church Member Profile. Doves Nest. Retrieve from http://www.dovesnest.net/CAN

[90] [90] Krall, R. E. (Summer, 1990). Family Ethics. *Mennonite World Conference Handbook,* Strasbourg, France/Scottdale, PA: Herald Press.

[91] Ezekiel 34: 1-10

[92] Benkert, M. and Doyle, T. P. (2009). Clericalism, Religious Duress and its Psychological Impact on Victims of Clergy Sexual Abuse (pp. 221-238). *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* (58)*.*

[93] Freyd, J. J. (1996). *Betrayal Trauma: The legacy of forgetting childhood abuse.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press*.*

[94] Winell, M. *Religious Trauma Syndrome (RTS).* Journey Free: Resources for Recovery from Harmful Religion. Retrieve from http://journeyfree.org/rts/

[95] Lukoff, D. (1998). From Spiritual Emergency to Spiritual Problem; the Transpersonal Roots of the New DSM IV Category (pp. 21-50). *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 38 (2).
Retrieved from http://www.spiritualcompetency.com/hpseart.htm

[96] Kelman, Herbert C. and Hamilton, V. L. (1989). *Crimes of Obedience*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. See also Shupe, A. (Ed.). (1998). *Wolves within the Fold: Religious Leadership and Abuses of Power.* Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

[97] This is the way that the original work for the PTSD diagnosis developed in the1970's era when returning Vietnam Veterans and their advocates lobbied for better Veterans' services and when American women were lobbying for better management and post-rape interventions in the United States legal and clinical systems. See (1) Herman, J. L. (1997). *Trauma and Recovery: the Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror.* New York, NY: Basic Books; (2) Kreisler, H. (September 21, 2000). *The Case of Trauma and Recovery: Conversations with Judith Herman, M. D.* Berkeley, CA. Institute of International Studies of the University of California at Berkeley. Retrieve from: www.globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people/herman/. See also Bessel van der Kolk's discussion of the politics of the proposed diagnosis *complex post-traumatic Stress disorder in* Van Der Kolk, B. (2014). T*he Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the healing of Trauma.* New York, NY: Viking Press.

Chapter Four Endnotes
The Question of Soul Murder
Pp. 72-82

[98] Luke 17:21. See Gumbleton, T. (July 28, 2012). The Reign of God is a Treasure*. National Catholic Reporter Online.* Retrieve from http://ncronline.org/blogs/peace-pulpit/reign-god-treasure-hidden-field

[99] hooks, b. (2000, pp. 4-5). *all about love: new visions.* New York, NY: William Morrow.

[100] Ibid, p. 5. Online dictionaries define cathexis in this way: *a term from psychoanalytic theory that is defined as the concentration of mental imagery on one particular person, idea or object – especially to an unhealthy degree; the charge of psychic energy so invested.*

[101] It is important to note that Paul Tillich's mid-life theology of God emerged after his experiences as a German military chaplain in World War One. His biographers (Pauck and Pauck) note that the conservative young man, after the Battle of Marne, returned home a different adult man – a wild man - than he was before the war. He began to read European existentialists and then became an existentialist. Migrating to America as Hitler began his rise to power, he later wrote the three volume series, *Systematic Theology,* as well as his most popular and influential book, *The Courage to Be.*

[102] Pauck, W. and Pauck, M. (1976). *Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought*, New York, NY: Harper and Row. The battle of Marne was the last major German offensive of World War One. It was a major allied success as the allies turned back the German army. Casualties were high: France, 95,000; Germany, 168,000; Britain, 13,000; USA, 12,000. Paul Tillich was a Protestant/Lutheran chaplain on location at Marne and witnessed the bloody casualties and destruction up close. Pauck and Pauck comment that the bloodshed and deaths – some of them his close friends - of that battle deeply affected Tillich. As I read Pauck and Pauck, I came to believe that the different man they report, who returned to Germany and civilian life after Marne, was a man who suffered from severe post-traumatic shock for the rest of his life. In my opinion, he attempted to self-medicate by alcohol and by promiscuous sexual activity. Obviously, this must remain an untested hypothesis since Tillich is not here to answer our questions of his life. However, some of his most creative theological work focused on the human experience of existential anxiety. It is likely that his analysis with Karen Horney – the great German-American psychoanalyst – also helped to shape his American life, identify, and theology. See also Hanna Tillich's two books which were published after Paul Tillich's death. Tilliich, H. (1974). *From Time to Time*, New York, NY: Ste in and Day; (1976). *From Place to Place*, New York: Stein and Day. See also Rollo May's 1973 biographical commentary about his friendship with Tillich. *Paulus*: *Reminiscences of a Friendship.* New York: Harper and Row.

In a collection of sermons, *The Shaking of the Foundations* (1948, New York, Scribners, p. 162) Tillich published an August 20, 1946 sermon *You Are Accepted* which I consider his most powerful published sermon. In it Tillich expresses his conviction that faith is the courage to accept God's acceptance – even when we are most unacceptable. It is Tillich's personal manifesto: *I am accepted by God as I am – not as I should be.*

*Sometime at that moment a wave of light breaks into our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying: "You are accepted. **You are accepted**, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later, perhaps you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. **Simply accept the fact that you are accepted** (p. 162).*

[103] hooks, op. cit., p. 6

[104] Ibid, p. 13.

