

The Elephants in God's Living Room



Volume Four

Bearing the Unbearable A Collection of Conversational Essays

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The Elephants in Gods Living Room, Volume Four
Bearing the Unbearable: A Collection of Conversational Essays

This book-length set of conversational essays was created as I began to think through a wide variety of clinical and theological issues that relate to a wide variety of sexual violence issues. The underlying question for these essays is quite simple: *what do we individually and collectively know that we don't know we know?* The Johari Window forms a frame for this question. But I have adapted it away from its original purposes in organizational development and have, therefore, expanded its use as a personal framework for reading the works of others and for my own writing.

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These essays include bibliographic references.

- (1) Twentieth-century religious leader sexual abuse and Institutional cover-up Issues
- (2) Religious authoritarianism and the cultures of clericalism
- (3) Vicarious Trauma (compassion fatigue, traumatic counter-transference, secondary trauma, burn-out, etc.)
- (4) Post-traumatic Stress Disorders and Complex Post-traumatic Stress Disorders
- (5) Empathy Disorders
- (6) Betrayal Trauma
- (7) Religious Problems Diagnosis
- (8) Spiritual Problems Diagnosis
- (9) Jeremiah and the Prophetic Tradition of Holy Scripture
- (10) Sacrifices of the Children to Idols
- (11) Wounds of those bearing witness
- (12) Deep Grief
- (13) Deep Healing
- (14) The Johari Window as a Theoretical Framework

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In Memory



**Howard Clinebell
1922 – 2005**

Teacher, role model, mentor, colleague and friend

Dedication



Photograph by Nicholas A. Tonelli

For all witnesses to violation
Who respond with compassion and informed care.
In the deep hope that
The enchanted wasteland of toxic and corrupt spirituality
May once again
Become a verdant forest
Filled with singing birds,
Blooming plants of all kinds,
Animals protecting their young,
Clean water springs and pure waterfalls,
Deep joy and still points
Safety for all creation
Shelter and home
To the most vulnerable beings that live there.

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A Personal Introduction

Raising awareness of the fact that violence can be prevented is, however, only the first step in shaping the response to it. Violence is an extremely sensitive topic. Many people have difficulty in confronting it in their professional lives because it raises uncomfortable questions about their personal lives. Talking about violence means touching upon complex matters of morality, ideology and culture. There is, thus, often resistance at official as well as personal levels to open discussion of the topic.

World Health Organization: *A Summary Report*.ⁱ

Introductory Comments

These conversational essays began to appear about two years ago – give or take a couple of months. They began in my head as imaginary and fragmentary morning conversations with published material by Roman Catholic scholars and activists – mostly with the words of Father Thomas Doyle but also sometimes with those of therapists such as Richard Sipe and Mary Gail Frawley-O’Dea. Their usual focus began with my questions regarding child sexual abuse done by ordained clergymen in the Roman Catholic Church.

But occasionally I wandered into the intellectual terrain which therapists describe as traumatic counter-transference. I wanted, in these conversations, to know how these Roman Catholic scholars, activists and victim advocates emotionally and spiritually survive their intimate and ordinary working knowledge of the toxic realities of sexual abuse stories. I wondered if they had the same or even remotely similar responses to these stories that I have had over the years to stories about affinity violence done to women and their children – responses in which everything I thought I knew and everything I once believed about human goodness got called into question.

By the time these imaginary conversations began to occur, I’d read much of Father Doyle’s oeuvre of other-than-canonical work; much of Sipe’s online work and several of his books; much of Frawley-O’Dea’s published clinical work; a wide variety of Roman Catholic journalists; several clinical theory books about PTSD; in addition, I had read or watched recorded Roman Catholic victims describe their individual, and therefore, personally unique experiences of their post-victimization world. In addition I read several books written by practicing priests who described their own very personal responses to their denominational church’s behavior. I visited the web sites of several well-known plaintiffs’ attorneys and saw how they framed their work. A Pennsylvania friend sent me all

of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* coverage of the trial that sent Monsignor Linn to jail. I read Grand Jury reports and on-line depositions. I subscribed for a year to the *National Catholic Reporter* and regularly visited ten or twelve bloggers' sites to see non-ordained lay Catholic responses and comments.

At times during the reading and writing aspects of my work, I was simply overwhelmed with intense feelings of grief and rage at what had happened to so many clergy-abused children and women over such a long time period. That this abuse had been done in God's name by ordained Christian men was simply inconceivable to me. That their denominational supervisors colluded in their abuse by not reporting it to civil law enforcement agencies seemed obscene beyond words.

In this time of extended sadness for abused and victimized individuals and for their families and in this time of focused anger at their church for its refusal to act appropriately and responsibly, I had so many questions and no where to take them. My "teacher" became Father Doyle's public written words and my silent, intensely focused personal dialogue with them.

In addition to these imaginary conversations with Roman Catholic scholars, activists, and victim advocates, I returned to actual historical conversations I remembered having with teachers of theology, with clinical teachers and with a wide variety of professional colleagues about healing deep wounds of the psyche and the spirit. In my imagination I revisited clinical hours with several therapists who had guided my own processes of self-interrogation and healing.

In memory, as I re-visited these interactions with trustworthy teachers, mentors, and personal therapy guides, I mentally and emotionally quizzed them about how they would handle today's realities of religious leader abuse and institutional clericalism. What, if they were still alive, would they say to me? What would they want said to the world? What, I wondered, would they tell me to do. What questions would they ask me? What self-care precautions would they urge upon me?

During these imaginary early morning conversations, some of my teachers reminded me of the important legacies they had planted in my own life – legacies of personal integrity and intellectual honesty, joy in learning, intellectual curiosity, clinical integrity, spiritual bravery in exploring one's doubts, personal self-interrogation of one's own woundedness and personal fault lines as essential to the doing of clinical work, and the importance of manifesting service to others as a mark of spiritual and emotional maturity. During times of reverie, these individuals reminded me about the need to serve others from inside a position of informed, non-possessive, non-judgmental, and non-dogmatic compassion. In these morning visits to my past, I re-engaged with their teachings about the central role of justice and personal accountability to healing – healing of the person and healing of the cosmos. In the middle of my deep sadness and

profound soul-engaging anger, I recalled their discussions of the need to practice active self-care in the presence of evil. I remembered their acts of kindness towards me when I most needed them.

My life has been so permanently blessed by the lives and the wisdom of these honorable and perceptive teachers, therapists, and mentors. Because of their presence in my life when I was younger, I know without a doubt that there are trustworthy persons with genuine integrity inside the counselor's office, the church's pulpits and the religious academy.

As I was trying to think my way through the enchanted, toxic landscape of abusive religion, I repeatedly encountered waves of overwhelming gratitude for these many individual's supportive and nurturing presence in my life. This gratitude served as an antidote to my grief, rage and despair. It helped re-orient me to the lived-life realities of compassionate goodness in the face of evil done by religious leaders in God's name. My early and lasting friendships with these individuals served as a rudder wheel as I steered my life through a very turbulent inner ocean. Extremely distressed by the malicious nature of what I was learning I clung to gratitude to preserve some inner sense of balance!

Slowly, in these morning debates, arguments, and questioning conversations, I came to understand that my emotional-spiritual task, in this current moment of my life, therefore, is to balance both poles of the Christian world – the presence of honorable, generous, compassionate, indeed righteous individuals alongside the presence of judgmental, hostile, narcissistic, and abusive ones. Both realities, I knew, needed to be acknowledged. Not everything and everyone inside the religious borders of Christendom was pathogenically evil. But, equally important, not everything and everyone was good or spiritually whole. A process of spiritual discernment was called for. Thus, the long range goal of spiritual maturity for religious leaders emerged into view. What did it mean, I wondered,, for individuals and their communities to represent and demonstrate spiritual maturity?

These essays emerged first as random journals. For much of my adult life, I have journaled as a semi-disciplined way to think my way through the jumble of ideas and the tangle of emotions that confront me in my professional work or in my personal life. I have such an intense inner personality that I simply need to get "stuff" on paper so I can think more rationally and objectively about issues I care about.

Sometimes a journal began in weeping. Sometimes it began in cursing. At times it began in outrage at the willful damage done by so-called *holy men and holy women*. At times I found that I had no words to convey the magnitude these kinds of predatory damages do to the human body, to the human personality, to the human community, and to the human soul. Sometimes I thought there were NO words in any language that were adequate to the task of making a difference

for the current church. I wondered if my hope for the future of the Christian Church (my spiritual clan) and a different way of managing a wide variety of ideological disputes and authoritarian abuses inside the institutional, corporate church was just wishful-thinking rubbish.

At other times a journal began in gratitude. When I encountered people's written work about these complex issues of affinity violence inside the religious community and this work made sense to me, I wanted to learn from them. They joined the hosts of beloved and revered mentors and teachers – who always have appeared in my life when (1) I needed them and (2) I was ready to learn from them. Some of them entered my personal pantheon of heroes – individuals I admired for their tenacity, their courage, their humility, their compassion, and their service to others.

In this professional-personal journey into the toxic and enchanted forest of religious leader or spiritual teacher sexual abuse and institutional cover-up behaviors I found myself in a very personal dark night of the soul. My Mennonite childhood had taught me that God's face could best be seen inside the community of the faithful remnant. But if the remnant was no longer faithful, indeed, if it was deliberately and knowingly and maliciously unfaithful, then where was God's face to be found?

Solitary writing began to seem at times like spitting into a category 5 nor'easter – thinking that I could re-route its destructive destination.

But in this aging phase of my life journey, I thought that distilling others' wisdom and sharing this distillation through my own work was a contribution I could still make to efforts in the commons to stop sexual abuse and violence from happening *and* to heal the wounds of abuse where it had already happened. I thought (perhaps hoped is a more accurate word) that just maybe I had some life wisdom to share as well. I began to think that if my work helped just one individual to understand these issues or helped just one individual join today's advocates as an informed, compassionate witness and worker inside the enchanted forest of affinity and betrayal abuses, then maybe my work was important.

Consequently, I kept returning to the "voices and writings" of clinicians such as Rachel Naomi Remen, Judith Lewis Herman, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, Rollo May, Alice Miller, Emmett Miller, Jean Baker Miller, Wayne Muller and Robert Resnick; to the teachings of preachers, religious activists and theologians - people such as Roman Catholic Dominican Father Thomas Doyle, Anglican Father Mathew Fox, Roman Catholic philosophers, theologians and preachers such as Mary Daly, Hans Kung, Henri Nouwen, William Lindsey, Gustavo Gutierrez, Thomas Merton, and Juan Luis Segundo; Protestant theologians, ethicists, preachers and social activists such as Marie Fortune, Howard Clinebell, Nelle Morton, Pauli Murray, Matthew Fox, William Sloane Coffin, Jr. and Dan

Rhoades. I turned as well to the writings of world religion scholars such as Huston Smith; spiritual teachers in other world religions such as Ram Dass, Jack Kornfield, Pema Chodron, Rabbi Rami Shapiro and Starhawk. Somewhat allergic to the whole concept of bishops, I even sought out and read (or listened to) the words of some Roman Catholic bishops, for example, Thomas Gumbleton (America) and Geoffrey Robinson (Australia), and Anglican Bishops such as Gene Robinson (America), Chilton Knudsen (America), John Shelby Spong (America) and Desmond Tutu (South Africa). At a distance, I perceived these individuals to be honest and faithful men and women – individuals who did not physically or sexually abuse vulnerable others in God's name. They taught and preached a gospel of genuine good news – one that in the long summer of my despair seemed to have integrity. As a clinician I know that everyone has fault lines. No human being has all the answers to life's troubling questions. But these were people who seemed genuinely humble, self-aware, perceptive and helpful rather than narcissistic, self-centered, malicious and destructive.

I am copy editing these words on the day that Nelson Mandela's body is being returned to the earth in South Africa. I am grateful for his inspiring presence in the world. Like Abraham Lincoln, he is the father of the dream of liberty and freedom for all of his nation's people. As I write, I think that perhaps God has taken home one of my lifetime's 36 holy men – the Lamed-Vovnik of Jewish Hasidic tradition. Who will replace him, I wonder, on the world stage as a just and honorable political leader? Each of us who follow an internal dream of embodied justice and a living peace must, I think, seek to embody our own soul's call to its journey of peacemaking, integrity, and compassion. But we also need others who inspire us and who, simply by being who they are, provide us with models and with courage.

In reading published interviews, individual biographies and formal written work about and by these men and women, I was searching for a way out of my own dark night of the soul – a dark night caused by deep grief, intense despair and focused rage – not at my personal violation but at the knowing, persistent and continuing violation of others and the Christian church's deliberate destruction, by its negligence, of their rights to live in safety. The nearly total ineptness of many Christian denominations and their theologians and ethicists in (1) acknowledging that there is a problem with clergy abusiveness and (2) apparent cluelessness or even perhaps maliciousness in managing these complex problems with abuse just plain infuriated me. There had to be a better way. But if no one in religious administrative positions appeared to be searching for that better way, then the church's victims' pathway out of the enchanted abuse forests would remain hidden from them. They would remain trapped inside the toxic tar pits of enchantment.

Even worse, vulnerable individuals would keep being abused in God's name by additional generations of human predators and the human population inside the toxic forest would grow rather than diminish. If there were no rescue operations

inside the toxic wastelands of abuse, then individuals would remain trapped. If there were no significant changes in the Christian Church's polity, ecclesiology, ethical teachings, and theology, future generations would also be trapped in the aftermaths of experienced affinity violation and gendered sexual or physical abuse. If today's church did not change its trajectory, it goes without saying that spiritually, religiously, and emotionally abused individuals would continue to be violated.

We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Restⁱⁱ

But there were men and women activists *and* there were victim advocates *and* there were survivors of abuse who were at work in their efforts to help others. They didn't stop their work because of spiritual despair, deep grief, or unrelenting anger. They didn't stop their work because the religious establishment ignored them – or even actively abused them. These men and women seemed to represent a continuing prophetic hope for the survival of God's people - a hope that the church qua church was not totally irrelevant to the needs of wounded and violated people. In some article, somewhere, I read Father Doyle's critique of his church's ruling hierarchy – a critique that stated that the ruling elites of his church were good Catholics but they were not Christians.ⁱⁱⁱ He then commented that today's faithful people of God were found among the common people who did seek to help victims and their families. As I pondered his comment, I wondered if, in a similar situation, there were good Mennonites who were not Christians. Obviously, such a judgment was not mine to make. But I wondered about the question; what did it mean to be a Christian in the face of such internal evil – evil inside the Christian commons? Was it a good thing, in the face of such personal and social moral corruption to even think of oneself as Christian? How could one avoid being complicit and still remain in the commons?

I thought often of the Lamed-Vovnik, the thirty-six just and righteous individuals of mystical Hasidic Judaism. These are individuals who, by their righteousness, prevent the destruction of the world by evil. They wander the earth – unknown to anyone else and to each other. As long as they continue to exist, in each generation, God holds back his anger at human depravity for their sake.

In light of the sexual abuse issue inside Christendom – for it has invaded many denominations in many nations – who were these righteous men and women? Who or what kept God's wrath at bay? Were they perhaps the unseen and often unheralded men and women who helped sexual abuse victims reclaim their lives?

What I found as I continued to educate myself about the role and work of anti-abuse activists was a kind of informed, constantly maturing idealism. I observed an unrelenting commitment to the needs and welfare of others. I witnessed a wide variety of victim helpers and advocates struggling to find their own pathway through the enchanted forests of violence and spiritual or political corruption.

They were not individuals seeking to destroy the commons. They were not individuals seeking to overpower it. Rather, they wanted to make the commons safe again for everyone. Their personal sense of idealism and compassion seemed well-laced with political and social realism. Their anger at injustice done was righteous and pure. These were not naïve individuals. Nor, were they gullible. They had looked straight on at these complex issues of affinity violence and systemic corruption – both often done in God's name - and, in essence, said, *I do not agree. This spiritual atrocity of abuse will not be done in my name. This religious atrocity of institutional betrayal will not be done in my name. I refuse to be silent. I refuse to be complicit. I will speak up and I will act. I cast, therefore, my personal destiny with those who are abused. I will seek to be today's Good Samaritan – helping those whom my institutional or denominational church has violated and then abandoned.*

Looking closely at their lives and their work in the world, I observed an ability to honestly face into the factual realities of their individual wounds and the wounds of their people. I witnessed deep personal and well-rooted beliefs that there was a better way – that good was still present in the world – manifesting itself in the lives of ordinary people seeking to help others in any way possible – the true people of God. In my time of despair, I witnessed their sense of hope for a Christian world in which God's *little ones of all ages* would once again be safe.

The Music Begins to Guide Me

Many mornings I woke up “hearing” Fannie Lou Hamer's voice raised in song: *this little light of mine – I'm gonna let it shine.*^{iv} Other mornings I woke to Sweet Honey in the Rock as they admonished adults everywhere: *your children are not your children.*^v On still other mornings I woke to Sweet Honey's marching anthem *we who believe in freedom cannot rest.* As I thought about raped children and abused women, I returned to Holly Near's lament *Hay Una Mujer Desaparecida.*^{vi} The women activists who created and then performed this music did not quit because of their despair. They did not retreat into silence because of an absence of hope. As the remembered music inside my mind died, I often began to sing the words which had awakened me inside my sleep.

For many months, music from various world injustice protest movements sustained me. It surrounded me as I moved through my days. Usually the melodies found their way into my consciousness just as I was waking for the day – then my noisy, restless mind hunted until the words arrived. Then, almost awake, I began to sing. This music became a way of protesting and a way of praying. It became a pathway out of my personal despair. Because there was this body of music in the world, I knew I was not alone. There were brave women and honorable men at work in the world of injustice. I could seek to follow them. I could seek to join them.

In this deeply intertwined mix of hope and despair I *knew* my work in regaining some inner sense of balance and serenity was not yet finished – I needed to re-think my lifetime of work. Did this professional lifetime of advocacy for raped and beaten women matter at all? Was the world remotely a better place because I have lived here on this beautiful blue marble in space for such a short while?

The Road to Faith^{vii}

Years ago, a year or two before my biological father's death, I found a book in a used book store that began to address my grief at witnessing his suffering and my questions about death. In the years since then this book has traveled with me all over the world. It has been underlined and re-underlined in various colors of ink. When I am overwhelmed by despair and see only God's absence, I open it and begin to read. These are the words that Will Oursler wrote after his father, Fulton Oursler, died. They describe the search for a meaningful faith, a meaningful way of living in the world.