[105] Matthew 18:20

[106] Doyle, T. P. (2013). *Why the Institutional Church Does What It Does: A Look inside Institutionalized Narcissism.* Dublin, Ireland. Retrieve from https://vimeo.com/67774835

[107] Two very important books from the late twentieth-century describe and discuss these matters from a feminist point of view: They are (1) Eisler, R. (1987). *The Chalice and the Blade: Our history, our future.* San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row. (2) Starhawk. (1981). *Truth or Dare: Encounters with power, authority and mystery*. San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row*.

[108] Oliver, M. (1993). Maybe (Pp. 97-98): *New and Selected Poems.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

[109] Daly, M. (1) (1973). *Beyond God the Father*. Boston, MA: Beacon; (1968). *The Church and the Second Sex: With a new feminist post-Christian introduction by the author*. New York, NY: Harper Colophon; (2) with Caputi, J. (1998). *Webster's First Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language*. Boston, MA: Women's Press Limited.

[110] Fericano, P. (March 27, 2016). God Help Us. Blog: *A Room with a Pew*. Retrieve from http://roomwithapew.weebly.com/blog/of-men-in-foolish-hats-and-housecoats

[111] Hemingway, E. (1929). *Farewell to Arms.* New York, NY: Scribner.

[112] In ancient mythologies, Hecate was a Trinitarian deity whose three faces looked to the past, the present and the future. Thus, she could simultaneously see in all directions. In Greek mythology she was am ancient Titan goddess who alone of all the Titan deities was allowed into the pantheon of Olympian gods and goddesses – a pantheon headed by Zeus. She reigned, according to ancient mythologies, the earth, sea and sky. She was seen as the guardian deity of the

crossroads where three roads met. Metaphorically, I see entering Hecate's crossroads as the situation faced by every survivor of clergy sexual abuse and their consequent encounters with corrupted religious institutions. The life journey they were on before abuse occurred has forever changed their life trajectory. They cannot, in essence go back the way they came. They can never become the person they were before the events of sexual abuse and its subsequent institutional abuse happened.

[113] Cleland, M. (2001). *Strong at the Broken Places.* Atlanta, GA: Longstreet Press.

[114] Traumatology: the study of human responses to trauma

[115] Thanatology: the study of human responses to death and dying

Chapter Five Endnotes
Narrative, Thick Description and Autoethnography
Pp. 83 - 89

[116] Neimeyer, http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com/2008/11/at-weeks-end.html R. A., Botella, L., Herraro, O., Pacheco, M., Figueras, s., and Werner-Wildner, L. A. (2002). *The Meaning of Your Absence: Traumatic Loss and Narrative Reconstruction* (pp. 30 – 47) in Kauffman, J. (Ed.). *Loss of the Assumptive World: A Theory of Traumatic Loss.* New York, NY: Routledge.

[117] As used here, the words *witness* or *witnesses* refer to anyone who seeks to help victims of abuse re-constitute their lives. These may be, but are not limited to, first responders, therapists, attorneys, canon lawyers, emergency room staff, child protective agency staff, police, family members, friends, and so forth.

[118] Erikson, E. and Erikson, J. (1999). *The Life Cycle Completed.* New York, NY: W. W. Norton.

[119] (1) One example of this kind of written socio-theo-historical analysis is found in Doyle, T., Sipe, A. W. R., and Wall, P. J. (2006). *Sex, Priests and Secret Codes: The Catholic Church's 2000-year Paper Trail of Sexual Abuse*, Los Angeles, CA: Volt; (2) a second is found in Robinson, G. (2007). *Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church.* Mulgrave, Victoria, Australia: John Garrett; (3) a third is found in Tapsell, K. (2014). *Potiphar's Wife: The Vatican Secret and Child Sexual Abuse.* Adelaide, Australia. ATF Press, Ltd.

[120] Ellis, C.E., Adams, T. E., and Bochner, A. P. (January, 2011). Autoethnography: An Overview. Qualitative Social Research Forum 12 (1). Retrieve from http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095

[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid.

[123] (1) Herman, J. L. (1997). *Trauma and Recovery: the aftermath of violence-from domestic abuse to political terror.* New York, NY: Basic Books; (2) Herman, J. L. (May 10, 2013). The Politics of Trauma: An interview with Judith Herman in Caruth, C. (2014). *Listening to Trauma: Conversations with leaders in the theory and treatment of catastrophic experience.* Baltimore, MD. John Hopkins Press; (3) Mendelsohn, M., Herman, J. L., Schatzoa, E., Coco, M., Kallivayalii, D. and Levitan, J. (2011). *The Trauma Recovery Group: A Guide for Practitioners.* New York, NY: Guilford Press.

[124] Ellis, et al., op. cit.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] (1) Geertz, C. (1973). *Interpretation of Culture: Selected essays.* New York, NY: Basic Books;

[128] Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. *Qualitative Research Guidelines Project.* Retrieve from http://www.qualres.org/HomeThic-3697.html

[129] Ibid.

Chapter Six Endnotes
Mid-sentence Musings and Reflections
Pp. 90 - 118

[130] Krall, R. E. (1997/8). Mask: The Shamanic Cry

[131] Becker, E. quoted in Janoff-Bulman, R. (1992). *Shattered Assumptions: Toward a New Psychology of Trauma.* New York, NY: Free Press/Macmillan International, p. 61.

[132] See Chapter Fifteen, p. 145ff.

[133] Pew Research Center. (May 12, 2015). America's Changing Religious Landscape. Retrieve from http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/

[134] ARDA (undated). *The Scientific Study of Religion: Measuring Religiosity.* Retrieve from http://www.thearda.com/learningcenter/modules/pdf/MeasuringReligion.pdf

[135] Kabat-Zinn, J. (1999). *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness.* New York, NY: Bantam.

[136] (1) Miller, E. E. (1997). *Deep Healing: The Essentials of Mind/Body Healing.* Carlsbad, CA: Hay House; (2) Miller, E. E. (with Deborah Lueth). (1978) *Self-Imagery: Creating Your Own Good Health*, Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts.

[137] Later when I compiled all of these masks and poems into a sequential narrative, I used the ancient myth of the Sumerian goddess Inanna to frame the poetry. Ereshkigal was Inanna's twin sister or a second aspect of this ancient deity and she ruled the underworld of death and the shades.

[138] Fox, T. (August 1, 2015). SNAP Conference Speech. *NCR Facing the Abuse Alone.* Westmont, IL: Digital Conference Providers, Inc.

[139] Remen, R. N. (December, 1998). *Spirituality and Healing: A Seminar for Clinicians*, Hilton Head, SC: NICABM. See also a transcript of the February 24,193 PBS program Moyers' Moments: The Human Experience of Illness, Episode, *Wounded Healers* in which Bill Moyers interviewed Dr. Remen' at Commonweal in Bolinas, CA. Retrieve from http://billmoyers.com/content/wounded-healers/

[140] Morton, N. (1989. *The Journey is Home.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
[141] (1) May, R. (1994). *The Courage to Create.* New York, NY: W.W. Norton; (2) (1983). *The Discovery of Being: Writings in* Existential psychology. New York, NY: W. W. Norton; (3) May, R. (1999; 2012). *Freedom and Destiny* New York, NY: W. W. Norton

[142] For a picture and information about the door of no return retrieve information from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Slaves_(Gor%C3%A9e)

[143] For information about this historic and controversial trip in April, 1985, see http://www.upi.com/Archives/1985/04/24/Ortega-to-visit-Moscow/7657483166800/

[144] Archbishop Juan Jose Gerardi Conedera and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Guatemala (October 19, 1991). *Guatemala: Never Again!* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press.

[145] Fericano, P. (March 27, 2016). *God Help Us.* Blog: A Room with a Pew. Note: Mr. Fericano is an adult survivor of abuse at St. Anthony's Seminary in Santa Barbara, CA. Retrieve from http://roomwithapew.weebly.com/blog/of-men-in-foolish-hats-and-housecoats

[146] Lukoff, D. (1998). From Spiritual Emergency to Spiritual Problem; the Transpersonal Roots of the New DSM IV Category (pp. 21-50). *Journal of Humanistic Psychology 38 (2).* Retrieve from http://www.spiritualcompetency.com/hpseart.htm

[147] Benkert, M. and Doyle, T. P. (November 27, 2008). Manuscript: *Religious Duress and its Impact on Victims of Clergy Sexual Abuse* Pp. 1-28.

Doyle, T. P. (December 31, 2008 [2009]). The Spiritual Trauma Experienced by Victims of Catholic Clergy Abuse (239-250). *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* (58).

Benkert, M. and Doyle, T. P. (2009). Clericalism, Religious Duress and its Psychological Impact on Victims of Clergy Sexual Abuse (pp. 221-238). *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* (58).

[148]   Winell, M. Religious Trauma Syndrome (RTS). Journey Free: Resources for Recovery from Harmful Religion. Retrieve from http://journeyfree.org/rts/

[149] Van der Kolk, B. (2014). *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma.* New York, NY: Viking.

[150] Freyd, J. and Birrell, P. (2013). *Blind Betrayal: How We Fool Ourselves; We Aren't Being Fooled*. New York, NY: Wiley.

[151] Kauffman, J. (Ed.) (2002). *Loss of the Assumptive World: A Theory of Traumatic Loss.* New York, NY: Routledge.

[152] *We* here refers to Individuals with clinical training, religious training, theological training and/or legal training – in short, individuals who work with the survivors of clergy sexual abuse. Whenever this monograph refers to *we,* it is referring to this group of individuals.