There are others who seek, but who, at the same time, are afraid. They fear self deception and wishful thinking. They seek the truth on its own terms, without equivocation, sentimentalism, evasion, clichés in place of sound reason: they want the right to probe, to question, to doubt, to disbelieve, to refute and reject as well as to accept.^{viii}

I live in self-doubt and I learn by questioning. I am always in search of wise teachers and mature healers whose wisdom and integrity can guide me when I am most confused or most despairing or most wounded by life. Now an old woman I am no longer naïve in my search. Not everyone who proclaims the path to healing is a genuine healer and not every spiritual teacher has integrity. There must be a process of internal discernment as we seek to guide our own life ship on its journey across culturally troubled waters. While I tend, by personality, to be a loner, I grow more and more convinced that none of us should seek to manage our own lives in isolation from other's lives. We collectively need each other. This is particularly true when our work in the world involves confronting evil.

Blind obedience or a gullible spirituality benefits absolutely no one...except maybe those in positions of authority, control and dominance. It is but one of the many manifestations of authoritarianism writ large. I do not now – and never will – agree that sexual violence or the physical abuse of women and their children in any form is acceptable male dominance behavior. Its rationalizations and cultural buttresses must be sawed down and burned. Wherever institutionalized Christianity is one of those buttresses, a keystone so to speak, it must be analyzed; it must be critiqued; it must be dislodged. Its central living roots must be uprooted and exposed to the sunlight.

The Personal Enters

Conversations not only include our interests in someone else's life histories, and intellectual or personal perspectives about the issues and matters at hand, they often begin as conversations with our own life histories and inner selves. We pick up a conversation with others because of complex personal motivations and curiosities. This set of written conversations exemplifies this kind of internal awareness. I have picked up the pen – so to speak – in order to interrogate my life and to glean wisdom from my life's experiences and questions.

While I want to learn what others know, I am also interested in tracking down that which I know but do not know I know. At this stage of life, the developmental authorities claim, I *should* be seeking to understand my lifetime of collected wisdom. I *should*, therefore, be reviewing my life as preparation for death's inevitable and final silence.

My Personal Location

One becomes most effective when one is speaking out of one's personal experience and one's action grows out of the understanding of one's immediate personal experience.

Judith L. Herman^{ix}

For almost 45 years of my life I have been a second wave American feminist. During the 1970s I became a women's health activist and anti-rape activist. This aspect of my life began inside my professional clinical work environments. As time passed I became an educator who taught students that sexual abuse and physical violence in the personal sphere were important topics to understand – as important as the topic of war in the public sphere.

I hold to the feminist precepts that the personal is political and that the political is personal. I do not begin, therefore, my examination of the issues in this series of conversational essays from some abstractly neutral place. These are topics about which I have both thoughts and feelings. These topics and I have a long personal history with each other. I am committed to trying to understand them. Issues of morality, ideology and culture are always in play as I seek to understand the personal forms of affinity violence which devastate so many women's and children's lives. They are equally in play as I seek to understand inept, dysfunctional or morally corrupted institutional management practices inside religious communities.

My professional background includes a strong community mental health element – which means I think about a tri-fold approach to many different issues of human violence: treatment or cure, containment or quarantine, and prevention. The living and dancing intersection of the personal with the social is a key

element in community mental health theory. No isolated piece of human behavior can be understood in its complexity if one overlooks the social context in which that behavior occurred. Every aspect of human behavior has a history, a root in human biology or physiology, *and* a root in a cultural form – a cultural pattern that is usually unconscious and rarely examined.

In 1962 I graduated with a generic degree in nursing; In 1970 I completed all requirements for a masters degree in psychiatric and community mental health nursing. In 1990, I completed all requirements for my doctorate in personality and theology. I am, therefore, a mental health clinician; a women's studies scholar; and an Anabaptist-Mennonite pastoral theologian educated and trained by Methodists. By religious heritage and in my personal value system, I am a pacifist.

I am, therefore, a nurse and a pastoral theologian educated within the Christian tradition. My theological academic preparation includes a strong background in developmental and social psychology. I have the continuing education equivalent of a master's degree in health care administration/health care economics. I also have the continuing education equivalent of a master's degree in alternative health care methodologies and philosophies.

I have been an institutional program manager/mid-level administrator in one place or another since I was 26 years old. During the last eighteen years of my professional career, I headed a Mennonite undergraduate program in peace, justice and conflict studies – the first woman to do this in any Mennonite undergraduate curricula. My national homeland is the United States. My first language is English. My second language is Spanish. My gender is female; my ethnic class status is white middle-class. My sexual orientation is heterosexual. My immediate religious heritage includes a Lutheran father and a Mennonite mother.

I am the youngest member of my generational cohort of cousins, *the baby of the extended family*. I grew up surrounded by family and clan. My grandparents, aunts and uncles, and older cousins babysat me when I was little and watched over me as I grew up. I knew the inside of their lives with an intimacy that close relatives used to have – an extended clan reality that no longer exists for most Americans. As I grew up I mourned my relatives' aging frailties and then their deaths but over the years have come to celebrate their significant gifts to my life as essential to the person I have become. In particular, I value the healing resiliency of laughter which they modeled when the clan got together. From them I learned that while serious, life did not need to be grim. I value their ability to think for themselves. Their bone-deep integrity has often sustained me. I have benefitted from their commitments to educate their children even as they, themselves, had not experienced post-secondary education for themselves. I have benefitted from their pragmatic belief that they shared some responsibility to the commons – serving on school boards, manning the volunteer fire response

team, and working alongside charitable organizations who assisted others who needed help.

The Influence of Parents and Their Lives

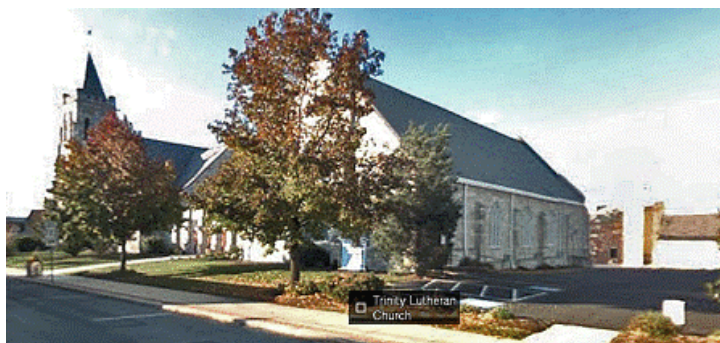
My primary religious education as a child and adolescent was inside the Old Mennonite tradition but there were always strong undertones of my father's religious faith and spirituality. While most Sundays I attended the Mennonite Church, by the time I was able to read something more advanced than *Dick and Jane*, I could work my way through the Lutheran hymnal and unself-consciously participate in its seasonal liturgies. These liturgies seemed as natural to me as the a cappella hymn-singing of the Mennonite Church. As an example of this naturalness, I never deliberately memorized the Apostle's Creed. From reading and hearing it multiple times in Lutheran worship services, I just knew it.

The austere plainness of the Mennonite meeting house and its strong tradition of a cappella music was my primary religious and spiritual home.



A Mennonite Meetinghouse^x

But the stained glass tinted light, the magnificent pipe organ music, and the choir-led liturgical music of my dad's church was also an ordinary aspect of my childhood's religious and spiritual indoctrination.



Trinity Lutheran Church, Mount Joy, PA

Both churches regularly recited the Lord's Prayer and I learned to respect the various endings of this prayer in different religious communities.

Every meal in my home was preceded by a simple family grace. For many years, I assumed this was my mother's family's tradition. Then, in midlife conversations with some of my dad's family – in particular my California second cousins, I discovered that this was the traditional Krall family mealtime prayer. Generations of Krall cousins had used this same prayer for decades. Since my grandfather Krall in old age was not at all religious, we cousins now assume that this prayer was part of our grandmother Krall's religious heritage and her means of religiously teaching her children – our parents' generation. Each succeeding generation taught it to their own children. In fact, this mealtime prayer still survives in my family. It is known to all of my nephews and my niece even if they, themselves, don't do a family grace. This prayer declares in its opening sentence that God is both great and good. Recited three times a day for more than twenty years, this prayer of gratitude is forever moored in my spiritual pores.

The Episcopal Church's Fathers

In addition to my family's religious teaching, my parental home was located across a small alley from my hometown's Episcopal Church. With perpetually open doors, the main sanctuary became a drop-in haven for me during the independence wars of late childhood and early adolescence. Needing to escape one or both parents, I simply ran away from home - across the alley. The smell of incense; the gleaming beauty of silver candelabra on the altar, and the slanted rays of red, blue, green and gold sunlight streaming through glass taught me something about my own maturing longing for transcendence. Sitting alone in the quiet deserted church building as my inner childhood and adolescent turbulence and annoyance at my parents quieted, I knew that I was, in some ways that still remain inexplicable to me, at home.



St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Mount Joy, PA

When I became old enough, my parents enrolled me in the church's annual Easter egg rolls and, even later, I began to attend Christmas Eve mass celebrations. On my own, I learned how to navigate the *Book of Common Prayer*. A whole series of *fathers* (and their families) were friends of the *chat across the alley* type. They were both biological fathers and spiritual fathers. Because of their various children, I knew the inside of their home and the kinds of conversations that went on there. These conversations and parent-child relationships were not ontologically different than the ones in my own home.

One difference was that these Episcopalian families had television sets which my parents did not own until all of their children were out of the house and permanently on their own. My mom, an elementary school educator, felt that television would interfere with her children's developing ability to read. While in childhood I argued that she was wrong, in retrospect, I now know my mom was right. With a variety of priestly children, therefore, I surreptitiously watched Captain Kangaroo, Kate Smith, Liberace, and Dick Clark on many an after-school "homework session" inside the rectory.

One of these priestly fathers, when my biological father was terminally ill and close to death, befriended my young adult self, held my tears as a sacred trust, and sought, by compassionate listening, to accompany me as I tried to learn on my own how to *make it through*. On later visits home, after my mom was living alone, this same priest assured me that every morning he or his wife looked to see if my mom's upstairs blinds were up. Seeing them still down by mid-day, they went across the alley to ascertain that she was OK.

By mid-life, on holiday trips to my mom's house, I only visited the resident priest and his family on Christmas Eve – when I was included in the post mass holiday receptions in the rectory. Seeing me at mass, as I exited the priest would say, *stop by the house for a drink tonight before you go home*. In this witching hour I could re-connect with high school friends and make new acquaintances.

So, even though I was never a member of this small town Episcopal Church, the *priestly fathers* were a constant in my life from the earliest days of my life when they sometimes became my impromptu baby sitters to the mid-life days of being my adult friends and the self-appointed guardians of my mom's well-being and safety.

By late adolescence I had very different religious experiences than all of my Mennonite friends. Other than the Roman Catholic Church I had attended religious services or summer Bible school in all of the churches in my hometown. I could work my way through a wide variety of liturgical practices. Because of the small town nature of my childhood, my parents knew the people of these churches as friends or business associates and we were always welcomed warmly at weddings, funerals, baptisms, confirmations, lessons and carols, evangelistic meetings, Christmas pageants, Easter sunrise services, pig roasts, fish fries, or other small town church events.

When I was twelve years old, one of my cousins converted to Catholicism and I attended my first mass – a wedding - in the pre-Vatican Two church. My parents talked with me about appropriate social manners in a setting where I would most likely understand little or nothing that was said. I modeled my own behavior on their quiet dignity as they simply watched the service unfold. We stood when the people stood. We sat when the people sat. We recited the Lord's Prayer. My dad recited the creed. We stayed seated during the Eucharistic celebration.

At the wedding reception my non-drinking parents raised their wine glasses in the toasts to the bride and groom and as a family group of three we circulated among the non-dancing guests. This was a time for the entire family of cousins to be together and I was very curious about the service which was so very different than anything I'd witnessed in worship. About the only thing that was familiar was wearing my Sunday best clothing and being quietly respectful of all that happened around me.

Late Adolescence and Young Adult Years

By my first year in college I was already disenchanted by some forms of Mennonite worship. In particular, I detested long circuitous and boring sermons. During the college years I visited a wide variety of churches – including a black church, a Unitarian Church, multiple Lutheran Churches, several other Protestant churches, and several Roman Catholic masses – which a friend and I witnessed from balcony seats.

By my senior year in college, I knew I would keep my denominational membership inside the Mennonite Church of my childhood. I was also certain that I would not attend services on a regular basis. My growing agnosticism about all things ideologically and dogmatically religious was something I chose not to share with my family and most of my friends. Needing to attend services, I luxuriated in the beauty of stained glass windows, the majesty of pipe organs, the simple harmonies of the unaccompanied human voice raised in song. Freed of the parentally-supervised need to attend services, I joked with my closest friends that I'd become a bedside Baptist or a mattress Mennonite.

Without self-consciously knowing it, I was exchanging the rigid intellectual belief structures of my Mennonite childhood for the spirituality of communal worship inside a wide variety of denominations. The eclectic nature of my religious background in a family where polyphony was more the norm than a single note shaped me as a child and adolescent in ways that continue to shape me. Even though each of my parents pursued an individual religious path, their choice to raise my brothers and me inside a two-denomination family presented me with intimate information about religious experience and personal spirituality that most of my friends did not and indeed could not access.

In midlife I began to call my childhood experiences of religion a koan that I would need to spend the rest of my life resolving. The specific nature of this religious koan would change in different developmental stages of my life. But after a certain age in late childhood or early adolescence, I never again believed there was only one way to encounter God or to uncover truth.

That specific conversation occurred with my mother, not my father. I went down the list of all my close-in relatives: Lutheran, Pentecostal, Church of God-

Anderson, Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian, Mennonite, Methodist, Church of the Brethren, etc. I named each person out loud to my mother and asked, *is he or she a Christian?* My mother replied each time in the affirmative. When this litany of my questions about my cousins and their parents was complete, I then asked the clincher question, *if all of these people are good Christians, why do I have to be a Mennonite?* My mother had not seen this one coming and her answer was not persuasive.

I knew I was a kid and understood that I would have to wait until adult life to find my own path into religious identity. But I also had a piece of parentally-installed information that most of my Mennonite child friends did not seem to have. God loved everyone – not just Mennonites. There were many paths to an authentic religious identity and each produced good and loving people. None of these people whom I loved was excluded from God's love because of their denominational identity....or even a lack of it. Knowing my grandparents, uncles, aunts, and adult cousins to be good and loving people, I did not believe any of them were hell-bound.

Even one of my dad's lame jokes reinforced this sense in me that as an adult I would have choices I did not have as an adolescent. He would tease my mother about Mennonites in heaven being so separated that he would not be able to find her; then he would go on to joke about the large heavenly room filled with Mennonites and the need for all the other heavenly saints to tiptoe past this room. When asked, St. Peter simply said absolute silence in the hallway outside the Mennonite room in heaven was observed because the Mennonites inside this large room believed they were the only ones in heaven. I suppose the collective cognitive dissonance of all these singing Mennonites would have been too great for the therapy angels to handle. My mother's response to this actually quite loving bit of marital teasing was to protest and then laugh. I knew, therefore, that both of my parents – while faithful to their individual denominations' claims on their lives - believed that both of them would eventually be together in one heaven.

Eventually, even discussions about who I was free to date and about who I was not free to date included religious dimensions. My father was clear that should I choose to date non-Mennonite boys, this was acceptable to him. My mother chose to emphasize the reality that it was not acceptable for me to date Roman Catholic boys because I would need to convert. As a direct descendant of the 16th century Anabaptists, such an idea was simply not acceptable to her. She had a strong preference for me to date Mennonite boys but what could she do when I argued from her own early adult choices and decisions for the freedom to do things with boys I liked rather than boys that met her pre-determined religious seal of approval. At one point, with all of the arrogance of adolescence, I said to her, *if you wanted a different daughter then you needed to marry a Mennonite – not a Lutheran.*

***Divided Religiously,
the Parents Gave Clear Messages about Sexuality***

One thing was clear to me in late childhood and adolescence; it remains clear to me today. Both parents were united in their agreement that I was going to graduate from college. Whatever their private and hidden-from-me discussions about religious denominations and church attendance, expectations about graduation from college were an open conversation from mid-childhood on. Dating, marriage, and pregnancy decisions all needed to be postponed until I had the magical adult ability to support myself. My solution to this issue, for I agreed with this parental goal for my life, was to see all my adolescent boy friends as friends and none of them as a boyfriend. I hung out part time with my girl friends and part time with my boy friends and part time with both. I did not choose to define these situations as *dating*. For the very small number of my high school friends who were headed immediately to college after graduation, the message was quite clear. Our parents individually and collectively gave very similar messages to each of us about sexuality, marriage, pregnancies, and even casual sexual exploration. While quite a few of my high school classmates were pregnant at graduation, none of us in the college bound group were even seriously dating anyone. We were just hanging out with each other in a wide-ranging series of always-shifting alliances.

As an old woman looking back, I joke with myself that by age 18 I had become an ice lady. I had taken my sexuality and put it in chains. I had dreams for my life that did not involve babies and husbands or even lovers.

The Story of Sexual Violence

Sexual violence was simply unknown to me. My parents, my clan, my extended community and even I myself had formed patterns of watchful behavior which kept me safe. It is not that I knew how to avoid sexual violence and violation. I was never in the time and place which a sexual predator could use. I was *anywhere but here* in terms of potential sexual predators.

In addition, the boys in my ordinary life were nice boys, good boys. We usually visited in my family's living room – as they drummed their drums, pounded on the family piano, or just hung out doing nothing much at all. We did each other's homework and didn't see it as cheating. We continued to ride our bikes maniacally through town – shouting threats at each other at the top of our voices – daring each other to ride without using the handle-bars; at top speeds without stopping for stop signs. It was monkey see – monkey do. We were, in essence, good friends from early childhood, not sexualized potential mates.

The Umwelt of my time and place was one in which every family knew every other family. Nice boys and nice girls were known to every parent just as they were known to every kid, every teacher and every other adult. Now as an adult woman

I also recognize that my family's social position in this small town meant that few people were willing to risk messing with me. My dad's clan was omnipresent and all were known to be very protective of their children. I lived for the first twenty years of my life inside this protective tent and took it for granted. Someone related to me – or a close personal friend of one of my relatives - was always watching my back so that I was free to explore the world with freedom and safety. This also meant, of course, that any serious misbehavior or even dangerous behavior would also be observed and reported to my parents.^{xiii}

It was, therefore, in my post-college professional life where I first learned about rape, incest, spouse battering, and other forms of interpersonal violence. By the time I was twenty-five I was not naïve but my knowledge was second hand - that of a professional person rather than first-hand - that of a victimized woman.