[153] Cunningham, T. (2015). Why We Never Got Ebola: A Christmas Story. Retrieve from http://testkitchen.huffingtonpost.com/ebola/a-christmas-story/

[154] Anonymous (December 27, 2015). Living a Myth: *Questions from a Ewe.* Retrieve from http://questionsfromaewe.blogspot.com/

[155] In 2015, for example, the Boston Diocese hired a political strategist to poll active and inactive Catholics to poll Catholics in Eastern Massachusetts. Boston Globe Reporter Lisa Wangsness (November 28, 2015) included the following data in her report.
   ➢ 1.8 million baptized Roman Catholics in the diocese
   ➢ 16% attend mass on a weekly basis – down from 70% in 1970
One of those surveyed, author Jennifer Hughes, attributed the survey to the church's marketing problems: *We're not getting new users. Our image is tarnished. We are not attracting youth.* Retrieve from https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2015/11/28/archdiocese-boston-surveys-catholics-about-church-and-its-leaders/WoyXk8SItfglZLmj1dYv2H/story.html

Using attendance at mass as a significant indicator of the levels of belief and commitment is the research question most asked. Current research appears to indicate that almost 1/3 of baptized Catholics rarely or never attend mass – with the exceptions made for weddings and funerals. See this website for cumulative random polls and survey statistics.
http://cara.georgetown.edu/CARAServices/FRStats/massattendweek.pdf

[156] American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual –* 4th edition. Washington, DC.

[157] Lukoff, D. (Undated). *DSM-IV Religious and Spiritual Problems: an online course.* Petaluma, CA: Internet Guided Learning.
Retrieve from http://www.spiritualcompetency.com/dsm4/dsmrsproblem.pdf

[158] American Psychiatric Association (1994, p. 685) quoted in Lukoff, D. *DSM – IV: Religious and Spiritual Problems,* p. 14.
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[159] Ryan, T. How can I be spiritual without following organized religion? *The Busted Halo Question Box.* *http://bustedhalo.com/questionbox/how-can-i-be-spiritual-without-following-organized-religion*

[160] Jung, C. G. (1954-1979). *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, ed. William McGuire et al and trans. R. F. C., Hull. Bolingen Series XX, Princeton, NY: Princeton University Press, Vol. 9 (2), p. 10.
See also: https://epages.wordpress.com/2011/10/25/throwing-light-on-the-shadow-carl-jungs-answer-to-evil/

[161] Lukoff, op.cit, pp. 13-26

[162] Michalczyk, S.A. and Michalczyk, J.J. (2014). Documentary: *A Matter of Conscience: Confronting Clergy Abuse.* Boston, MA: Etoile Productions.

[163] Ibid, p. 30.

[164] Ibid, pp. 27-71

[165] There are many Mennonite hymn sings on you-tube in which this song is sung by college choirs, high school choirs, family reunions, national church conventions, congregations in worship, church music festivals, and even Mennonite Central Committee quilt auctions. To listen to this hymn as it was sung at the New Hamburg (Ontario, Canada) quilt auction, retrieve from the following you tube presentation - where you can see Mennonite women wearing prayer coverings and plain dresses and Mennonite women with short hair – wearing slacks. See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QNk3iNZhSQ

Chapter Eight Endnotes
Estrangement, Separation and Alienation of the Soul
Pp. 131 - 134

[166] Tillich, P. (1948). Sermon: You are Accepted in *Shaking of the Foundations.* New York, NY: Charles Scribners. Reprinted in Long, T. J. and Plantinga, C. P., Jr. *A Chorus of Witnesses: Model Sermons for Today's Preacher* (1994). Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Erdmans Publishing Company, p. 97. Because of his opposition to the growing power of Adolf Hitler, Paul Tillich was dismissed in 1933 from his teaching position at the University of Frankfurt. With the help and sponsorship of American ethicist and theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, a professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Tillich and his family moved to the United States. Tillich's academic career in the United States included Union Theological Seminary in New York (1933-1955), Harvard (1955-1962), and the University of Chicago (1962-1965). After Tillich's death his wife Hannah Tillich published intimate details regarding Tillich's alcoholism and his sexual addictions. According to a personal conversation with Rollo May (ca 1976-1977) after Hannah's first book was published, Tillich's analysis with Karen Horney was influential in his theoretical formulations about anxiety, alienation, and existential courage. I have not been able to confirm or to disconfirm May's impressions in

the years since this very brief, informal and gossipy mis-century conversation. But it has seemed to me in recent years that Tillich's personal experiences in World War One at the Battle of Marne and his personal experiences at the beginning of Hitler's march to power are examples of traumatic experience. Therefore, it is very likely that Tillich understood trauma through personal experience which he then translated into this short sermon and later transformed into his major work on anxiety, *The Courage to Be.* For further information about Tillich, see http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/bce/tillich.htm; see also Tillich's authorized biography by Pauck and Pauck (1976), *Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought.*

[167] Ibid, pp. 92-101.

[168] Ibid, p. 93

[169] Ibid.

[170] Ibid, p. 95

[171] Ibid, pp. 96-97

[172] Ibid, pp. 99-100.

Chapter Nine Endnotes
Religious Duress
Pp. 134 - 155

[173] Miller, G. W. (January 10, 2016). *Providence Journal Op Ed Page.* It Could Have Been Any One of Us. Retrieve from
http://gwaynemiller.blogspot.com/2016/01/it-could-have-been-any-one-of-us.html

[174] Benkert, M. and Doyle, T. (November 27, 2008). Manuscript: *Religious Duress and its Impact on Victims of Clergy Abuse.*

[175] Ibid, Abstract, p. 1.