Coming of Age

In my particular journey through adult life, I have worked to understand issues of human sexuality and issues of human violence. Once the ice woman melted, I tried to learn about life by experimentation, conversations with friends and teachers, and by reading. I learned very soon that adulthood was not accompanied by an infallible – or even very reliable - instruction manual. Trial and error was an essential aspect of every adult's life. Along the way, I made mistakes and missteps but I tried to learn the lesson of each mistake and each misstep so I would not repeat it.

My feminism and my professional activism arrived whole and, as it were, in the same breath. In the background of their arrival were two social realities: (1) the American Civil Rights Movement led by American black people and (2) my age cohort's protest movement against America's war in Vietnam. As a very young clinician, living in the midst of these two American social rights movements, I embedded myself in the emergent women's health movement. I attended conferences and older women scholars and researchers befriended and mentored me. It was not hard for me to understand that women's rights were related to the civil rights of African Americans and the human rights of very ordinary Vietnamese families who lived inside a war zone.

Gendered Violence as a Cultural Form

As a second wave feminist, it was inevitable that I would hear stories of sexual violence and domestic violence. And while the first rape story I ever heard as a mental health clinician taught me how much I did not know, I was not shocked by its telling. It was, instead, as if the second shoe had dropped. The patriarchal ethos once more, as it had in the American South during the preceding centuries of American apartheid and as it had in the 1960's war zones of Southeast Asia, revealed its socially violent and corrupt methodologies of authoritarian control and domination.

The First Shoe

Sometime during the early 1970's, the first shoe had dropped. This happened as I was working alongside a graduate student in a large University Medical Center. I was appalled to hear first responders yell from the electric door into the emergency room admission desk, *here is that rape we called you about*. I was instantly enraged at the callous disregard for the sad-and-distressed-looking woman who accompanied this loud and pretentious male voice. She was not a rape; she was a woman who had been raped. I made an instantaneous decision that I was going to protest this unprofessional and ignorant behavior. What ever professional currency I had built up in this particular emergency room was going to be spent on behalf of this woman and other raped women who entered its doors in the future. I could not change her experience but I thought to myself, *by god I will change this organizational milieu. This kind of loud and insensitive announcement will not be tolerated in the future*. The medical director and the nursing services supervisor of this emergency room were friends of mine and I knew I was headed into a professional but also confrontational chat. I was quite certain that I could not change their staff's behavior but I knew they could. Medicine and nursing are both based on military models of command and obedience. Commanded by one's supervisors to stop this kind of rude and dehumanizing shouting, it would be a very unwise individual who continued to do it.

I immediately began to deconstruct what had just happened with the graduate student intern I was working alongside. I was responsible for her clinical practicum and she needed to hear from me, directly and immediately, that this kind of obnoxious clinical behavior was totally unacceptable. She needed, as well, to hear my strategy for change because in just a year or two she would be a nurse supervisor and administrator herself. She needed to think about her own values and about how she would approach such a situation when she encountered it in her own practice. She needed to think through how she could use her own anger at injustice as an internal guide to what she needed to do if she was going to become an effective and deliberate change agent in situations of inept and bad care.

Every survivor of rape or domestic violence or incest that I met in my subsequent professional life, benefitted from my instantaneous experience of compassion and empathy for this woman – whom I never met personally – and my blazing rage at uncaring and unprofessional health care behaviors – behaviors which continued to victimize her by dehumanizing her experiences.

The Second Shoe

The second shoe fell almost five years later when I headed a student counseling service and heard my first date rape story. In group supervision, I mentioned this experience and within less than 48 hours I heard a second story from a colleague

who was also a member of the group supervision team. I immediately intuited something that has proven true. When the story of a rape victim is spoken out loud in a compassionate or sympathetic manner, it frees other victims to come forward. Speaking professionally about rape in public has always meant in my experience that additional stories will emerge. Writing a web-published book has taught me that the principal holds: even in such an abstract and non-personal communication media, individuals will contact the author.

Since these events, first as a supervisor of clinicians-in-training and later as a student life counselor of undergraduate students, I have seen one task or calling of my life to involve raising awareness about the many different forms of sexual and gender violence issues needing study and resolution.

Deliberately Choosing to Enter the Enchanted Forest

Almost fifteen years later as a rape crisis line volunteer and rape survivor group co-leader, I, for the first time, deliberately chose to enter the enchanted forest to learn what it could teach me. Once I knew what I needed to know; once I had learned the lessons I needed to be taught. I was intellectually prepared repeatedly, by my choices, to re-enter this damnable and treacherous forest. No one, however, ever mentioned to me that spiritual and emotional preparation was just as essential as academic clinical training.

To summarize: a sexually violent culture captured my attention very early in my clinical career and I have worked to understand it ever since then. However, there has been no Archimedes moment in my life to fully capture the root causes and memetic structure of this form of violence – unless one understands these causes and structure to be the patriarchy itself.

Today, my personal and professional priorities continue to be (1) stopping men's violence towards women and their children and (2) treating the residual emotional and spiritual wounds of violence, violation and betrayal. By definition, therefore, I am interested in prevention.

Metaphors about Collegiality inside the Sexual Violence Forest

In a long conversation about the activism and healing work that the Rev. Dr. Thomas Doyle and his colleagues are doing inside their denomination, the Roman Catholic Church of America,^{xiv} my nephew Carl critiqued my understanding and interpretation of inter-religious collegiality. In my own internal metaphor system, I have seen the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation functioning as a Grand Canyon like divide separating Doyle (and other Roman Catholic sexual violence and clericalism advocates) from their Protestant or other world religion counterparts. We collectively needed, I thought, to learn how to build footbridges across this religious divide – bridges on which anti-violence activists could approach each other for information and for support.

Listening carefully to my metaphor and explanation, Carl began to question me about the usefulness of such visual metaphors as deep canyons and hastily constructed and narrow foot bridges.

In their place he argued that there is another way to conceptualize the realities of denominational distances and the concomitant reality of Catholic's and Protestant's social and theological ignorance of each other's work. He wondered if it might not be more useful to see the sexual violence landscape as having many internal pathways. Using my metaphor of the sexual violence landscape as an enchanted forest, there is likely to be more than one way into and then through it.

Rather than seeing Roman Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist, Jewish, and secular anti-violence activists (or even clinicians and theologians) as moving towards each other on hastily and tenuously constructed hanging bridges, might we not be better served by a metaphor of trails and hiking paths? Walking through the enchanted landscape of sexual violence studies and research protocols on many different and perhaps even somewhat parallel paths, each of us is, therefore, in the same toxic, malignant enchanted forest, doing the work we see in front of us to do. We may, therefore, meet as colleagues and friends or we may not.

In such a metaphor, there are many gateways into the Umwelt of sexual violence advocacy. Each gateway represents one pathway. Each pathway represents, therefore, a specific human being who carries specific wisdom, knowledge, or perhaps even a specific sense of call. No one pathway replicates any other pathway. No one pathway dominates the forest. No one pathway repudiates other pathways. No one helper's life journey into this enchanted forest replicates or duplicates another person's.

In such a model, each helper's life and each activist's work of dedicated service form a unique pathway into the Umwelt of human predation, human criminality, human evil, and human suffering. Each witness' life history provides us with a clue about the gateway he or she has used to enter the dangerous and enchanted forest of sexual violence advocacy.

Each person seeking to create a helper's path through this enchanted landscape needs to know that there are other advocates already at work inside the forest. They are also seeking to help others. Each witnessing and helping individual inside the toxic forest needs to know that she is not an only. Each needs to know he is not alone. In order to create escape exits for everyone captured inside the enchantment of affinity acts of sexual violence, many different kinds of workers and helpers are needed. Each has a role and each has a task.

Whether or not witnessing individuals ever meet, whether or not they ever befriend each other, the work each one does inside this treacherous landscape compliments and in some way or another enhances and extends the work of

others. The search for methodologies of understanding, healing and disenchantment is, therefore, a communal search.

Concluding Remarks

Today, it is clear to me that workers inside the enchanted realm of sexual violence advocacy work – those whom I call the witnesses – need each other. No one can do all the work that needs to be done. No one should have to bear the emotional and spiritual burden of anti-violence advocacy work alone.

In this particular series of essays, I begin to explore the intersection of the victims' stories with the stories of their helpers, witnesses, and advocates. I look to the prophetic traditions of Jewish and Christian Scriptures for help in gaining an understanding of what has gone wrong that today's religious leaders and institutions have become part of the victims' problems with encountered forms of abuse rather than a reliable guide to their healing.

These essays are, therefore, profoundly anchored in the personal voice. I bring to their writing the person I have become and the questions that I still have. There is, therefore, no attempt to create a pseudo-sense of academic objectivity. Along the way – where I engage in conversation with others, I attempt to document the words of theirs which I use as conversational triggers. I am always in dialogue with others. As are all human beings, I have been profoundly shaped in my life by my encounters with others. In these essays, I attempt to deal honestly and fairly with the contributions of others to my life and to my thinking. Even those individuals who sought intently to harm me have become my teachers. In retrospect I understand the words of a dying man in Rachel Remen's oncology practice – a man who saw his enemies as important because they made his work better.^{xv}

Sexual Violence is the Kudzu of Christianity



Jack Anthony^{xvi}

I've been thinking about my recent conversations with a wide variety of Mennonite women and men regarding affinity sexual abuse and their encounters with the structural violence of clericalism^{xvii} inside the Institutional Christian Church.

One evening as I was reading yet another article about Post-traumatic Stress Disorders, this visual metaphor appeared. I recalled seeing tree groves entirely covered with Kudzu on various professional trips in the American South. The next morning I went surfing on the World Wide Web for images. The photograph below is the perfect visual metaphor. When ignored and mismanaged, Kudzu takes over. Eventually if its roots are not destroyed, this noxious vine chokes the landscape. Unaddressed, sexual abuse done in God's name by religious leaders has a similar reality – it chokes healthy religious life for individuals and for the collective whole.



Jack Anthony^{xviii}

Years ago I watched a good friend of mine declare war on Kudzu in Birmingham when she took ownership of her new home there. She needed to use some civilian variation of Agent Orange and lots of muscle power to get it under control and if she didn't work regularly at keeping her property weeded and clean, Kudzu threatened to take over again.

The back story here is Mathew Fox's writings.^{xix} He^{xx} and I^{xxi} have both have had vivid night-time dreams about the crumbling structural edifices of the Institutional Roman Catholic Church.

I like the image at the top of this page – the rustic old house metaphorically can represent the Christian church in all of its permutations as it fails to eradicate its own spiritual Kudzu – enabled, protected and concealed gender-based harassment and multiple manifestations of affinity sexual violence as well as the secondary violence of clericalism done by *religious leaders against the laity; by believer against believer*.

Once we know even partially the demographics of religious leader violence and abuse inside the borders of Christendom, the Christian Church we once loved and trusted dies. Its spiritual shell is abandoned and its transformative foundations crumble.

The cultural institution and its buildings, buttressed by history, money, status, social connections to the powerful, cultural prestige, and power, may continue to live. But its institutionalized spiritual power to transform and heal humanity's wounds is dead.

There are many forms of abuse inside religious institutions: sexual abuse, financial abuse, physical abuse, spiritual abuse, economic abuse, verbal abuse, gender abuse, sexual orientation abuse, ethnic abuse, religious abuse, skin color abuse, emotional abuse, psychological abuse, etc. Multiple forms of abuse are endemic in the Christian community and they have passed forward through succeeding historical eras unchecked. Twenty-first century institutional Christianity is pervaded by all of them. All represent a corrupted will to dominate and a corrupted intention to control. All represent spiritual dry rot. All use the patriarchal impulses or personal needs of denominational leaders to control the people and to manipulate them. All of these personal and institutional needs for domination and control represent the superordinate consciousness and weaponry of the global patriarchy.

Inside today's Christian community its hierarchs and oligarchs are fiddling fancy dance songs while their church-house is taken hostage by a spiritually, morally and intellectually immature and corrupt clergy. Inside the crumbling structures of religious faith, the church's ruling elites are eating the finest chef-designed meals while their people suffer spiritual deprivation and malnourishment. Perhaps

ancient Rome's Nero has somehow or other managed to re-incarnate himself as a twenty-first century Christian Church ruler.

New research indicates that 1 in 100 Americans diagnostically represent some form of sociopathy. This research will need to be replicated. But let's assume that 1 in 1000 Americans have a major character disorder. When we put that kind of statistic side-by-side with sociologist Anson Shupe's findings that organized religions tend to attract individuals with character disorders into leadership positions then it becomes visible that Christianity has a major problem.^{xxii}

Outsourcing the Gospel to the Liability Insurance Lawyers^{xxiii}

What you do to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you do it to me, Jesus once proclaimed.^{xxiv} That essential message of the Christian gospels is forgotten as the dishonesty and abuse of religious institution clericalism – its unique form of structural violence Kudzu unrelentingly creeps towards its final choking control.

When the church's victims and victim advocates and healers become its enemies, the church as a spiritual institution is dead. When its living prophets are ignored and defamed, there is no possibility for self-correction. Consequently, there is no healing for the wounds the church inflicts on its members and the general society at large.^{xxv}

Those of us who are Mennonites have historically claimed the outrageous premise that all forms of interpersonal and social violence are at all times and in all places forbidden to Christ's followers. We have tended over the centuries, however, to think of this violence only in terms of war and the civil government's use of the state's powers including the death penalty.^{xxvi} We have been taught that when threatened by or victimized by intended violence towards us, we should not resist. We are frequently admonished to love our enemies and to do good to those who hate us. We are admonished to forgive 490 times. Our persecuting enemies, in this model, are outside the community of faith.

In this kind of spiritual teaching, we abandon the victims of affinity violation to their victimizers. We forget that Jesus also taught that anyone who harms his little and vulnerable ones – the insignificant little ones of any age – would be better off being drowned than allowed to continue their violations.^{xxvii}

We do not see that our addiction to, internal tolerance for and denial of sexual harassment, sexual violence and domestic abuse have gutted the living peace witness of our denomination.^{xxviii} We do not seem to collectively comprehend that the presence of affinity violations demands individual and communal accountability as the price of healing.

Our Mennonite criticism of other Christian communities for their willingness to accept the need for and participation in the nation-state's violence is at times so dense as to be almost impenetrable to outsiders. Yet, inside the living sociological Mennonite community of faith and praxis we seem to have forgotten the scriptural premise that we are each called to self-examination, repentance and conversion for our own enabling and complicit participation in social evils. We have forgotten the radical Anabaptist message that inside the community of faith we are all to be held accountable to each other for our actions. We have chosen to ignore our faith ancestors' insistence that the deed we actually do is more important than the dogma we preach.

Jewish scriptures and Christian scriptures are both uncompromising in their insistence that the people of God can become corrupted by idolatrous power and wealth. When this happens they lose the ability to participate in God's transforming powers in the world. Spiritual kudzu masquerades as a healthy landscape even as it chokes out diversity and makes the landscape unlivable.

Anywhere but Here



Tiger and Camouflage^{xxix}

Virtually everyone leaves a trail behind them in the form of tracks, objects, relationships, official documents, and the memories of others. These bits and pieces are preserved in their environments, though they may be scattered across it like shards. The writer's job is to find them, sort them, and assemble them in such a way that offers the reader a coherent collage of that character.

John Vaillant^{xxx}

The Tiger as Teacher

In John Vaillant's book, *The Tiger*,^{xxxi} he reports that Clark Barrett, a professor in the anthropology department at UCLA and an expert on predator-prey dynamics describes a deer's advantage as the **anywhere but here principle** (emphasis his): all a prey animal needs to do is be anywhere the predator isn't – it doesn't matter if it is a foot away or a hemisphere – and it will live another day.

*The predator, on the other hand, must be **exactly** (his) where its prey is, and at exactly the same moment, or it will starve. Thus for a predator mastery of time and space – in addition to a thorough understanding of terrain and prey behavior – are crucial. Pack hunting, of course, increases the odds enormously, but unlike the wolf or the lion, the tiger is a solo stealth hunter and, thus, has a far more challenging task. Possessing neither the endurance to run his prey down, nor the numbers to surround and harry it, the tiger's method must instead resemble that of the lone assassin. It must insert itself almost intravenously into its prey's Umwelt – an Umwelt it must be noted, that has evolved over millions of years to be exquisitely sensitive to the presence of felid predators.*

Making matters more difficult is the fact that tiger prey typically travel in herds. With their dozens of eyes, ears, and noses, and their decades of collective tiger-evading experience, a herd of deer or boar can be as vigilant and jumpy as a Secret Service detail.

*In order to subvert this, the tiger must embody a contradiction: this large, pungent, extraordinarily charismatic animal must achieve a state of virtual nonexistence while operating **inside** (his) the sphere of its prey's highly attuned senses.*

Witnesses, native and Russian alike, agree that there is something almost metaphysical about the tiger's ability to will itself into nonbeing – to, in effect cloak itself. In the Bikin Valley it is generally believed that if a tiger has decided to attack you, you will not be able to see it. With the exception of the polar bear, which also hunts by stealth, there is no other large mammal this big whose survival depends on its ability to disappear (pp. 165-166).

The Human Predator

When we look at sexual abusers and their supervisors and the agencies which hide their abusive and violent deeds from public awareness, it might be appropriate to call these stealthy human abusers and their managerial protectors by the clinical name of sociopaths. They are extraordinarily skilled in assessing potential victims. They are skilled at avoiding detection. Their stealth and cunning is well honed and exquisitely well-timed. They become invisible at will. There is a sense in which it might be possible to call their pre-victimization efforts to lure and capture victims as efforts at gaining domination, in short, a form of cultural as well as individual enchantment.

As master predators they are extraordinarily skilled in grooming their victims by confusing and intimidating them. Sighted at all, they are persuasive in their postures of piety and their declarations of innocence. They are exquisitely skilled in avoiding detection. Like the tiger, they mesmerize their prey *and* the hunter who would, in his turn, locate them, identify them and stop them. These are no ordinary predators. They are predators at the top of their particular game. They are the polar stars of sexual predation. They are metaphorically like the cunning and resourceful man-hunting tiger of Vallaint's story.

The umvelt of the overgrown enchanted forest of human victimization is home to them. They know every trail, every briar patch, every bramble bush, and every fetid cave. They have marked every tree and every stone. They know how to make their intentions invisible to their intended prey. Moving in on their victims, their stealth protects them from detection until too late.

A predatory tiger is deadly – no matter how intelligent, charismatic, elegant and majestic its beauty. The same is true of human predators.

The Human Religious Institution Umwelt

Believing their authority to be challenged by lesser beings, in this case the laity, the Christian Church's abusive human leaders in their robes, stoles, and priestly shoes embody another kind of majestic and regal elegance. They possess authority. They claim to speak in God's voice. They pronounce that only they know the singular path to salvation and eternal life for a particular community of God's people. Only they can mediate the angry God's wrath.^{xxxii} Inside their clerical role and status, they demonstrate human power. Wielding religious language and performing acts of liturgical piety, they, like the unseen wild tiger in its forest umwelt, can hide inside the religious umwelt of liturgical and spiritual hypocrisy.

In much the same way that a predatory tiger seeking retaliatory retribution is deadly – no matter how majestic and charismatic its beauty, so too are these privileged and charismatic human beings destructive when they turn against their people. In disdainful narcissistic rage and callous self-protective acts of punishing revenge, their graceful liturgies and their elegant vestments conceal powerful human predators. These deeply and publicly religious but largely a-spiritual men and women strike against the vulnerable with the power of their position, with the charisma or their personalities and with the full force of their status and authority.

The Sexual Abuse and Clericalism Umwelt

The Christian Church's victims know what most individuals – outsiders to the abuse umwelt - refuse to acknowledge. Interpersonally and socially abusive religious leaders have stolen something from them – breaking the acceptable code of the human religious umwelt. Inside their encounters with individual acts of clergy sexual and physical violence and inside their subsequent encounters with religious institution structural violence, the bond of trust that creates and maintains the religious umwelt has been forever broken.^{xxxiii}

In addition, in a similar way, the victim's inner spiritual umwelt has also been forever altered as well. What was once trusted is now mistrusted. What was once believed is now disbelieved. What was once beautiful is now ugly. What was once comforting is now alienating and discomforting. That which was once seen as noble and uplifting, is now recognized as ignoble and degrading. That which was most sacred has been desecrated. That which was once understood as representing God's voice has become identified with the voice of the Devil. In their encounters with corrupt clergy, the survivors of clergy abuse discover that their belief in, desire for, and trusting search for transcendence ultimately became an emotional and spiritual tar pit of personal entrapment.

Yet, with help, survivors of clergy sexual abuse may create healthy and meaningful post-abuse lives for themselves. They may, by listening to and honoring the transformative power of their wounds, create a new pathway for

themselves and others – a path that leads them out of enchantment into meaningful, lasting, and trusting relationships with others. As they seek healing they may encounter the divine as well as the human in new ways.

With help from supportive others and by committed inner work a clergy abuse survivor can escape the emotional and spiritual tar pits in which she or he has been entrapped. While perhaps unable to precisely re-create the life that was theirs prior to victimization, abuse survivors can, nevertheless, in this present moment, create a viable and meaningful life that has meaning, purpose, and close relational ties with others.

The Predator's Spiritual Situation

In an unconscious form, the individual tells the story of what once happened to him in the name of the high ideals of his upbringing... People do to others what was done to them.

Alice Miller^{xxxiv}

What clergy sexual predators and their malfeasant supervising administrators seem to overlook is revealingly simple. In the acts of abusing and victimizing some one else – out of a vengeful spirit (or some other obsessive, malicious or even criminal motivation) individual and collective predators contaminate their own inner spirituality and their outer communal worlds. They not only corrupt the victim's religious and spiritual Umwelt: they soil, stain and corrupt their own. They not only destroy their victims' lives. Eventually, by their mean-spirited, aggressive and violent actions against vulnerable others, their own inner lives are blemished and then eventually over time transformed. Taking on the permanent identity of sexual abuser, they are forever changed.

They, like their victims, are entrapped. This time, however, they are entrapped in their illusive and narcissistic belief that they are superior to other human beings. Looking on, however, from the perspectives of depth psychology, the outside observer wonders whether their entrapment first began in deep personal wounds – these then projected wounds of inferiority, the wounds of cynical ambition, the wounds of the need to control and to dominate, the wounds of sociopathic violence, and the addictive wounds of being unable to attach to others in trust, in love and in reciprocal mutuality.

Choosing to embody, in such violent ways, the shadow aspects of the priestly archetype, one wonders about the inner life of these individuals. What terrors in the night awaken them? What potions and rationalizations do they use to quiet and self-medicate the inner awareness of their growing isolation from others? What means do they use to silence the voice of their inner conscience? How, in the most self-intimate and private moments of their lives, do they justify themselves to themselves?

The human tar pit of their entrapment is no less deadly than the evil one in which they trapped their victims. In reality, it may be even more deadly. Not only do individuals who are betrayed by violence experience the wounds of post-betrayal syndromes, so too do individuals who betray and violate others.

But, by never asking for help and by never acknowledging the harmful wounds they have personally and collectively inflicted on vulnerable individuals, these priestly predators may never get free of their estranged entrapment. The path to healing for predatory and abusive individuals is to recognize and acknowledge the damage they have done, make a full confession, and change their abusive behavior for ever. This is similar to and just as difficult a journey that an enlightened camel might attempt to make through the eye of a needle. But without full accountability and full repentance, there can be no healing for abusers of other people. The needle's eye is a narrow one – it consists of deep feelings of remorse and a committed intentionality to change. It usually means recognizing that the self is powerless to change the addictive nature of abusive and dominating behavior and the concomitant need to ask others for help in breaking free.

Victimization and the Crumbling Church

Collectively, therefore, the corrupted priestly caste may become the wooly mammoths and saber toothed tigers of their contemporary religious Umwelt. Uncorrected by reform and transformation, Matthew Fox's dreamlike vision of a crumbling Roman Catholic Vatican-led church may become its realized future.^{xxxv} Then, in some perhaps not-too-distant future, abusive clergy and their corrupt and hypocritical institutional home, the now-dead and crumbled church, will be seen as only ancient memories or viewed as archaic, lifeless fossils.

When I first read Fox's vision, I recalled a solitary hike on back paths inside a tropical forest in northern Guatemala. I was alone on a hidden and little used trail at Tikal and on every side of this deserted and obscured trail there were unexcavated buildings - remnants of a pre-Columbian Maya kingdom. These ancient and magnificent temples and other outlying structures built by master stonemasons were now in ruins and they were covered with centuries of dirt, vines and tree roots.

While some elements of that ancient belief system remain alive among today's indigenous citizens of Guatemala, it is no longer the driving cultural and religious belief system of the nation and its people. Other gods have invaded the once all-powerful temples of shamans, priests, and god-kings. Other ideologies prevail. Another world culture predominates.

No religion will survive forever if it is (1) morally corrupt, (2) spiritually bankrupt, and (3) does not serve its people and their needs.

An Interlude: Mystical reading

Emotional access to the truth is the *indispensable precondition* (emphasis hers) of healing. In the long run, we can only function with consciousness of the truth.

Alice Miller^{xxxvi}

I think that there are no accidents in mystical, revelatory reading. Here I am in America's Southwest on a sweltering 2012 July afternoon following a subtle intuition about "needing" to read Vaillant's book for some reason or other. While I have several friends for whom the tiger is a spiritual totem and guiding spirit, I never would have guessed upon picking up this book about the king of the feline world that its spirit totem would grab my attention and say to me, *Listen up! These words about me can teach you about human predators. My search for vengeance can teach you about human desires for revenge. Pay attention. I can teach you things about predatory vengeance that you never thought to ask.*

In my quiet times since reading this book I have returned to the sense of the tiger's "words" and have wondered, *does animal predation for food – or vengeance for wrongs done to it in its own world view (as in the case of Vaillant's tiger) - have any similarities to human predation for power? Can animal dominance behaviors teach us anything about acts of human dominance? Can I/we learn anything from this narrative about a very dangerous tiger that will help us to understand the situation of sexual predation by religious leaders? Does, just perhaps, the human sexual predator begin to offend from motives for revenge? This particular tiger moved beyond the need to kill for food to a driven need to kill for revenge. What is there about the driven inner need for revenge that drives human predators?*

The Christian Patriarchy

*When God is male
Then men become gods.*

Mary Daly^{xxxvii}

The first-person stories about clergy sexual violence which I know personally and the written stories that I read rip apart my serenity and break my female spirit into paranoid shards. Encountering them causes me to retreat deep inside myself to that inner silent place where there are no words at all. Without words, there is just a silent but certain understanding that sexual predation *is* the central, animating story of violent patriarchal cultures – including that of today's institutionalized Christianity. Male-dominated Christianity as a socio-cultural institution could not exist as it is now configured without the abusive isolation of

women from positions of leadership and the sexual-physical violation of women and children done to them by Christian men they know.

Patriarchy, by definition, needs men's violence to maintain its hold on human consciousness and action. As a particularized form of male authoritarianism, sexual violence is the methodology by which sexually and physically abusive men drive vulnerable women and children into isolation, silence, submission, and powerlessness. Sexual violence is the quintessential story of patriarchal authority and its many violently embodied forms of dominating control.

Clergy sexual violence reinforces a clergy predator's authority and power even as it diminishes a woman's or a child's personal abilities to control her or his own life decisions in safety and harmony. Sexually violent men subvert the woman's and the child's rightful personal stash of safety, human trust, personal authority and power. They do this because of the assumptions of patriarchal cultures that men are the head of creation. They, not the woman and certainly not the child, represent divinity. Their consequent acts of sexual abuse represent the omnipotent and omnipresent assumption now made flesh that the woman and her child are here to serve the man. For sexually violent men this includes the demand that the woman or child service the man's sexual desire by submitting to his driving erection. The acts of male sexual violence serve the patriarchy by silencing the woman's challenges to the presence of coercive sexual behavior as a male right and privilege. Rape, for example, becomes a liturgical male rite of patriarchal solidarity with other men. The primary purpose of this male ritual act is to gain and express male dominance by disempowering the violated woman or child. Secondly, it expresses the perpetrator's disdain for all women and all children.

Rape is the preferred methodology of the patriarchy because it is so feared by its human objects. Not only does an actual encounter with rape forever alter a woman's life: her anticipatory fear of rape does so as well. Rape's presence in the patriarchal world teaches women to limit their lives so they avoid encountering its raw violence.

While these acts of male-dominant and male-entitled violence disempower an individual's life, they also subsequently disempower the lives of every woman and child in their realm of influence because they use fear as a weapon of control. The contamination of sexual violence fear spreads rapidly and non-discriminately among women. Thus, one individual act of rape can disempower an entire community of women. Depending on the reach of the narrative, hundreds or even thousands of women may be terrorized, and thus disempowered, by one rapist's single violent act against one woman or one child.

The Penis: Patriarchy's Assault Weapon

When any man decides to use his penis as a weapon, he represents the dominating will of the patriarchy. When he decides to use his hands as weapons, he embodies the guiding ideologies of the patriarchy. When he decides to use abusive, debasing, and threatening language, he speaks for and in the name of the patriarchy.

In addition, when any male-led religious institution seeks to protect and cover-up individual and collective acts of sexual violence against others, its leaders express the divine will of the patriarchy. When they tell lies, they demonstrate its living soul. When they slander their accusers, they represent the breath of the patriarchy. When they commit acts of character assassination or attack the economic security of victims and survivors or their allies and helpers, they embody the sacramental real presence of the patriarchy. When they pretend to be that which they are not and that which they know they are not, they express the spiritual hypocrisy of the patriarchy.

A Twentieth-Century Hermeneutic

The contemporary (1984-2013) Roman Catholic chapter in its centuries old story about pedophile priests has illuminated my questions about sexual and domestic violence inside Mennonite communities. This outcome, in a certain sense is logical and, perhaps even, pre-ordained. Mennonites, after all, share the same scriptures and much of the same hermeneutic of Christianity and its living history with other Christians. In addition, it shares the historical Catholic Church's first sixteen centuries. The tenacious hold of the Christian patriarchy was well-established before the breaches of Christian unity represented by the Eastern Orthodox schism (1054 CE) and the Protestant schism (1517 CE) occurred.

Thus, current Roman Catholic authors and activists have begun to provide all Christians with descriptive and analytical language to use in thinking about spiritual leader criminality. The religious Umwelt of their contemporary worldwide Catholic Church appears on its surface to be quite different from that of the American Mennonite Church but the abuse narratives and the hermeneutical controversies of the two faith communities are very similar. Inside both denominations, clergy sexual misconduct abusers are protected by other clergy and religious leaders. In both denominations, power-driven and institution-protective cover-ups are visible.

In addition, the work by Kramer and Alstad^{xxxviii} indicates that abuse narratives in eastern religions look and feel very much like those of Western Christianity. Religious leader and spiritual institution authoritarianism appears to be a common denominator across patriarchal religious and denominational boundaries.

Philosopher-Psychologist Sam Keen offers a set of warning principles that can serve to guide individuals as well as entire religious communities. I abstract and summarize these below. Where I have italicized an item, this is a direct quotation. Keen's warning about corrupt religious leaders applies to many different religious and spiritual traditions.^{xxxix}

- Be cautious with charismatic leaders, authorities who are unquestioned by their peers and followers, folks who claim to have the only pure, holy, divinely revealed and infallible pathway to truth;
- Be wary of individuals who fascinate, captivate and overwhelm others;
- Be suspicious of any leader who insists that he (or his people) have the only understanding of truth or faithfulness;
- Avoid those who demand obedience as the sign of faithfulness and loyalty;
- *Look carefully at a spiritual leader's personal life. Does he or she deal with money, power, and sex in an open and admirable manner (p. 115);*
- *Check to see if a spiritual leader has friends, peer relationships, and a community of equals – or only disciples. I distrust anyone who claims to have achieved universal compassion but lacks the capacity for simple friendship. Friends keep us honest. When a leader has only disciples and devotees, he or she gets very little honest feedback or criticism. The ability to deal with others as equals is a necessary element in any authentic spirituality (p. 115);*
- Notice if the expression of differences in opinion is fostered and encouraged. Can individuals who are “in charge” publicly acknowledge that they don't know absolute and infallible truth;
- Be careful of any individual or group that demands absolute loyalty and behavioral obedience to a cause, a specific formula for and pathway to truth, a person, or a community;
- Look out for an absence of humor – humorlessness is a sign of personal and community rigidity – a sign of implicit emotional and psychological tyranny.

Rabbi Rami Shapiro in his spiritual advice column also addresses the question of abusive spiritual leaders in the following manner.

If your teacher makes you feel powerless, demands to be worshipped, or suggests that sexual intimacy with him or her is the gateway to union with God, I'd leave immediately and find a better teacher.^{x1}

Inside religious and spiritual teaching centers institutional secrecy and hypocrisy about sexuality and power litter the religious landscape like downed leaves in October. This is true of the current Roman Catholic Church in its management of its clergy sexual abuse and celibacy violations phenomena and it is true in the United States Mennonite Church as the institutional church attempts to do risk management and damage control in the wake of clergy sexual abuse behaviors and religious leaders' acts of adultery.

Both denominations (The Roman Catholic Church and The Mennonite Church) have cynically and hypocritically attacked or shunned insider-whistle-blowers. One consequence of this divide and conquer approach indicates an institutionally repressive denominational silence in the face of clergy sexual violence and criminality. It represents managerial cynicism about administrator and institutional transparency. It represents the authoritarian and patriarchal will of coercive power. It avoids, therefore, institutional transparency and accountability.

One thing that is different is that a group of Roman Catholic intellectuals – unlike most Mennonite ones - have decided to talk and write (in public) about the sexual abuse and clericalism phenomena in their denomination in order to see if there is a way to penetrate and then transform this particular enchanted forest. Another difference is that large numbers of clergy victims have made audacious and life-changing decisions to go public in order to support other victims and to offer a collective protest. The story of Roman Catholic acts of clergy violation and clergy corruption is, therefore, no longer hidden in the shadows. Anyone who seeks to understand it can find trustworthy guides and resources. In contrast, many Mennonite stories remain obscured and hidden.

Yet another difference is that the Roman Catholic discussion focuses on the violation done by male priests to pre-pubertal and post-pubertal adolescent boys. It is, therefore, in very interesting ways, a male-gendered and male-focused discussion. Thus, the role of the priest's penis and what he chooses to do or not do with it takes center stage. Obedient celibacy or disobedient non-celibacy at times appears to dominate the discussion of causality. These Roman Catholic male authors seem to see the issue as one of abusive genital sexuality rather than as an issue of patriarchal (and, therefore, by definition, authoritarian) domination, control and violence. In these books and articles, predators are male clergy and their victims are male children and adolescence. Reading these authors, one wonders at times if the abusive church is simultaneously a

recruitment organization and a highly-disciplined training boot camp for future abusers.

This male perspective offers a contrasting narrative to the one told among Mennonites which is mostly a female-gendered discussion. Mennonite women activists and victims have not focused on the ontologically embodied penis but have rather focused on sexual abuse as a violation of women's identity, power, personal authority, and self-control. Some have focused on the meaning of the personal attack as a cultural form of attempting to silence the entire community of Mennonite women. The act of sexual abuse is seen as one of methodology rather than as a biological event involving the abusive man's sexual organs. The theologically-buttressed ideology of patriarchy's causal role in clergy sexual abuse is, therefore, recognized by feminist Mennonite women.

This is an important difference because many Mennonite men, like their Catholic counterparts, have chosen to protect and defend known predators in the religious language of sin, confession, and obligatory forgiveness. Female subordination is seen as revolutionary when in fact it reinforces the masculine abusiveness of the religious as well as the secular commons.

The sin of sexual abusiveness in this model is viewed as sexual rather than an act of domination, idolatry or violence. It is, therefore, inside patriarchal cultures an understandable and forgivable male act. Here too the penis reigns. The man in the face of overwhelming physical urges simply lost control. He really meant no harm.

Inside the Mennonite community, the victim of clergy abuse is encouraged to forgive the sin and then to obediently yield to the reconciling will of the community as a whole. Threatening the unity of the faith community in an ethnic and clan-dominated church is more of a sin than is the act of sexual abuse which *only* threatens relatively powerless individuals. Not forgiving is perhaps an even greater sin than sexual violence. Victims are expected, therefore, to yield to the controlling obedience mandates of the patriarchal church regarding forgiveness and reconciliation. Victims, if they wish to stay included and involved in families, clans and denominational structures must, to protect the peace of the whole, remain non-visible and silent. If and when they do decide to speak, anonymity forms a tattered umbrella to shelter them from the denomination's clan-based-hostility towards them.