[176] As I have worked in this chapter with Roman Catholic authors and concepts I have reflected on my own Mennonite childhood and its encounters with secular and religious authorities such as bishops, preachers, Sunday school teachers, doctors, school nurses, grade school teachers, middle school principals, and choristers. I most certainly was taught to respect the elders of my community. Had any of them given me a direct command, I most likely would have obeyed it. Yet, I never saw the adults in my life as God figures. I am not certain why this is so. Perhaps it was the different signifier. Even small children in the Old

Mennonite tradition addressed ordained men as brothers and ministers' wives as sisters. Even the Mount Joy bishop was named and known to me inside my family as Henry Brown and outside my family and to his face as Brother Brown. Sunday school teachers were addressed by their first names as Emily, Myra, Sue or Florence while public school teachers were called Mr. Grey, Miss White or Mrs. Black. There was an explicit scriptural (Matthew 23:9) teaching inside the Old Mennonite community of my childhood that *no human man was to be called Father* (unless, of course, he was your biological father). This teaching was actually confusing to me as a small child because our home was across an alley from the Episcopal Church and rectory. The priests and their wives were my short-order baby sitters as in *can you watch Betsy for an hour?* I was taught by both of my parents very early in childhood to call the various priests by the honorific term of *Father.* By adolescence, this was automatic behavior. I would call across the ally, *Hi, Father.* He would call back, *Hi Betsy.* And both of us resumed whatever it was we had been doing before seeing each other. My dad's Lutheran minister was called *Pastor*. Thus, I had a three way naming problem: Father Jones, Pastor Smith, and Brother Brown. The Lutheran minister's wife was Mrs. Smith; the Episcopalian priest's wife was Mrs. Jones: and the Mennonite Bishop's wife was Sister Brown. By first or second grade I had this down pat. But hearing Mennonite sermons about not calling anyone *father,* I worried that maybe my family and I were all sinning. With more complex thought systems in late childhood and early adolescence, I simply stopped worrying about this naming nonsense. But I stayed aware that how I named these various men had to be socially appropriate.

When the resident Episcopalian priest was promoted to Canon Jones, I just flat out asked him, *I heard you have a new job. What do I call you now?* He just laughed and said, *Betsy, just me Father or Father Jones.* And that was that. I didn't want to be disrespectful – for in my parents' world, for a child to be disrespectful to an elder was simply unacceptable. Not knowing meant I might make a bad mistake. So, seeing him doing yard work in his ordinary yard work clothing, I ran across the ally and just headed right into my question.

One of my childhood's best friends was the daughter of a Mennonite minister. I played in her home and she played in mine. As I matured into mid-adolescence, he became Heinrich and his wife became Annie. It was a natural progression of naming as I matured. There was still respect for them as a ministerial couple, as elders, and as the parents of a best friend. But, moving towards adulthood, I adopted my adult parents' grown-up names for them in personal address. As I look back now, I realize they expected this of me and were quite comfortable as I assumed a more grown-up role. I also realize, however, that many of my friends called my parents Mr. and Mrs. Krall until well into their adult life. And my best childhood boy friend's parents are still called Mr. and Mrs. Pescado inside my internal imagination. I think now that in twelve years of growing up along side of this childhood friend, I never learned his parent's first names.

Inside the Mennonite community, therefore, a more egalitarian, thus flatter pattern of adult authority and naming practice was common whereas in my secular community of public school, age-appropriate friends and their parents, a more deferential and pyramidal naming process was the norm.

I wonder how much of this has to do with Anabaptist theologies of adult baptism. Once baptized following a personal confession of faith, each church member was assumed to be an adult – even if one was still a teenager. Congregational voting practices, for example, included all baptized individuals from the youngest to the oldest. As a town kid – as opposed to a farm kid – I was exposed, therefore, to many different religious practices and to their unique structures of authority and control. My world was secular and it was religious. And my religious world was multi-textured with many different denominations.

[177] Robinson, Bishop G. (November 12, 2010). Australian Clergy Abuse and Prevention Conference address: *The Prevention of Clergy Sexual Abuse.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vk94uiQ_vPI

[178] In clinical work, primary process thinking is defined as thought processes emanating from the unconscious – and is marked by illogical content, an emphasis on immediate wish fulfillment, and an equating of thought with action. This kind of thinking is predominant in early childhood but remnants remain in adolescence and adulthood – particularly in dreams.

[179] In clinical work, magical thinking is characterized by the belief that thinking or wishing something makes it occur.

[180] Pope Pius XI (December 20, 1935). Ad Catholici Sacerdotti. Vatican City, Rome. Retrieve from http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19351220_ad-catholici-sacerdotii.html

[181] Dunfee, J. M. (December 15, 2009). Priest: 'Alter Christus': Catholic Teaching Says That A Priest is an alter Christus. Retrieve from https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/Story/TabId/2672/ArtMID/13567/ArticleID/8029/Priest-Alter-Christus.aspx

[182] Cardinal O'Conner of New York. Retrieve from http://blog.archny.org/steppingout/?tag=priesthood; See also Pope John Paul II (1992) Apostolic Exhortation: *Pastores Dabo Vobis.* Retrieve from: http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_25031992_pastores-dabo-vobis.html

[183] The Rev. Laurie J. Ferguson is a fourth generation Presbyterian pastor and served her denomination as a member of six separate regional subcommittees composed of clergy and members of the laity for whom the task was to investigate clergy sexual abuse. Her summary of *learnings* is entitled "A Protestant Approach to Clergy Sexual Abuse" (pp. 189-194) and is found in an edited collection of essays by Frawley-O'Dea, M.G. and Goldner, V. (2007). *Predatory Priests - Silenced Victims: The Sexual Abuse Crisis and the Catholic Church.* New York, NY: The Analytic Press/Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

[184] Doyle, T. P. (April 28, 2013). Snap Conference Address, Dublin, Ireland; *Why the Institutionalized Church does what it does – a look at institutionalized clericalism.* Retrieve from http://vimeo.com/67774835.