In general this means that women on the margins of the denominational church are much more knowledgeable about the internal violence of their denominational church toward its women and children than are individuals who remain in its center. Obfuscation and denial, therefore, form the spiritual core of resistance to truth-telling.

Homosexuality: A Diversionary Tactic

It is quite clear to me that the Roman Catholic Church's hierarchy and the Mennonite Church's hierarchy have both used twentieth-century debates about homosexuality as a diversionary tactic in their efforts to manage, hide and evade institutional transparency in situations of clergy sexual misconduct and acts of sexual violence.^{xli}

In both denominations it has been more politically expedient to expel homosexual individuals from the community than it has been essential to discipline abusive church executives, theologians, ethicists, peace activists, administrators, and clergy.^{xlii}

An Unanswered Question

I am personally unclear about how much the Roman Catholic discussion is also a discussion by victim allies and advocates with a homosexual orientation. While their discussion often focuses on abusive individuals with a homosexual orientation, individual activists and helpers do not openly declare their own orientation.

Certainly, the theme of homosexual priests surfaces and resurfaces in the stories told and in the stories analyzed. But the story tellers and narrators do not declare their personal sexual orientation. This aspect of the narrative is probably deliberately obscured because of Christianity's (and Catholicism's) religious and socio-political hostility to the scientific perception that homosexuality represents a normal (as in the sense of healthy) biological variation of the human genome.

It is quite clear in their official discussions that Roman Catholic and Mennonite mandated dogma and the common belief structures of lay individuals as well as that of ordained clergy deny that homosexual individuals are made in God's image. Inside the Mennonite Church nationwide, there have been many more public statements about the evils of a homosexual identity and lifestyle than there have been public statements about the evils of heterosexual clergy and religious leader sexual abuse and misconduct. There have been many more reprisals against individuals with a same sex orientation than there have been disciplinary management actions towards abusive clergy and religious leaders.

I know that among Mennonite women, the discussion and sexual predator confrontations to date have been also been muted, almost non-existent ones on the topic homosexuality – this is, I suppose, in part because the known and alleged offenders all appear, at least on the surfaces of the public narrative regarding their actions, to be heterosexual men – nearly all of them married. For a gay man or lesbian woman to discuss events of homosexual sexual abuse by a homosexual Mennonite clergy person or other religious leader, at this moment in Mennonite history, thus revealing personal sexual identity and orientation, would

be to re-open a socio-religious wound very few, if any, Mennonite gay men or Mennonite lesbian women would be willing to open.

Principles of feminist discourse about sexual violence

Among feminist scholars this kind of silence about where a scholar begins one's own work is unacceptable. Each of the personal identity social locations (gender, sexual orientation, professional backgrounds, family identity, denominational heritage) affects what can be observed, what can be known, and what can be spoken in the common Umwelt of the particular abuse-ridden religious forests in which we find ourselves. When feminist women urge scholars to declare their beginning presuppositions and point of departure, this is to avoid giving the impression that any one woman's perspective is the determinative perspective for all women. It represents the feminist creed that no one perspective represents the truth of all perspectives. There is, therefore, no universal revelation. To properly ascertain truth, multiple voices are needed. And the social location of those voices needs to be known.

Any reasonable exegesis of the question *what ails thee* includes awareness that corrupted leaders of corrupt institutions need to be brought to a position of full accountability for their actions. In addition, corrupted theologies, dogmas, and cultural forms of praxis which support authoritarianism, hypocrisy and abuse need to be identified, questioned and abandoned as false teaching.

A Detour into the Personal

I recall a specific guided imagery session at Oakwood Retreat Center (Syracuse, IN) in which clinician-teacher Frank Lawliss guided a group of his students on a "journey" through an imagery obstacle course. At each obstacle we had to problem-solve (inside altered states of consciousness) our way through or around a daunting physical obstacle (a raging river with no bridge or boat in sight, a solid concrete wall blocking all access to the road ahead, etc.) in order to continue the journey we were on. Nearing the end of the imagery journey, we were told that we stood at the head of a maze of roads all of them promising to lead us to the golden city we could see way off on the horizon. Standing in the middle of this confusing maze of possibilities, trying to figure out which road was the correct one to take, I remembered Rollo May's words to me so many years before....*the road you choose will determine the outcome of your life. If you choose this road or another road – even one centimeter away, the outcome will be different. This is the essence of awakened freedom – to choose and to know that by choosing, your future is irrevocably changed from what it might have been had you made other choices. Not knowing the nature of the road you choose or its outcome, you still must choose. Know also that refusing to choose is also a choice and that it too, therefore, also has consequences.*

Hardening the Arteries of Compassion

There is the well-known reluctance of many (perhaps most) religious individuals to pursue or even knowingly stumble across others' stories of their personal encounters with affinity violation and victimization. This reluctance is based, at least in part, on the perception or intuition that another's story of violence, violation, and their legitimate desires for revenge and vengeance create an interpersonal demand to respond. It is, or so we often presume, easier to avoid knowing and to become a complicit and, therefore, corrupted witness than to become a knowledgeable, healing or prophetic one. It is easier to live within states of denial than to hear and heed the awareness that another human being who is standing just next to us in the enchanted forest suffers and needs our help.

The Refusal to Act

But, perhaps more importantly, compassionate others – the witnesses, advocates and helpers who do not run away from others in pain, intuitively know that a refusal to act in a timely, persistent and principled manner will cost the victims of individual and structural violence even more. Delayed, principled awareness and action collects interest much like an unpaid bank credit card loan.

In like manner, they intuit that a refusal to act also changes an individual's identity and personality in very costly ways. Choosing to act or choosing not to act: each decision and each decision's subsequent actions irrevocably challenges and changes the person who faces into the terrible and unbearable knowledge of clergy sexual abuse and religious institution clericalism. In addition, the destination of their life journey is also changed and all subsequent decisions will reflect upon this decision regarding action or non-action.

Hecate's crossroad^{xliii}

The principle remains constant: bearing an informed witness to the violence done by one person against another person and learning to understand the victim's personal experiences of suffering changes the witness forever. Witnesses can move in the direction of compassion or they can move in the direction of an absence of compassion. The presence of vengeance desires and violent inner rages change the inner landscape or Umwelt of human consciousness and it changes every inhabitant of the Umwelt. In much the same way that the sexual victim's life and self has been scarred by the violence she has experienced, the witness' life will be seared and scarred by what she or he learns and observes.

When the gods place the coal of healing, prophecy, and peace-making on the tongue or in the hands of the witness, there is no escape from Hecate's crossroad. There can be no return to naïve unawareness. Whatever pathway the

witness chooses, the outcome of the life's ongoing journey is hidden in the mists of the future.

One can either become corrupted by refusing to act on that which one knows or one can begin to embrace and embody the calling to be a helper. The only enigma to be answered as we stand in Hecate's crossroad can be stated quite simply: in what direction do our decisions about bearing witness take us? Do we choose to move in the direction of psychic numbing and an ethic of blaming hostility and denial or do we choose to move in the direction of compassion and an ethic of involved care?

Prophet, witness, activist, healer, advocate, and peacemaker must wonder as they stand in the center of Hecate's crossroad – facing stories of sexual violence for the first time or for the hundredth time - whether anyone at all will remain trustworthy and loyal as they move towards a fully informed consciousness and its inevitable confrontation with injustice and evil. They must wonder if there is anything that resembles good left in the world.

Hearing simultaneously the siren call or the patriarchy to deny, to blame, to shun, to abandon, to attack, and to move away and the inner call of the authentic soft self or compassionate soul to serve others by moving closer to the story of violation, those called by the gods to be witnesses, healers, prophets, and peacemakers must inevitably wonder about the nature and respective wisdom of these contradictory calls. I think they must often question their own sanity. Inevitably they will ask questions about their own personal safety. The siren's call to remove oneself as rapidly as possible from the scene of this human-damaging disaster is very powerful. All of us have powerful self-protective urges and these can and often do serve to protect the self from seeing, hearing, knowing and acting. Witnesses, who decide to stay, often ask themselves how or even if they can survive this terrible knowing with an intact body-mind-spirit and community.

Not only authentic healers, prophets and peacemakers wander in the dank enchanted human landscape of sexual violence; the malicious crazies and the avoidant deniers do so as well. Their cacophonous voices serve to obscure the cries of the victims for help. Their accusations of blame litter every path inside the enchanted forest. Blaming the culture; blaming the victim; blaming the witness; blaming the advocate, blaming the media, blaming the courts, blaming the healer: they stand aside while the wounded pass in front of them. Averting their eyes and turning their backs, they refuse to directly and compassionately intervene to help these wounded ones. Like the idealistic but totally clueless young knight of the Grail legend, seeing the wounded pass by, they refuse to acknowledge what they see. They refuse to ask *what ails thee*. The forest's illusory light surrounds them and obscures the pathway to freedom.

Paying Attention to Tiger Wisdom

When hunting down and seeking to control the movements and actions of the vengeful tiger, the tiger hunter must understand that she or he inevitably will become a prey animal to the tiger. There is a certain sense, therefore, that no one should ever go tiger hunting unaccompanied by others who are also skilled tiger trackers and hunters.

One need in denominational abuse prevention efforts is to nurture and provide for the advocate's inner reserves and resources in order to stay alert, awake and observant about personal danger. Becoming one more victim of the institutional tiger's vengeance-fueled rage helps no-one. If, in confrontations with sexual predator narratives, one becomes overwhelmed by the stories of victim-experienced sexual violence, then the predator has overtaken the witness and healer and, symbolically at the very least, taken him or her hostage as prey. If, in conversations and confrontations with abusive church managers, one loses one's own footing in the spiritual world, then the predatory forces have claimed and silenced the witness's life journey.

The predator-prey archetype

This is, it seems to me, a good example of the dual constellating archetypes that Guggenbuhl-Craig^{xliv} discusses. I will call this particular archetype the predator-prey archetype. Each of us is capable of being a predator animal just as each of us is capable of being a prey animal. Buddhist teacher Jack Kornfield's^{xlv} wisdom that some form of spiritual discipline is essential if we are to keep an open and compassionate heart in the face of another's aggressive and hostile assaults against us (or others) is essential to comprehend.

To successfully search out and then tame or gain control over the predatory, human-destroying tiger, we must, as it were, keep the emotional wellness and spiritual alertness and physical wholeness tanks filled. We need to learn how to manage our inner predator by refusing to act in rage even as we learn to manage our inner prey by refusing to call on and be intimidated by our fears and terrors. In Lynn Andrew's books she teaches her readers to manage their quite understandable fears as a technique of learning how to avoid calling or luring ferocious human predators to attack.^{xlvi}

Managing Our Fears

Learning to manage our fears, angers, and other strong empathic emotional responses to our work is one essential aspect of healing the wounds that accrue during confrontations with others who have been wounded by sexual violence and secondarily wounded by corrupt institutional practices.

One way I devised to manage my own irrational fears about sexual violence was to identify these fears by name, face into them, and only then deliberately and with great care scan my immediate environmental surroundings to see if I was in actual physical or emotional danger. Identifying no realistic sources of danger in my immediate surroundings and understanding the intense irrationality of these paranoid fears, I deliberately began to think about Alaska. Once inside the beautiful imagery of Alaska's oceans and mountains, my fears subsided. Obviously, had I sensed or intuited or been in real danger, my now deliberate and thought-out response would have been a quite different one. In a situation of real danger, my autonomic nervous system responses would have immediately taken over my response patterns.

Guided imagery training teaches us that our inner bio-chemistry and psycho-neuro-immunological systems respond in much the same way to deliberately-created mental imagery as they do to the external events, people, and places we encounter in the real world. By deliberately shifting our attention and internal imagery, we change the inner emotional and physical response patterns. The autonomic nervous system's aroused perception of danger and the body's activation of the body's fight and flight response pattern quiets and we return to a state of emotional and physical homeostasis with all of its ordinary perceptual processes.^{xlvii}

Deliberately creating alternative imagery allows the short half-life of autonomic nervous system arousal and the body chemicals created during that arousal to subside.^{xlviii} The now-quieted inner space of physiological homeostasis provides us with a much more personally secure and realistic inner place to make decisions about responding to our experiences and our world. As the mind quiets, so too does the body. We can then sort our way through counter-transference arousal and realistic arousal. This gives us a more realistic and self-responsible foundation for action.

More Reflections about Predatory Behavior

We call sexually abusive individuals sexual predators. Some sexual misconduct offenders offend once or twice and, stopping their behavior, do not take on the identity of a chronic or recidivist sexual predator. This is the person Labacqz and Barton^{xlix} identify as a clergy individual or religious professional who has strayed one or two times and might even in some situations marry the object of his or her straying – seeing her or him as a soul mate or as the one true love of a lifetime. Whatever happens to this individual, he does not go on to become a habitual, repetitive or recidivist abuser. In Shupe's conceptualization of this situation, such an individual does not assume the personal identity of a sexual abuser.^l His is not a continuous predatory presence inside the human Umwelt.

To acknowledge this category of individual misconduct behavior is not to excuse it as unimportant. It is simply to acknowledge that everyone is capable of making

irrational behavioral choices with harmful consequences for the self and others. As such individuals learn from their life experiences, they continue to mature. They do not become recidivists.

Once, however, as Vailaint noted, the predatory tiger deliberately, revengefully and successfully hunts and kills humans, then he begins to be very dangerous to others inside the living human community. His initial success as a hunter of humans guides him to developing more skills in reading the human Umwelt and in taking down additional vulnerable and unprotected humans. The skills he learned stalking the boar and the deer are now applied to stalking human beings. Before he can be stopped by the human community, the tiger gains more skills in undetected living within and raiding the human Umwelt. He gains mastery of its time and space dimensions. He learns how to hide himself until the moment of attack. He learns the Umwelt of the human community just as he once learned the Umwelt of the forest community of boars, deer, and other wild creatures. If the revengeful tiger is the ruling alpha male of the forest Umwelt, he becomes unchallenged in his ability to control the timing, ferocity, and nature of his attacks.

The chronic or recidivist sexual predator, to protect himself from being detected and recognized by his community, in a similar way must learn to read and then immerse himself inside time and space dimensions of the human communal Umwelt. He must learn how to effectively stalk and groom his victims so that the attack, when it comes, is precise and well-executed and silent. Giving his prey no opportunity to escape or to be anywhere but here, the sexual predator can strike at will. With enough time and learning, he can become the dominant predator of his particular Umwelt. Once again, if he is the alpha male of his enchanted forest community, the repetitive damage he can and will do is immense. Unchallenged in his ferocity, he can destroy other's lives at will and never be held accountable for his actions.

With a sexual predator's continuing abuse, his or her personal identity shifts and s/he takes on a personal identity as a serial offender.^{li} Looking back over a lifetime of abuse, the first offense, it seems to me, can be (and often was) excused by onlookers and work supervisors because of the offender's personality, family and clan status, employment locale, or even the casual onlooker's hypotheses about stress or overwhelming temptation, etc.

Therefore, when witnesses to abuse fail to hold abusive individuals accountable for their actions, abuse will likely continue. Ignoring the meaning and importance of abusive acts when they begin to occur provides the sexual predator with cover, time and space to further develop his expertise. More individuals will be victimized.

Repetitive events of predatory victimization mean that the clergy sexual predator's self must create very sophisticated rationalizations for his behavior.^{lii} I don't think one can simply blame, as Father Oliver Grady seems to do in Berg's

2006 documentary,^{liii} an adult man's erectile excitation response when seeing small children in their skivvies as the cause of his abusive sexual behavior. The decision to become a recidivist violator has deeper roots than sexual desire and bodily responses such as getting an erection and these roots lay in personal identity *and* in the cultural umvelt of authoritarianism, in short, the patriarchy. Not every erection must lead, lock-step, to sexual activity. Something more is at work.

I am not very certain that the usual disclaimer here about a predator's experienced violence in early childhood serves as a reason as much as it serves as a rationalization. Not every child raped in childhood becomes a rapist. Not every child beaten in childhood becomes a batterer. Not everyone victimized in childhood is continuously re-victimized in adult life. The self of the offender, in the present moment of abuse, knowingly or not, makes a decision to offend and to attack. The offender, at some level of his personality, makes a deeply personal and self-motivating decision to become a predator. For this decision and for his creation of a abusive personal identity he is ultimately responsible and he must be held accountable for both his identity and his actions within his communities of reference.

It may well turn out to be that prior abuse is a correlation factor rather than a causative one. At this moment in time, I think, we do not know for certain the causative or motivating factors in the interior life of abusers.

Between the act of victimization as its receptor object and a later act of victimization as its initiator is a region of human behavior we don't understand very well. But, I am quite certain, that in the internal mental and emotional space of the predator, during the time lapse between being victimized and later becoming a victimizer, multiple acts of cognitive and emotional interpretation occur.

In addition, I am quite certain that human choices about outcomes are in play. Individuals who did not choose to be victimized, in their long-term responses to that victimization, can subsequently choose whether or not to victimize others. Since not all victimized individuals choose to victimize others, complex intrapsychic realities that arise in or that relate to the complex realities of human revenge responses have to be in play. Some form of pathological transference is also quite likely to be in play.

In some manner or another, in ways we do not understand very well, the recidivist sexual predator manifests a different form of human consciousness. A sense of empathy for the suffering of others is singularly and strikingly absent. This kind of consciousness does not resist doing evil but embraces it and then rationalizes its presence as part of the necessary, the good, the pious, and the beautiful.

There is, it now seems to me, an element in the predatory sexual abuser's personal structures of consciousness that seeks revenge (perhaps for past wrongs done to a much younger self by others) or that seeks, power, control and domination over his or her victims in response to a primitive earlier sense of powerlessness. We know, I am quite certain, very little about the primal human wounds that create a malicious and predatory human identity and consciousness.

Unless we understand the shift in personal identity and individual consciousness that occurs between the first violation and the tenth, we do not understand the unvelt or cultural form of abuse.

The acts of sexual predation are, therefore not primarily crimes of sexual behavior nor are they primarily sins of sexual desire. Rather, they are crimes and sins which are rooted in revenge, power, dominance, authority and control issues. At their heart they are, therefore, violence and obedience disorders. As manifestations of violence and obedience disorders acts of sexual violence represent, therefore, the living and embodied presence of complex character disorders. As violence and obedience disorders, therefore, they represent the underlying and encompassing cultural disorder I have called the patriarchy.

While they may be seen as simple, therefore, non-complex events of sexual sinning within the religious umvelt, they are much more complex crimes of violence and must be read as intrapersonal and interpersonal vengeance or violence disorders. They are, therefore, both crimes and sins of violence. They utilize sexual attacks as their methodology for seeking to destroy others.

These acts and their complex cultural taproots may be, and likely are, buried deep in any given religious tradition's history and its long collective memory. I believe, however, if we were to examine them closely enough, we would find their taproots buried even deeper in the rich soil of the collective unconsciousness of the patriarchy.

Closing comments

Only when there is reason to suspect that conditions could be changed and are not does rage arise. Only when our sense of justice is offended do we react with rage, and this reaction by no means necessarily reflects personal injury.

Hannah Arendt^{liv}

As professional witnesses to the abusive umvelt of our respective religious denominations and spiritual traditions, we can (indeed I believe we must) take care of our inner spirit and soft self. We need, in addition to solitary self-care, the presence of a supportive community of others. To stay healthy we need to learn

other motivations for our actions in support of survivors and their families than aroused rage and strong desires for retaliatory revenge.

When infallible “truths” and corrupted traditions lead directly or even indirectly to the emotional and spiritual destruction of individual lives; when they lead to the alienated desolation of broken families; and when they destroy the vital living spiritualities of entire communities, they need to be overturned and buried at sea.

Bearing the Unbearable



Demographic Data

1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men in the United States have been raped at some time in their lives; 1 in 2 women and 1 in 5 men have experienced other forms of sexual violence victimization in their lifetime (e.g. made to penetrate someone, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact and sexual experiences). Victimization often occurs for the first time before the age of 25 (42% of female victims report being raped before the age of 18 and 37% report being raped between the ages of 18 and 25).

United States: Center for Disease Control and Prevention^{lvi}

16 % of men have experienced abusive sexual experiences before the age of 18.

United States: Center for Disease Control and Prevention^{lvii}

30 % of women globally have been physically or sexually assaulted by a former or current partner. An additional 7 % reported that they have been raped by someone other than a partner.

Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization^{lviii}

1 out of every 3 women and 1 out of every 6 men will be abused by a domestic partner at some point in their lives.

Joseph W. Shannon, Ph.D. Psychologist^{lix}

21% of Mennonite women report that they have been sexually assaulted and abused. Much of this abuse happened during childhood and adolescence. 5.6% of Mennonite men report sexual assaults and abuse.

United States: Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies^{lx}
Research Investigator: Conrad Kanagy, Ph.D.

Introductory Comments

Sexual violence in a civilian context of political normalcy and governmental stability is most often an acquaintance or affinity violation. While there are random acts of sexual violence committed by strangers, most acts of sexual violence occur between individuals who know each other. The victims of such violence know their perpetrators by name, by face, and by a pre-existing relationship. Acts of sexual violence that occur between individuals who know each other, function, therefore as (1) acts of physical violence *and as* (2) acts of interpersonal betrayal.

In talking about affinity violations, I want to be clear. Sexual victimization acts are sexual acts which do not include the informed and willing consent of their victims. While consenting adult acts of non-marital sexual intercourse or adultery, for example, may violate the moral or religious standards of the surrounding community, in and of itself, acts of consenting adultery or non-marital coitus do not represent affinity violence violations.^{lxi}

In contrast to adultery, acts of affinity sexual violence are never consensual: the abuser takes advantage of another's vulnerability. He chooses to use coercive means to dominate and control his selected victim. The act of affinity or acquaintance victimization occurs, therefore, within a prior-existing relationship – one in which a certain level of intrapersonal and interpersonal trust has developed. These sexually abusive or physically abusive acts are, therefore, deeply disturbing acts of interpersonal betrayal.^{lxii}

Because of the nature of the prior relationship and the intimate nature of affinity sexual abuse violations, it is quite likely that the victims and the perpetrators of sexual violence against them will continue to have an on-going interpersonal awareness of each other after the act of violence is history. The relationship between them does not end just because the act of violence is over. The nature of the relationship, however, undergoes a seismic shift. It is forever changed.

Jungian psychoanalyst James Hillman^{lxiii} comments about this in an essay on betrayal:

I mean ... that the wrong, if not remembered by both parties – and remembered as a wrong – falls on the betrayed. The wider context within which the tragedy occurred would seem to call for parallel feeling from

both parties. They are still both in a relationship, now as betrayed and betrayer. If only the betrayed sees a wrong, while the other passes it over with rationalizations, then the betrayal is still going on – even increased. This dodging [by the perpetrator] of what has really happened is, of all the sores, the most galling to the betrayed...resentment grows because the betrayer is not carrying his guilt and the act is not honestly conscious. Jung has said that the meaning of our sins is that we carry them which means we do not unload them unto others to carry for us. To carry one's sins, one first has to recognize them, and recognize their brutality.

The Spiritual Teaching of Ram Das

Many years ago I purchased a cassette tape from a seminar given by the Jewish-Hindu spiritual teacher Ram Das. In the years since then his teaching has continued to inform my own thinking about all kinds of violence and violence's aftermath in the lives of victimized individuals and communities. On the tape, Ram Das lectured about spiritual growth and spiritual maturity. As an example, he described a situation which happened inside his own spiritual community.

One morning a young girl in the San Francisco Bay area left her home to play tennis with several of her friends. She never reached the tennis courts. She never returned home. Days later her body was found. She had been abducted, sexually assaulted and murdered. Her lifeless body had been tossed into the underbrush.

As her parents' spiritual teacher, Ram Das wrote to them in an effort to comfort them and to be fully and compassionately present with them in their suffering. In the tape he told us that their spiritual and emotional dilemma, as the murdered girl's parents, was daunting. Essentially, he told his audience, *to continue living they had to learn how to bear the unbearable.*

Years later in a Buddhist journal, the mother of this daughter wrote about her own spiritual journey in the months and years after her daughter's death. She recalled Ram Das, his compassionate presence to her and her family, his letter, and his teaching of *needing to learn how to bear the unbearable*. Through his steadying presence in their lives and through his spiritual teaching she came to realize that if she and the remaining members of her family were not to be destroyed by the terrible tragedy of her young daughter's murder, they needed to do emotional *and* spiritual healing work.

In the years after the murder, the girl's mother described how she had founded an organization to help other parents of abducted and murdered children. She built upon her own experiences of terrible and unending grief to reach out to others who were now suffering the same powerless anguish that she experienced. Nothing could bring these sexually violated and murdered children back to life. Yet, if life were to go on for all surviving members of their families,

efforts had to be made towards growing and maturing and eventually being able to *bear the unbearable*. While the deep wounds of these murders could never be forgotten and never would be totally healed, they could be managed.

The Tight Cords of Victimization

Gifted family systems therapist Virginia Satir once taught an interdisciplinary group of mental health practitioners about the social bonds that accompany events of affinity victimization inside pre-existing family groups. She tied a group of 8 workshop attendees and volunteers to each other and to desks, chairs, a speaker's podium, a table's legs, and even her speaker's podium microphone. The knots were tight. Multiple cords were used and knotted together. Individuals inside this webbed net of cords and knots were in intimate and prolonged body contact with each other. Hands and legs of one person were bound to the hands, legs or torsos of others. Bodies were tied to the furniture. This web of knots was deliberately created to be almost impenetrable. No one knot, untied, would unravel every other knot. Eventually, as the audience watched, everyone and everything in the demonstration area was tied to everyone and everything else.

The task of the demonstration was for "this family" to "get free" in any way possible. The more people tugged and wiggled or pulled against each other in their effort to get free, the tighter the bindings became. The more they argued with each other about how and where to begin, the longer it took for their work towards the goal of freedom to get underway. This is not unlike therapy situations with victims of ongoing abuse. The intimate nature of sexual assaults inside abusive social relationships places one individual in intimate and nearly impenetrable bondage to other individuals. Even the physical environments of real-life victims can become threatening.

In this demonstration, only when one individual persuaded another individual to work together did the entire group begin an elaborate freedom movement dance with each other. Moving close to each other a cord loosened. Moving away another tight knot could be precisely located and identified. Once a knot, no matter how small a knot, could be loosened, a hand or a leg could wiggle free. Once an arm or a leg was freed, the knot could be loosened some more and perhaps it could be untied. Each loosened or opened knot led to more webs of knots that needed to be loosened and untied. This demonstration took more than an hour for the "family of eight" to free itself of its collective bondage. As the group freed itself, individuals escaped the bondage of the knots. As individuals moved free, they could choose to help (or avoid helping) others escape. With each act of freedom, the web became looser and allowed more acts of escape. Eventually, this "family" freed itself of its embedded bondage.

By watching and then debriefing this demonstration I learned more about moving free from situations of individual and systemic violence than any book or family systems course had ever taught me. I began to be able to visualize the dance of

victimization and how it entrapped everyone inside the dance. Unlike real acts of sexual victimization and interpersonal betrayal in the dance of victim and victimizer, the workshop's participants were safe in real time and were free, therefore, to experiment with being un-free and bound. At any moment, were any participant in real danger, the demonstration would have ended and everyone would have been freed. In addition, in this demonstration the cords of bondage were very visible – unlike the social ties of interpersonal sexual abuse.

The individual and structural bondage of affinity sexual victimization occurs in real time. It occurs in situations where victims are isolated from protective and helpful people. It occurs without advanced warning. It often happens in social groups where at least one or a few others are aware of the victimization and refuse (or are unable to) to help the victim. It often occurs in relationships where victims can be blamed for (1) having a bad character or (2) behaving in ways that indicate they should have known better.^{lxiv} Indeed, they can be blamed just for being vulnerable.

Such blaming misses the point. The full responsibility for all acts of physical and sexual violation belongs with the perpetrator. The presence of a victim's non-consent means that the victimizer has enacted violence. A crime, therefore, of violence has occurred between the two of them.

Who is Responsible for Rape?

In my classes and denominational conference sermons on sexual violence I often used the example of a naked woman who is walking down a deserted alley at the dark time of the moon. An assailant rapes her.

I rhetorically asked my listeners who was responsible for her being raped in such a situation. When the question was allowed sufficient time to percolate, it was inevitable that one male response was that she was responsible. Hearing this response from my audience, I repeated my question in slightly different language and then corrected the man's answer.

While the woman, in some way or another, may have been responsible for her nudity, the individual who raped her was responsible for the rape. He was rape's perpetrator. She was his victim. He was the subject. She became an object.

It was not unusual, at the end of such a conference presentation, to have one or more men approach me in order to argue that I was wrong. In such a situation, they countered, it was always the woman's responsibility if she were raped. It was her nakedness that provoked the man's action. I would hear the man out, and then ask, could there be other interpretations of her nudity than a sexual invitation? Could there have been other male ways of responding to the woman's vulnerability?

My own inner professional response to these conference or classroom male-initiated confrontations was both curious and cautious. It was likely, I thought then, that the man who was challenging my presentation might very well have personally felt that any woman's sexuality or nudity was an invitation to male dominance and rape. He may, indeed, have been a rapist rationalizing his attitudes towards women or even events of his prior behavior.

Whatever the situation was in his personal history, it was quite clear to me that he saw women as sexual objects rather than as human beings with the rights of self-determination. The decision about sexual activity belonged solely to the man rather than being a shared and consenting one with the woman. In her vulnerability, therefore, she could be (1) raped and (2) held responsible for it, in short, she could be blamed for the man's decision to rape her.

There could be many interpretations a man or a woman could make about a naked woman walking in an alley at midnight under a dark moon. These alternative interpretations mandate concern for her safety, compassion towards her vulnerability and the offer of practical help rather than sexual assault.

Over time, I began to see this simple illustration as a diagnostic evaluation tool. If audiences could be moved to thoughtful considerations and empathy for the naked woman's dilemma and behavior, then they could be moved into thoughtful discussions about sexual violence inside Mennonite communities. If, on the other hand, the primary response of an audience or classroom group was to argue with my professional conclusion that the rapist alone was responsible for his own violent behavior, I was less optimistic about the outcome of my work in that setting.

The Dance of Victimization

The following question arises, therefore, in the context of acts of sexual violation between two people who know each other. What happens in the interpersonal space between two individuals that allows the sexual violence perpetrator to take control? What happens between them in the moments before violence begins – those moments when the perpetrator of violation decides to victimize his human prey?

Victim Vulnerability

Sexual violence criminology literature and anecdotal evidence make it quite clear that victim vulnerability can be read accurately by potential victimizers. When incarcerated sexual violence perpetrators are asked in research protocols to look at pictures or videos of women or children and rate their vulnerability to rape and other physical attacks, there is statistically reliable agreement in the research population of perpetrators about which women and which children they would choose to approach to harm and violate.

Sexual violence and physical battering violence literatures are equally clear: a physically and/or sexually abused child is more likely (1) to be subsequently abused and assaulted in adolescence and adult life and/or (2) to become an abuser. Children who grow up in sexually or physically violent households are more likely to establish such households – either as perpetrators or as victims....or both

Unanswered Questions

What is the interpersonal signal that passes from potential victim to potential victimizer? Is it a subtle non-verbal signal or is it a pheromone?^{lxv} What is the nature of the signal that passes from victimizer to potential victims? What is the nature of the signal that passes from victims to potential victimizers?

In the animal world, predators attack the most vulnerable individual in the herd – the young, the slow, the old, the weak, the sick, the disabled. Is there anything about human victimization that mimics this animal form of prey-selection by human sexual predators? One answer to such a question is that sexual violence perpetrators can and do read victim vulnerability. Their ability to read vulnerability is learned and it is refined by experience. Each rape, in a sense, becomes a classroom practicum for future rapes. Each physical assault or act of harassment functions in the same way. That selection and grooming behavior which “works” for the violence predator is reinforced behavior. That behavior which “fails” is probably discarded.

What is the interpersonal behavior or scent that announces to the human sexual predator that he is in the presence of another human being who can successfully be victimized? What is the process by which victimizers identify a potential victim and begin the person-specific acts of grooming her or him for victimization?

After the fact some victims report that they had an intuition of danger which they ignored. What is the source of such an intuition? How does one individual's unspoken intention to harm a second individual transmit itself across the empathic barrier?

Politically Incorrect Speech and the Dance of Victimization

It is politically incorrect to talk about or to write about events of affinity violation and betrayal as *the dance of victimization* – but it is a dance. Every sentence about this dance can, therefore, be misread and misinterpreted as *blaming* the victim of violation, of making the victim responsible for her own victimization. This is an extremely faulty reading of such a discussion. To work towards prevention of sexual violence, however, we must begin to examine and to understand the nature of such an obscene dance.

When we blame victims for their victimization, we mistake vulnerability for a desire or an invitation to be victimized. When we excuse perpetrators for their acts of victimization by focusing on the pre-violation vulnerability of their victims, we reinforce the cultural belief system that a perpetrator's behavior in the face of another's vulnerability is acceptable, normal, admirable, or even a mutually desired outcome of their relationship with each other.

Two acts of misperception or a perceptual fallacy are evident. *First*, there is the victim's misperception that her victimizer was trustworthy in the sense of predictable and safe. *Second*, there is the abuser's perception that his behavior is normal male behavior and that he is not, as a result, accountable to anyone for his anti-social and criminal acts of behavior. In this misperception, the victim invited his violent advances.

It is essential as we work towards the prevention of abuse that both sets of misperceptions be corrected. A victim's misjudgments about an individual's trustworthiness do not mean that a woman is, ipso facto, responsible and/or blameworthy for her own violation at the other's hands. A victim's pre-existing vulnerability does not indicate that she precipitated her own victimization and is, therefore, responsible and blameworthy.

It is essential to understand that in all acts of sexual violence, the perpetrator is fully responsible for his decisions to violate the other. The responsibility for a perpetrator's decision to exploit her vulnerability for his own purposes belongs to him. In making the decision to abuse someone else, he cannot shift moral or social responsibility to the other. The abusive person carried total and complete responsibility for his decisions to violate another human being for his own purposes.

Human Vulnerability

Human vulnerability can be, understood in multiple ways. Some vulnerability is related to age and development. A small child of 3 or 4 does not have the cognitive and intuitive maturity to assess levels of danger. She is dependent upon her adult caretakers to protect her and to guide her. Her very survival is dependent on her ability to elicit others' protective care.

Legal and illegal chemicals can impair judgment in both perpetrators and victims. An adolescent with the intake of alcohol or drugs, temporarily has disabled her ability to make self-protective judgments about another's intentionality. A woman surreptitiously drugged in a bar is unable to defend herself.

Physically or mentally disabled individuals may lack the needed means to assess other's intentionalities or menacing behaviors. Trapped by the nature of their disability, they may also be unable to move away from danger. In addition, some

perpetrators may deliberately seek out access to disabled individuals in order to violate them.

Previously abused individuals may be unable to make wise judgments between safe social behaviors and unsafe ones. They may make mistakes in their decisions about who can be trusted and who cannot be trusted. They may be hobbled by feelings of self-loathing and self-doubt. They may be handicapped in wise decision making by personal insecurities. They may be depressed or even suicidal.

An Ethic of Care

When individuals and entire communities are saturated with compassion and an ethic of care, vulnerability can be read as an invitation for protection and supportive help. Inside such communities, vulnerable individuals are recognized as vulnerable and are consequently protected. As the vulnerable child matures, for example, she is taught how to care for her own inner soft self and to recognize and care for other's fault lines and their wounds. She is taught to respect her own needs and the needs of others for safety and trust. In short, she is taught empathy. She is taught compassion. She is taught self-protection.

In addition, responsible adult caretakers seek to protect vulnerable children. They teach children or adolescents about how to recognize and then avoid dangerous situations and people. Children in elementary schools are now often taught that no one should touch their bodies unless they give permission. This gives these children an advantage. They have been taught to both reject and report inappropriate and unwanted touches.

Interpreting Vulnerability

While vulnerability can signal the presence of pre-existing or even primal wounds, it can also signal an individual's readiness to grow and to mature. It can signal the inner self's reaching out as a newly sprouted plant reaches out to the sun.

Vulnerability can signal the lonely self's search for intimacy. It can signal a maturing self's increasing social abilities. It can signal a search for transcendence in the face of human experiences of isolation and loneliness. It can signal a search for unity in the awareness of division and alienation. It can signal a search for comforting and protection in times of distress.

Vulnerability can also signal times of distracted attention – times when the individual self is pre-occupied and, therefore, not fully present to his or her surroundings. It can signal times of emotional or cognitive confusion. It can also signal cognitive, emotional, or social immaturity.