[185] Ferguson, op.cit. pp. 189-194.

[186] Ibid, pp. 101-102).

[187] Ibid, p. 191.

[188] Benkert and Doyle, op. cit. p. 3.

[189] Cozzens, D. B. (2002). *Sacred Silence; Denial and the Crisis in the Church.* Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

[190] The "Pontifical Secret" is one form of corrupt canon law and praxis. For a short description of the Pontifical Secret see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pontifical_secret; for a longer discussion of it as it applies to the sexual abuse by clergy of the laity see Tapsell, K. (2014). *Potiphar's Wife: The Vatican's secret and child sex abuse.* Adelaide, Australia: ATF Press.

[191] Doyle, T. P. (February 25, 2014). Frontline Interview with Jason M. Breslow. Tom Doyle: "Vatican is the world's last absolute monarchy." http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/tom-doyle-vatican-is-the-worlds-last-absolute-monarchy/

[192] Doyle, T. P. Dublin Snap Address, op. cit. Retrieve from http://vimeo.com/67774835.

[193] Malloy, R. G. Can you explain what happens at ordination when the "ontological change" happens? *The Busted Halo Question Box.* See http://bustedhalo.com/questionbox/can-you-explain-what-happens-at-ordination-when-the-ontological-change-happens

[194] The Vatican. *Priests in the early church and Vatican Two.* http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cclergy/documents/rc_con_cclergy_doc_23111998_pvatican_en.html

[195] The Vatican, op.cit.

[196] Robinson, Bishop G.   (November 12, 2010). Address to the Australian Clergy Abuse Reparation and Prevention Conference: *The Prevention of Clergy Sexual Abuse: Twelve Elements in Institutional Culture that Contribute to Abuse.* Retrieve from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vk94uiQ_vPI

[197] For his extended discussion of this, listen to the entire address given by Father Doyle in Dublin, op.cit. http://vimeo.com/67774835.

[198] Kelman, Herbert C. and Hamilton, V. L. (1989). *Crimes of Obedience*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

[199] Huguccio della Chiesa (Hugo of the Church). *The Cost of Looking Good in the Church*   http://www.awrsipe.com/Burke/TheCostofLookingGood2007.pdf

[200] Stevens-Arroyo, A. (February 1, 2010). Catholic Clerical Narcissism. Faith Street blog.   Retrieve from http://www.faithstreet.com/onfaith/2010/02/01/clerical-narcissism/5357

[201] Anonymous (July 9, 2014). Dealing with Clerical Narcissism. Blog: How to Handle Church Bullies. Retrieve from http://churchbullies.blogspot.com/2014/07/dealing-with-clerical-narcissism.html

[202] For a good review of the autonomic nervous system see Sapolsky, R. M. (1994). *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: A guide to stress-related diseases and coping.* New York, NY: W. H. Freeman and Company. To get a working set of concepts about the body's response to intense stress, see (1) Levine, P. and Frederick, A. (1997). *Waking the Tiger, Healing Trauma: The innate capacity to transform overwhelming experiences*, New York, NY: North Atlantic and (2) Van Der Kolk, B. (2014). *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of Trauma.* New York, NY: Viking Press.

[203] (1) Levine, P. A. (2008). Healing Trauma: A pioneering program for restoring the wisdom of your body, Boulder, CO: Sounds True; (2) (2005). Healing Trauma: Restoring the wisdom of your body, Boulder, CO: Sounds True; (3). (2010). In An Unspoken Voice: How the body releases trauma and restores goodness. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books; (4) (2003). Sexual Healing: Transforming the sacred wound. Boulder, CO: Sounds True; (5) with Frederick, A. (1997). Waking the Tiger, Healing Trauma: The innate capacity to transform overwhelming experiences, New York, NY: North Atlantic.

[204] (1) Naperstek, B. (2001). Anger and Forgiveness, Akron, OH: Image Paths; (2) Healing Trauma: Guided Imagery for Posttraumatic Stress. Akron, OH: Healing Journeys.com; (3) Naperstek, B. (2006). Invisible Heroes: Survivors of Trauma and How They Heal. Piatkus/Little Brown Books.