Sexual abusers can, therefore, read and use all of these various forms of vulnerability as an excuse for rape and other forms of sexual or physical abuse. Recidivist abusers become experts at identifying such forms of human vulnerability as they groom and later exploit their victims.

Developmental Maturation

In the face of human vulnerability, the long-term developmental goal, it seems to me is not the development of invulnerability. Rather the goal is maturation and a willingness to manage our deep human experiences of vulnerability in ways that we are protected and others are protected. A certain human tenderness towards our own vulnerabilities and those of others is, I think, a sign of emotional health and social maturity.

A well-defended sense of social isolation is never the goal of human maturation. A complex mix of independence, dependency and interdependency is needed for healthy intrapersonal and interpersonal communal life.

The way to a safer tomorrow is not to become invulnerable automatons. Rather, vulnerable individuals need time to mature. For maturation to happen, individuals need a supportive community that educates them about realistic dangers and realistic mistrust.

Such awareness mandates therefore that communities and families respect the vulnerable individual's needs for support and protection. Mature others need to be alert for potential victimization and to act proactively on their behalf.

In an 2013 address to a gathering of Minnesota lawyers, law enforcement criminal investigator and advisor the to Boy Scouts of America Michael V. Jordan^{lxvi} described the reality that individuals and communities need to learn how to recognize complex signals in the dance between perpetrators and victims – that elaborate dance of grooming in order to intervene. He described the organizational or communal need to recognize subtle signals that these disorders are present in their commons as a pre-requisite for early intervention. I agree with Jordan. This means that individuals and communities must educate themselves about these matters so they can immediately recognize perpetrators and respond to the vulnerable with protective care and compassion.

Full Responsibility and Full Accountability

My own position, here is quite clear. When one individual sexually assaults or physically abuses or interpersonally harasses and threatens a second person, the perpetrator of violence and violation carries full responsibility for the acts of victimization. His (or her) willingness to exploit the vulnerability of another person indicates that he has lost or never developed the ability for self-other empathy and compassion. His willingness to inflict malicious and deliberate

suffering on others is often accompanied by elaborate rationalizations that excuse his behavior – at least to himself. Giving up his full, complex share of compassionate humanity and empathic awareness, he retreats inside a hard shell of isolating consciousness. Inside this isolating shell, there is little or no comprehension of the evil he does and the evil he has come to embody.

Sexual violence perpetrators, unwilling or unable to hold themselves responsible for their own behaviors, must be brought, therefore, into full social accountability for their actions inside the commons of their human communities. Whether or not their personal moral awareness can be influenced and changed, the individual must be confronted with the impact of his deeds on others. He must be prevented from further acts of violation and victimization. In general, therefore, this means criminal prosecution.

Reprise: The Dance of Victimization

That said, if we want to move towards prevention of sexual violence, we must be able to read the Umwelt of the pre-existing relationships of violence perpetrators and victims. Since no sexual perpetrator sexually violates every individual she or he encounters, there is something in the relationship between the two particular individuals in the dance of victimization that enables or facilitates victimization to occur.

While proximity (the here and now) is a factor that opportunistic and pre-meditated perpetrators both use, it is not the only factor. The likelihood of discovery or non-discovery, while a factor, is not the primary factor. The likelihood of being reported (or not being reported) for sexual acts of violence, while a factor, is not the primary factor. The likelihood of punishment is also not the primary factor in facilitating or inhibiting the sexual predator's behavior. The sexual sophistication or the perpetrator or the social and sexual naïveté of his victims is also not the primary factor. Perpetrator evasion of discovery and accountability in previous actions is also a factor. It, too, however, is not the primary factor.

The disinhibiting factor of alcohol or drug consumption plays a role. For perpetrators it lessens the capacity for empathic or moral thinking. It releases the individual perpetrator from violence-inhibiting factors. For potential victims, alcohol and drugs lessen their capacity to read the danger signals about imminent danger. Not all people whose cognitive abilities are impaired by alcohol and drugs become rapists. Not all become victims. Therefore, alcohol and drug consumption is not the primary factor.

Somewhere in the personality of every predator, there is a moment when each one decides, for the first time, to bully, to betray, to sexually abuse and to physically violate the safety of another human being. All future rapes, acts of harassment, acts of stalking and all subsequent acts of grooming are a repetition

of this first violation and act of betrayal. In the life of a recidivist perpetrator, this initial act changes the direction of his personality and his relationships with others. Powerful reinforcements then anchor the behavior as a permanent aspect of his behavioral repertoire. With each subsequent violation, the perpetrator's personal identity begins to shift. Rationalizations pile upon rationalizations. The perpetrator's moral sensibilities shift. The perpetrator's capacity to feel empathy for the suffering of others undergoes permanent changes.

There are two partners to the dance of victimization. One partner, the initiating partner, is the predator. His dance partner is his victim. Our society, to date, is reluctant to hold sexual victimizers fully accountable for their acts of predatory violation. This is particularly true in situations of affinity violence. We are hesitant to identify perpetrators as sociopaths because in many ways the sexual violence perpetrator resembles the statistically normal and non-abusive individual in most of his personality traits.

Just as a sociopath or an individual with a narcissistic personality disorder knows how to pre-sort and groom potential victims in order to identify a specific person who is vulnerable to financial scams, the rapist and sexual abuser also know how to locate and identify potential sexual abuse victims. Both kinds of abusers successfully intuit the presence of other persons who can be lured into captivity and the dance of victimization. For some individuals who are perpetrators, their dance routine may include elaborate grooming methods which are utilized solely to gain the intended victim's trust.

Seeking the opportunity to abuse another individual, the premeditated abuser knows how to stalk his prey, how to wall his selected prey off from others who can help the intended victim to move into safe zones, and how to gain continuing access to intended victims without detection. Deliberately and patiently he builds trust in his pre-selected victims. Only then does he (or she) strike.

Or, the sexual violence initiating individual may be an opportunist abuser. When he is in *the right place at the right time*, he uses the opportunity to strike quickly.

Sexual offenders understand and exploit cultural obedience disorders in their transgressions. They deliberately violate reasonable standards or practices of authority and obedience, of dominance and submission. He or she transgresses by manipulating cultural practices of age and gender identity formation and social gender conditioning among individuals seen as likely prey. For example, cultural practices of femininity and masculinity often emphasize male control behaviors and female submission or yielding behaviors. As another example, small children often need to obey older people for their own safety. The recidivist offender utilizes the default human position of necessary and desirable obedience for his own purposes.

Like Vaillant's predatory tiger^{lxvii} in its forest umvelt, the sexual predator knows how to *insert [himself] almost intravenously into his human prey's umvelt – an umvelt it must be noted, that has evolved over millions of years to be exquisitely sensitive to the presence of ... predators.*

Intuition and Self-protection

The other partner in the dance of victimization is the victimized individual. That she or he is an unwilling partner does not negate the social milieu and social aspects of victimization. If the individual and collective intuition of prey animals is to protect individual members of the prey community by sensitivity to the presence of predators, what happens within human beings who become the preyed upon members of their culture? Why do adolescent and adult women ignore the many – perhaps omnipresent - warning messages inside the culture of women about the presence of sexual predators? How and why do adolescent and young adult women for example, ignore these warnings about danger? Why do they ignore their own their intuitions or precognitions of danger?

To ask these kinds of questions is not to blame the victims for their experiences of victimization? To ask these questions is not to excuse the sexual violence perpetrator for his decisions to exploit vulnerability. To ask these questions is to seek for answers that can lead women to safety. To ask these questions is to seek a pathway towards sexual violence prevention.

It seems self evident to me that once captured, however, by the sexual predator's hypnotic influence, captured by his physical prowess or by his charisma and interpersonal powers, and brought into the here place *and* the now moment of sexual violence, there is little for a victim to do except to fight for her life and survival until the dance ends. Nevertheless, while some studies show that struggling, resisting and fighting back may (1) prevent a rape and (2) lessen the severity of rape's long-term sequellae, some of the rapist's damage to the woman begins in the moment she perceives an attack is imminent. The dismembering reality of a rapist's presence in her life changes the girl's or woman's life forever. Any assault, therefore, whether successfully completed or not, has a negative impact on a girl's or woman's future life and all of her subsequent relationships with others.

For a small child of 4, as an example, there is no possible way to escape once he or she is in the recidivist sexual abuse perpetrator's proximity. The cognitive and emotional apparatus of such a small child and her or his small body size mean that cognitive and physical resistance in the moment of violence is likely to be futile. This particular child may have the intuition that more violence is going to erupt but have absolutely no resources at hand to protect him or herself. In this kind of situation the child has no recourse but to submit and endure. As a survival technique, many children learn, therefore, to dissociate.

Fight, Flight, Freeze

It well may be that adult reminiscences regarding the immobility of the sexually violated child or adolescent they once were, demonstrates Peter Levine's conclusions about the experience and the long-term aftermath of violence. If one cannot successfully fight and if one cannot successfully flee the presence of life-threatening violence, the body-self freezes in place and the individual can no longer move. But the mind and complex memory systems of the body continue to record both the events and the terror of the events. This freezing response in the face of overwhelming violence and terror is, Levine, hypothesizes a life-saving, biologically based physical response.^{lxviii} In clinical literature before the 1950's this freezing effect was seen by the criminal justice system as consent and it led police jurisdictions to the process of unfounding – which essentially meant a dismissal of the victim's charges as unfounded. The feminist anti-rape movement began to challenge these assumptions. The women's health movement built upon this anti-rape activism and advocacy.

After Hans Selye's^{lxix} ground breaking work on unpacking the human stress response, the medical research community began slowly to understand the human stress response and that research is continuing. Now, sixty some years later, we have a rudimentary understanding of the role of the autonomic nervous system, brain structures such as the hippocampus, amygdala and limbic system. We are beginning to understand how dissociative memory is stored in the human body and brain. The concept of cellular memory can now be respectably studied by the medical research community.

Today's studies about the aftermaths of sexual and physical violence done to them by individuals they know indicate that victims remain entrapped and entranced by their experiences long after the rapist-assailant has exited the now moment and the here moment of their violation.^{lxx} These acts of violence, designed to disempower the woman or child, are internalized by the body, the emotional self, the cognitive self, the spiritual self, all memory systems and the psycho-neuro-immunological systems of physiological arousal.

In addition, family members and friends often enter the entranced maze of post-victimization events. They like the predator and society at large, can blame the victim for his or her victimization. They can refuse to support and care for the victim in realistic, knowledgeable and empathic ways. In some situations they both can and do join the sexual assailant in further assaults on the victim's character and behavior by physically punishing the child for reporting sexual victimization.

Secondary Victimization

Punishing or disbelieving or blaming the victim of sexual abuse is a secondary, but no less damaging form of social victimization. It exaggerates and extends the

first violation and further damages the victimized individual's abilities to care for and heal her wounds. Clinical literature is quite clear. The first individual or individuals, who learn about a woman's victimization and the quality of their responses to her, impact the potentialities for future healing.^{lxxi} If she is believed and treated with empowering compassion, then her long-term potentialities for healing are good. If she is disbelieved or blamed by the first witness to her story, then her struggle to find healing may well take longer. Her route to full healing will be much more perilous.

The Teaching of Ram Das Reprised

In the intervening years since listening many times to this cassette tape series, I have often returned to Ram Das' spiritual wisdom. In many circumstances individuals and communities we are powerless to escape or to change the outcome of violence in their lives and environments. They may be equally unable to prevent violence in the lives of others.

Some of the residual wounds of our encounters with violence may be so deep and so primal that they can never be completely healed. Yet, if we seek a spiritual and/or emotional pathway to realistic healing and if we are touched by compassion and empathic supportive help from others, we can slowly and tentatively begin to stretch, mature, and eventually learn to bear that which is unbearable. As we learn how to manage our own trauma, we can then learn to use our own wounds as resources in the service of understanding and supporting others as they learn to manage their own wounds.

As workers in the sexual violence arena we are called, as human helpers, victim advocates, and prophetic voices to both believe and to bear witness to other's stories of violence. We are called to help others to build the inner resources they can subsequently use to manage the deep wounds that accompany their experiences of violence. As healers, advocates and prophets we are called to make efforts to relieve another's suffering whenever and in whatever ways we can.

It is inevitable, therefore, that we too will be wounded by the story of sexual violence. In the work we do and in the relationships of our lives, we too must often begin to work our way towards the painful gift of learning how *to bear that which is unbearable*.

Concluding Comments

The deep and terrible wounds of the human individual who has been victimized by violence cry out to be attended to. The wounds of those who love individuals who have been victimized likewise call out to be cared for. The wounds of their communities of reference also demand attention. Finally, the empathic secondary wounds of those who provide help become visible when we know where to look

for them and when we seek to understand them. These wounds of the witnesses, helpers and advocates also call out for healing.

The stories of sexual violence and corrupted social institutions that protect bullies, rapists, harassers and child molesters are toxic and destructive stories inside human psyches and inside human communities. These stories and the actions they represent destroy individual lives *and* they destroy human relationships. Consequently as witnesses, healers, victim advocates, prophets and peacemakers who choose to listen to the stories of violation, we too will be wounded. Just as sexual violence locates and exploits the pre-existing fault lines in any victim's personality, in a like manner its narrative will locate and exploit the fault lines in the healer's, advocate's and witness's personality.

As listeners, advocates and healers, it is inevitable that we will be wounded by the stories of violence which we hear *and* by the wounds of others that we seek to tend.

The cognitive, spiritual, psychological, emotional and interpersonal costs of our choices to help others will be great. Our wounds also call out to be healed. Like the direct victims of violence, we too need to learn how to *understand the unthinkable, manage the repugnant, and bear the unbearable*.

I have come to believe that one mark of emotional and spiritual maturity for healers, victim advocates, prophets, peacemakers, and witnesses is the ability to look the evil of sexual violence square in the face and to set one's self to the task of learning its true nature. A related task is that of continuing to learn *how to bear that which initially seems humanly unbearable to hear, to witness, and to know*. With each new revelation of violence's human face and its destructive powers to damage the human spirit and psyche, the healer's spiritual will and calling can and will be tested. To maintain a helping spirit and spiritual practice, old skills will need to be re-furbished and new skills will need to be learned.

When we do this work of sexual violence healing and prevention work with intellectual curiosity, a sense of personal humility, courage, integrity, and professional skills, we will search for and continue to find life-rewarding and life-renewing pathways of the heart. In doing our work as impeccably as we are able to do it, we will eventually come to understand compassion as a manifestation of human love.

Love and care for the neighbor in need is one measure of spiritual maturity. As we continue to work and as we continue to learn from our work, we will inevitably become God's suffering heart and God's healing hands and God's prophetic voice.

Empathic Disorders



The Scream^{lxxii}
Edvard Munch

Introductory Comments

My mother tongue is the human body.

Ernst Barlach

There are a variety of diagnostic metaphors used to describe empathic disorders as these are experienced by individuals whose work environments or advocacy activities put them into immediate, direct and personal contact with survivors of violence such as sexual abuse victims or refugees from war zones. This group of individuals can include doctors, nurses, lawyers, first responders, military chaplains, medics, psychotherapists, clergy, social workers, peace and justice activists, humanitarian workers in war zones, victim advocates, etc. Some of these descriptive or diagnostic metaphors include burn-out, compassion fatigue, traumatic counter-transference, secondary victimization, secondary trauma, and vicarious trauma.

I am going to utilize several of these descriptive phrases because each has some nuances of meaning which help us gain a more complex understanding of the phenomena being identified and described. The behavioral manifestations of vicarious trauma can originate in a wide variety of physical settings such as therapists' offices, lawyers' offices, court rooms, student classrooms, college dorm room bull sessions, war zone refugee camps, hospital trauma centers, and even shared family living spaces.

Empathic Distress^{lxxiii}

According to some authors, empathic distress is the inability to tolerate the physical or emotional suffering of others. Some authors see this as a process of over-identification. Others see it as a manifestation of co-dependency. On the

other hand, I tend to see it as an inadequate psychic barrier or buffer in the presence of strong emotions such as anxiety, fear, or disgust. One predominating experiential symptom is a strong desire to flee the painful or stress-filled suffering of others. Avoidance, denial, and minimization of the other's suffering are others. A refusal to get involved is a behavioral component. Looking the other way or walking on the other side of the road are behavioral metaphors that might describe the presence of empathic distress.^{lxxiv} Of course, these behaviors could also represent a simple absence of compassion and empathy – a narcissistic desire to protect the self by non-involvement.

It is fairly clear that healthy compassion varies from empathic distress in several ways:

- Healthy compassion enables individuals to stay present to and helpful to those who are in pain or are suffering;
- Healthy compassion does not ask those who suffer to take care of the emotional needs of the helpers or witnesses to their suffering;
- Healthy compassion includes a personally healthy central nervous system and autonomic nervous system – one that does not fall apart at the first signs of trouble and its accompanying pain and anguish;
- Healthy compassion does not need the wounded other to stay wounded so that the helper can feel helpful or powerful or in control;
- Buddhists talk about healthy compassion as the ability to move into an inner space of equanimity when faced with self-other pain or suffering.

The ability to fully observe the pain of others and stay engaged without overreacting is actually an example of what it means to experience healthy compassion.^{lxxv}

Personal Beginnings

But when the traumatic events are of human design, those who bear witness are caught in the conflict between victim and perpetrator. It is morally impossible to remain neutral in the conflict. The bystander is forced to take sides.

Judith Lewis Herman^{lxxvi}

This conversational essay is profoundly personal in its origins. Before I had language to understand myself, I knew the realities of traumatic anxiety. Thus, the personal voice is utilized to further our theoretical and clinical understandings of the emotional responses or clinical phenomena of vicarious trauma. My encounters with various forms of psychic wounding emerged in a wide variety of settings. Each encounter taught me something about myself. Each taught me something about the nature of psychic wounding in others. Each in more diffuse

ways continues to teach me as I recall my younger self and her encounters with human suffering.

During the 1980's and 1990's it was in the theoretical work of Harvard psychiatrist Judith Herman where I first encountered accurate, researchable and teachable language and concepts to describe my own experiences and those of others.^{lxxvii} Finally, I began to have descriptive and analytical languages to communicate my intense personal reactions to the suffering of others. Once there was language, a conceptual framework could emerge that helped me to understand my own inner realities as well as the inner realities of others.