[205] (1) Herman, J. L. (May 10, 2013). The Politics of Trauma: An Interview with Judith Herman in Caruth, C. (2014). *Listening to Trauma: Conversations with* Leaders in the Theory and Treatment of Catastrophic Experience. Baltimore, MD. John Hopkins Press; (2) (1997). *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence - From Domestic abuse to Political terror.* New York, NY: Basic Books; (3) See also Kreisler, H. (September 21, 2000). *The Case of Trauma and Recovery: Conversations with Judith Herman, M. D.* Berkeley, CA. Institute of International Studies of the University of California at Berkeley. Retrieve From http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people/Herman/herman-con0.html

[206] (1) Van der Kolk, B. (2001). *The Assessment and Treatment of Complex PTSD. Chapter 7: Traumatic Stress,* ed. Rachel Yahuda. American Psychiatric Press*;* (2) Van der Kolk and McFarlane, A. C. (1996). The Black Hole of Trauma (pp. 3-26) in van der Kolk, B. A. et. al., *Traumatic Stress: The effects of overwhelming experiences on mind, body and society.* New York, NY: Guilford; (3) *(January 17, 2014). The Body Keeps the Score in Caruth, C. (2014). Listening to Trauma: Conversations with Leaders in the Theory and Treatment of Catastrophic Experience.* Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Press; (4). Van Der Kolk, B. (2014). *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the healing of Trauma.* New York, NY: Viking Press; (5) Van der Kolk, van der Hart, O. V. D., and Marmar, C. R., Dissociation and Information Processing in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (pp. 303-327) in van der Kolk, B. A,, et. al., *Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experiences on Mind, Body and Society.* New York, NY: Guilford; (6). Van der Kolk, Trauma and Memory (pp. 279-302) in van der Kolk, B. A. et. al., *Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experiences on Mind, Body and Society).* New York, NY: Guilford.

[207] Anonymous (July 9, 23014), op.cit.

[208] See Robinson, op.cit., for his discussion of the *bella figura* as a contributing factor in the sexual abuse crisis.

[209] Milgram, S.   (1974). *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View.* New York, NY: Harper and Row. Boston, MA: Etoile Productions

[210] Zimbardo, P. G. (2008). *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding how good people turn evil.* New York, NY: Random House Trade Paperbacks.

[211] Frontline (February 25, 2014). Tom Doyle: Vatican is the world's last absolute monarchy. Retrieve from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/tom-doyle-vatican-is-the-worlds-last-absolute-monarchy/

[212] Benkert and Doyle, op. cit., p. 8

[213] Online dictionaries define *duress* as threats, violence, constraints to do something against their will or better judgment; constraint illegally exercised to force someone to perform an act.

[214] See, for example, (1) http://lifehopeandtruth.com/god/who-is-god/fear-of-the-lord/; (2) http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2014/05/24/what-does-reverence-mean-bible-definition-of-reverence/

[215] Freyd, J.J. and Birrell, P. (2013). *Blind Betrayal: Why We Fool Ourselves We Aren't Being Fooled.* New York, NY: Wiley, p. ix.

[216] Oulette, D. (December 29, 2015). Quoted by Ray Duckler: *In God We Trust: Priests in New Hampshire Made that Hard to Do.* Retrieve article from http://www.concordmonitor.com/photos/20216203-95/ray-duckler-in-god-we-trust-priests-in-new-hampshire-made-that-hard-to

[217] Benkert and Doyle, op.cit., p. 25

[218] Ibid, p. 26. Quoting Katherine DeGiullio, Interview with Dr. Leslie Lothstein, *National Catholic Reporter,* August 9, 2002.

[219] Cushing. T. (December 8, 2105). Where were we – and where will we be next time? Raucous Caucus Blog, *Pleasanton Weekly* http://www.pleasantonweekly.com/blogs/p/2015/12/08/where-were-we----and-where-will-we-be

Chapter Ten Endnotes
Religious Trauma Syndrome
Pp. 156 - 161

[220] Marko, E. (December 27, 2015). It Takes a Village. Retrieve article from http://www.evemarko.com/2015/12/27/it-takes-a-village/
[221] http://journeyfree.org/rts/

[222] Winell, Part One: RTS, Its Time to Recognize It. http://journeyfree.org/rts/rts-its-time-to-recognize-it/

[223] Ibid.

[224] Winell, Part Two: Understanding RTS: Trauma from Religion. http://journeyfree.org/rts/understandingrts/

[225] Winell, M. Understanding RTS: Trauma from Religion. Retrieve from http://journeyfree.org/rts/understandingrts/

[226] In my personal childhood, I heard some of these kinds of sermons about hell and the rapture/end-of-time before I had the mental equipment to deconstruct them. If the house was overly quiet at night when I woke, I would check out my parent's bedroom and my brothers' bedroom to make certain I had not been left behind in the rapture. Hearing everybody softly snoring, I would return to my room and fall asleep. I was fortunate in having a father who thought free-roaming evangelists were a pile of hell-raising rubbish and who actively questioned them inside the doors of our home. On several occasions, he made derogatory comments about the sanity of some evangelists and their claims. While this commentary may not have rescued me from my childhood fears about being good enough to get into heaven in a situation of sudden death, they helped my adolescent and young adult self decide that what I'd been taught inside my cradle church's evangelistic meetings as a child was pure insanity. It actually helped me – if not my mother – when one of these hellfire and brimstone Mennonite evangelists was discovered to be sexually involved with individuals he was not married to. By the time his sexual liaisons became known, I was in early adolescence and my parents talked openly and critically about his immoral behavior. In my home, there was no pretense of evangelical purity to be hidden inside a protective wall of family silence. I was old enough to figure out that if one of these guys could do this, so could a whole bunch more. By the time I was a college freshman, I refused to attend revival meetings. I preferred playing surreptitious cards in my college dormitory room to being hustled about the state of my endangered soul. If I was coerced into going by a hyperactive and super spiritual Dean of Student Women, I took a snide snickering sarcastic, young adult pleasure in debunking every word these traveling evangelists proclaimed. I did not respect the Dean nor did I respect these evangelists. Called to a mandatory prayer meeting as a second semester freshman because of my attitudes and behavior, I literally giggled through the entire prayer session – causing me to become the object of even more prayer. I found the whole scene to be ridiculous. I was already well on the road away from conformity to the most basic beliefs of my church regarding personal appearance and personal conduct and my likelihood of going to hell for wanting to be a part of the secular world. I was not unscarred by my childhood church and its teachings. But I was rescued from utter devastation by my father's suspicion about all things fundamentalist, evangelical, and authoritarian. I was also spared because of my polyglot reading. By the age of 13 or 14 I was reading at a post—college level and I was raiding the local public library for all kinds of books – most of which my home congregation's ministers would not have approved of me reading. After my first year of college, I transferred from this fundamentalist and evangelical college and never once looked back. I also never regretted the amount of card-playing I did there with my friends.

[227] Winell, RTS: Part One*; RTS – Its Time to Recognize it.* Retrieve from http://journeyfree.org/rts/rts-its-time-to-recognize-it/

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Chapter Eleven Endnotes
Susto
Pp. 162 - 173

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Endnotes
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Pp. 174 - 177

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[247] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/21/female-hysteria_n_4298060.html; see also http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3480686/

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Chapter Twelve Endnotes
Complex PTSD or C-PTSD
Pp. 178 - 185

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Chapter Thirteen Endnotes
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Pp. 186 - 197

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[264] Ibid, p.71

[265] Ibid, P. 73

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Chapter Fourteen Endnotes
Shattering of the Assumptive World
Pp. 198 - 211

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Chapter Fifteen Endnotes
Attribution Theories: Just World Thinking and Victim Blaming
Pp. 212 - 230

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the fight/flight/freeze/fold responses of the human body in traumatic encounters of any kind.

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Chapter Sixteen Endnotes
The Stockholm Syndrome
Pp. 233 - 235

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Chapter Seventeen Endnotes
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Pp. 236 - 239

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[375] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_dissonance

[376] Doyle, T. P. (2008), op.cit.

[377] Benkert, M. and Doyle, T. (November 27, 2008). Manuscript: *Religious Duress and its Impact on Victims of Clergy Abuse.*

[378] Doyle, T. P. (2008), op. cit

[379] Sister Sally Butler's experience of cognitive dissonance began when a mother of two young boys in the public housing projects where she worked told her about priest sexual abuse of her two small sons and also told her the stories of other boys' abuse by the same priests. Butler's comments were retrieved from the 2014 documentary, *A Matter of Conscience: Confronting Clergy Abuse.* Boston, MA: Etoile Productions.

[380] *Crossing the Rubicon:* A limit or boundary that when passed permits no return and typically results in irrevocable commitments; reaching a point of no return. This was the situation of Father Thomas Doyle in 1983 and 1984 in Lafayette, Louisiana when he became aware of the prevalence of cover-ups in the American Roman Catholic Church and began to speak up. As an early whistle-blower, he became persona non grata inside his church. I was faced with a similar situation when I began to push Marlin Miller, President of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, IN to deal with the sexual abuses of the seminary's major theologian, John Howard Yoder.

For a very helpful documentary about whistle-blowing in America's Roman Catholic Clergy Sexual Abuse Scandal see Michalczyk, Susan and John (2014). *A Matter of Conscience: Confronting Clergy Abuse.* Boston, MA: Etoile Productions.

[381] Butler, S. op. cit.

382 Richard Sipe's website contains an index to some of Father Doyle's written materials and can be accessed at http://www.awrsipe.com/Doyle/index.html. I addition my website contains a web-based anthology of Doyle's work which can be accessed on line at http://ruthkrall.com/resources/a-thomas-doyle-cyber-anthology/

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Pp. 250 - 255

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[390] Ibid, p. 75.

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Pp. 256 - 258

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Pp. 262 – 265

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Chapter Twenty Three Endnotes
The Rape Narrative: Issues of Obedience and Authority
Pp. 266 - 274

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Pp. 276 - 277

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Pp. 278 - 283

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[431] For a very powerful testimony to the powers of life to heal us of our wounds see the story of the recovery and healing of the Central Park Jogger who survived a life threatening event of rape. Maybe ten or twelve years ago, I heard her speak at a NICABM conference in Hilton Head, South Carolina. She was a powerful witness to this group of clinicians and healers of the power of the life force to transform experienced trauma and suffering into beauty and personal strength. Her story is now in book form: Melli, T. (2004). *I Am the Central Park Jogger: A Story of Hope and Possibility.* New York, NY: Scribners.

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