With a solid conceptual foundation for understanding the human phenomenon words such as compassion fatigue or vicarious trauma represent, it is possible to teach ourselves and others how to prevent their disturbing realities from intruding upon and incapacitating daily life. In our daily lives as helpers and witnesses, we are not powerless in the face of strong emotional abreactive experiences. Our choices are not just limited to overwhelmed powerlessness, paranoia, or rage-filled desires to avenge human evil. Our choices in the face of systemic or individual evil are not just immobilization or flight.

1946 give or take a year

Even as a small child I was aware of other's suffering. Encountering it, I wanted to act. Once when a neighbor's husband died suddenly, I said to my friend Joey – not his name - (who like me was in pre-school or early elementary school years) *we need to do something to comfort her*. With all of the seriousness we were capable of, we talked about what we could do. We had no money. She had no use for any of our toys. We were just barely old enough to cross the street between our two houses without an adult guardian in tow. We didn't really know her very well. I didn't even know her name. To me she was just that *nice lady who lived in the house next to Joey's*. However, in our young minds, this dilemma of our need to reach out to her was not our parent's problem to solve. It was ours.



Sweet wild violet

Sweet wild violets were in bloom behind the Episcopal Church in a vacant lot. We each decided to pick a bouquet and carry these lovely spring flowers to the

woman. We each had huge fistfuls of violets when we knocked on her door. When she answered, we said to her, *we picked you some violets*. She was very gentle with us as she accepted the flowers but as she turned to close the door we could see she was crying. Neither Joey nor I knew what to say. We had tried to help her feel better and it seemed we had made things even worse. I felt so troubled that we had made her cry. Only as I matured into adult life and re-visited this memory did I understand that this woman – without children of her own – probably valued those freely picked and offered wild flowers more than she could ever tell us.

1950 give or take a year

As I have been writing these essays, memories keep emerging. One morning recently I woke pondering whether or not I have had an empathic boundary issue during my entire life. Always observant and intuitive as far back as I can remember, were my empathic boundaries too permeable? Was I too aware of the suffering of others? As I asked myself this question, I was once again taken back in my life to early childhood. I was nine or ten years old when my parents took me and a girl friend to the Philadelphia zoo – I was hyped in anticipation because I was eager to see the animals I'd only read about in children's books. This excursion with my friend had been planned for weeks and when the day arrived I was in seventh heaven - so eager was I to get to Philadelphia – a city I'd never seen before. I was dressed and ready to go before my parents had even finished their breakfasts. Elephants, tigers, giraffes, and lions were exotic possibilities to me that morning as we left Mount Joy.

Within minutes of being inside the zoo, I wanted to leave. I wanted to cry and I wanted to scream. I knew I couldn't leave because my parents had paid a significant amount of money for this opportunity. I was old enough to know I should not make a scene and embarrass my parents. I knew I had social obligations to my friend. I also knew that my parents and my friend Raquel - not her name - appeared to be enjoying the zoo. But I was real clear inside about my personal responses. I hated it. What I had begged to do in Mt. Joy had become a daytime nightmare in Philadelphia. From the moment I saw the beautiful animals in cages I was overwhelmed by sadness.



Zoo-Caged Lion

When we got to the old lion in his very tiny cage I was so distraught and overtaken by tears that I finally asked if we could go home. I was not having a temper tantrum. I just couldn't stop crying. I would try. Then I would look at the old lion and the tears would start all over again. My parents thought, my mom told me much later, that perhaps I was just too young or too immature for the zoo and seeing that I couldn't stop crying, both parents had decided it was time to leave. We didn't even stop to get ice cream. It was as if, looking back, I needed to escape something terribly oppressive that I was too young to understand.

Now, I wonder, so many years later if I had understood about closing psychic barriers, if I might have been able to understand more what the lion was communicating to me without being so devastated by his predicament – a proud wild beast displayed for human amusement – in a much too small cage. As it is, when I look back, all I remember feeling on that day was overwhelming sadness for this beautiful animal and his caged predicament. We never went back to that zoo. Every time my parents would ask if I wanted to go to the zoo, I would say, *no, it smells so bad*. Eventually, the question of visiting zoos dropped from our family conversations about outings we could do together.

As an adult I occasionally visited zoos and I always felt as if the animals were begging me to free them – which I obviously could not do. I began, in my mind, to apologize to them for their captivity. If no one else was around, I apologized out loud. As zoos began creating bigger and freer spaces for their captive and domesticated animals, the anguish lessened. But I still do not like witnessing wild animals' captivity and suffering. It is a viscerally painful reality for me.

Only in this stage of my life, then, do I question myself. *What am I sensing that I don't know? Do I have a major empathic disorder – an inability to shut out the suffering voices around me?*

1961: Dr. Norman Beatty Psychiatric Hospital

As an undergraduate student nurse in a state hospital for the mentally ill and criminally insane, I was taught that I needed to understand the human experience of interpersonally transferred anxiety. I needed to be able, when encountering a sense of intense emotional responses such as panic, to determine whether this overwhelming sense of diffuse anxiety belonged to me or to the patient I was working with at any given moment in time. I learned this the hard way. I was twenty one years old.



Indiana State Hospital, Westville, IN^{xxx}

By the time my class did its psychiatric rotation we were seniors. With five or six other female students, I was assigned to a back ward of seventy men. Each of these men was chronically disabled by severe and, in that era, untreatable mental illness. During the daytime hours the men's sleeping barracks' doors were closed and locked. The central day room and its adjoining bathroom with a row of urinals and stools with no doors were the only living spaces available to these actively psychotic and sometimes physically violent men. In this particular ward there were not enough chairs for each man to sit down. So, they often sat on the floor with their backs against walls or the ceiling support pillars or they lay on the floor. Some men just paced for hours at a time. Bench and chair occupancy functioned as a signal of day room dominance. Every time a student nurse claimed a chair, a patient was deprived of seating. It was not uncommon to witness semi-nudity. Acts of public masturbation were common as one man or another sought to comfort himself.

One thing was interesting to me. When we opened the door to the ward each morning, one man or another would yell *the student nurses are here. Behave yourselves. Stop your cussing.* One consequence of this patient self-policing was that female students assigned to wards of women patients had a much more violent and difficult experience than we did on the men's wards. There inside an all female environment experienced repeated cursing, the thrown chair or even strong total body grabs from behind. As female students on a male ward, we were also spared the weekly ordeal of supervising the male patients' showers.

While each student had a set of access keys, the expectation was that we would spend four to six hours on this ward each day. This was more or less an honor system requirement because our faculty was not with us on a predictable basis. During those hours we were expected to interact with the men on a continuous basis. The staff office was forbidden to us. At times I privately thought some members of the staff were as crazy and ill-behaved as the men whose lack of freedom they controlled and I actively avoided going near the office door. Since some of the male staff sexually hustled the female students on "their" wards, I kept my distance as much as was physically possible. I don't think at this moment in my life, I had heard the phrase *snake pit* but I was entrapped inside one twenty to thirty hours a week for twelve weeks.

These huge psychiatric ward outbuildings were all connected by dark, nasty smelling underground tunnels which were mostly vacant. They were rumored to be unsafe. Vague innuendos of sexual attacks were whispered. We'd been directly and emphatically told to use them only in groups and only in rainy weather.

During this rotation we lived on the huge state hospital campus. The student nurses' housing wing had house mothers who lived there and were present at all times. We were, therefore, as young female students never alone or unsupervised. During the evening hours we were always, in one way or another, chaperoned. This kind of female herd experience was very new and very hard for me. I was a loner used to privacy when I wanted or needed to be alone. I was not used to always being in someone else's public gaze. I was personally used to being self-responsible and resented the limited access to the outside world that I was permitted. Our male classmates had more freedom to move around without chaperonage and that irritated me immensely.

One day on the ward, I thought I was going to be as insane as the men I was in theory at least supposed to be helping. The crowding, the noise, the smells, the crazy behavior, the nudity, the masturbation, the restless energy of male pacing inside a very small locked space, and the insanity of thinking I was helping anyone created a drive state in me that I'd never experienced before. I knew I had to get out of that ward. If I didn't leave sooner rather than later, I was going to begin screaming. I knew if I walked outside across the grass just to be alone with my thoughts and to regain self-control I would be seen and reported as missing from the ward. I decided to use my key and secretively descend into the labyrinth of underground tunnels – where with any luck I would not be discovered. I told no one where I was going. While the staff was not looking, I opened the ward door, slipped out and locked the door behind me.

I was discovered. Under the watchful eye of security I was accompanied back to the student housing complex where the day housemother met me and sent me to my room. I was immediately visited by the student nursing education program director. I could not stop crying. As a senior I was terrified that I would be dismissed from the program. I was a good student and I had never before disobeyed a direct order from nurses or teachers in positions of authority over me. I had very little language to describe what had happened to me inside the ward but in looking back I suppose it was clear to everyone but me that I was in the middle of a full-blown panic attack.

One of our classroom teachers, a very compassionate man, spent several hours over the next week or so talking with me. He explained in language that I could understand what had happened to me. He began to coach me about how to open and to close the doors of empathy and intuition so that I could be helpful. He began to teach me about how I could bracket my own discomfort in order to be present to someone else's. He listened to my rage at the way these men were

discarded as untreatable and the abject helplessness I felt at witnessing their disturbing behavior. He talked with me about grandiosity and realism – none of these men would be cured in our respective lifetimes but we could relate to them in humane ways that momentarily eased their suffering. Playing checkers, for example, was not a cure for mental illness. But the game provided the patient with a mature way to express his humanity. Games and puzzles allowed patients to predictably encounter someone who was not even crazier than they were. Playing cards allowed a small group of men to socialize with women and with each other in a manner reminiscent of regular life. Our daily presence provided the men with someone to talk to about whatever they wanted to talk about. At the end of our “visit” to their lives, they were, therefore, less isolated from ordinary human experiences. The predictability of our presence countered the unpredictability of their usual life. It was important to learn how to bracket and manage the grandiose fantasy that we would change the lives of these men. None of us was expected to be the Messiah. We were, however, expected to be both humane and professional. We were in this situation to learn from it not to change it.

Since that summer, the only issue I have consistently disagreed with is contained in the last sentence. I strongly believe that seeing such human suffering means that professional people need to learn how to challenge the social structures which create and maintain it. Adjusting to the pathology of unjust or inhumane systemic structures only means that they do not change. In fact, they are reinforced. Unchecked, over time they clone and reproduce themselves. As naïve as I was, it was quite clear to me from observing the long-term staff that their own inner selves were damaged by the work they did. Not only the patients were crazy in that hospital; so too were many of their caretakers. The hospital hierarchies and care structures were themselves crazy-making. In today’s language, they were systemically corrupted forms of structural violence.

When I later encountered Dr. Judith Herman’s early published work on incest, rape, domestic violence, torture, etc., and the trauma response, I began to gain language that was most helpful to me. Attending several of her professional continuing education seminars for health professionals, it was helpful to hear her explain in clear language the combined need for clinical work *and* social activism. It was helpful to get language to describe clinical counter-transference reactions. As a feminist and as a clinician, she began the process in which I could consolidate much that I already had intuited and believed about the life and work of professional healers and therapeutic counselors.

But in 1961, for that twenty-one-year old self, all that I had to work with was my strong desire to help and my empathic awareness that something was very wrong in my culture when mentally ill and emotionally handicapped men could be warehoused and abandoned in their suffering.

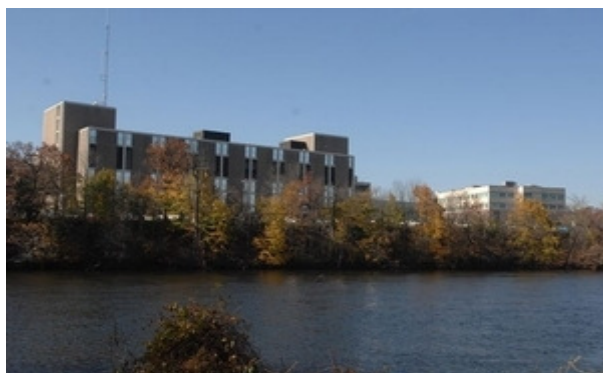
Human warehouses of any kind destroy the human spirit of the human beings they stockpile *and* they inevitably corrupt the human spirit of the human keepers.^{lxxx} Nurse Ratched had not yet become the cultural icon of this kind of systemic violation of the human spirit in the name of care.^{lxxxii} But when she appeared, she had the 1960's state hospital milieu nailed.

Over time I slowly began to develop my own creed: human beings, no matter how disabled deserve attentive humane care from their society. Too disturbed or too disabled to care for themselves, they deserve to be protected. Wounded by life and very vulnerable to abuse, they deserve both protection and adequate treatment. In addition, they deserve to live in hope that one day they may be made whole again.

This was my very first personal experience of the reality that sometimes helpers get overwhelmed by what they encounter and witness in their professional lives. It was my very first professional encounter with the reality that sometimes designated helpers and care providers urgently need help.

1962: Elkhart General Hospital

During my senior year of college, my biological father was terminally ill and was slowly moving towards death. Diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 1958, he had fought the disease through two surgically-induced remissions. But now it was clear: death was very close. I was personally devastated. I was also blessed. The campus pastor had professional training in counseling and when I talked with him, he was helpful. In addition, the nursing faculty who supervised my clinical practicum assignments also supported me during this time. Many years later one of these women said to me, *you asked me questions about human suffering and death at such depths that I thought about them long after you left my office.* I was, therefore, not abandoned by helpful adults who understood more about human death and the suffering of intense anticipatory grief than I did.



Elkhart General Hospital

It was a personal day in hell, when the hospital staff assigned me to care for a man who was dying of pancreatic cancer. When I walked in to greet him he stated at me with the same weary and sad yellow eyes that my father did. When

I looked at his skin, it was as orange and as brittle as my father's skin. As I bathed him, his bones and skin were the bones and skin of my father. When I moved him as gently as I knew how, his cries of pain were the cries of my father.

At one point I went to the restroom to quiet my grief and wipe my tears so that I could be professional with this man – so that I could take care of his needs rather than my own. I needed a few moments of privacy to regain my professional poise. I needed time to think. I paused long enough to gain access to the formative years of my professional training. Metaphorically I chose not to faint. I would not run away. I would not hide. I decided that I would do my absolute best to help him be comfortable. I would talk with him as I had been taught to talk with dying patients. I would stay with him rather than abandon him. He deserved the best care I could offer him. In short, he was not my father. His impending death was not my father's impending death. He deserved to be seen as the man he was not as the man of my projected suffering. At the end of the day's shift, I asked the floor's team leader if I could care for him the next day if he was still alive. I now wanted to care for him rather than run away and hide.

In our lifetimes, physician-oncologist Rachel Naomi Remen has said, we re-encounter our own important life stories and as long as we live we continue to make meaning from them.^{lxxxiii} In looking back, I know this jaundiced emaciated dying man became my teacher. Taking care of him helped me perhaps more than I was able to help him. On that day I grew up a bit. I moved one step closer to personal and professional maturity. I learned one more step in my understanding of transference and counter-transference although it would be several years in the future from this day when I learned those words.

The 1970's:

Feminist Women Initiate the Anti-Rape Movement

To study psychological trauma is to come face to face both with human vulnerability in the material world and with the capacity for evil in human nature.

Judith Lewis Herman^{lxxxiv}

Before the anti-rape movement had appropriate or accurate language to describe what was obvious in front of our eyes, women activists and women healers encountered empathic disorders in themselves and in other female helpers and activists. While I did not have technical and situation-precise language to describe what I was personally experiencing and what I was witnessing inside anti-rape and anti-domestic violence activists, my prior education and clinical experiences as a community mental health nurse specialist did provide me with a basic understanding of traumatic counter-transference issues.^{lxxxv}

As a community mental health nurse, I had learned some inner ways of buffering my own spirit from being overtaken by the suffering of others. The first time student nurses witnessed autopsies or the first time they circulated in a surgery suite, they learned to focus on the task at hand and not to faint. In the presence of death, the helper had to learn how to take care of the body of someone they knew and had cared for without falling apart. They had to know how to comfort the next of kin.

The First Lesson of Professionalism

Trauma is contagious. In the role of witness to disaster or atrocity the therapist at times is emotionally overwhelmed. She experiences, to a lesser degree, the same terror, rage, and despair as the patient

Judith Lewis Herman^{lxxxvi}

This very first lesson of professionalism is essential to one's emotional and professional survival in the clinical professions of medicine and nursing. As a health care provider it is essential to learn how to be attentive and helpful without (1) metaphorically or literally dissolving or (2) hardening one's sensibilities so that one stops sensing one's deepest intuitions as clinical guides. It is also essential to manage the empathic transfer of strong emotions and it is essential to harness the strong judgmental tendencies of blaming and accusing. When the patient presents himself or herself for care and for treatment, it is essential to treat the individual with respect and with compassion for their actual life situation. It is not the gallbladder in room 202 which needs our care; it is the patient with gallbladder disease who does. Each patient has a personal identity and a social identity. Both need to be respected. Likewise it is not a dissociative disorder that confronts us. Individuals with difficult life histories and personalities come in and out of our professional lives. Some are profoundly unattractive. Some are profoundly wounded. Some are profoundly confused by their experiences of life. Each deserves to be treated with dignity and compassion. Some are so brave in the face of death that they inspire us.

Good clinicians learn to monitor their empathic processes of identification as a clinical tool. As they mature they learn not to judge others. As part of their clinical training, they learn how to enter the lives of their clients and they learn as well how to exit them. They learn principles of ethical behavior. They also learn how to manage strong emotional responses to the life tragedies and hardships of others. That patient whom caregivers carry home with them at the end of their shift or tour of duty represents, therefore, counter-transference issues and these issues must be managed appropriately if the caregiver is to emotionally survive the demands of his or her ongoing work.

Transference and Counter-transference Issues

Traumatic events destroy the victim's fundamental assumptions about the safety of the world, the positive value of the self, and the meaningful order of creation.

Judith Lewis Herman^{lxxxvii}

Transference and counter-transference issues arise at one time or another in every mental health professional's clinical practice. Because this is a known reality, the clinical professions advise practitioners in training about the continuous need for self-awareness. The aphorism, *only a fool has himself for a doctor*, is an effort to teach beginning clinical students that self-delusional activities are a temptation to be avoided. In addition, individual and peer supervision activities are provided inside clinical agencies which provide counseling or mental health services to others. Even seasoned practitioners are advised to have ready and consistent access to peer supervision and consultants.

Literature about the therapeutic community is quite clear: When treatment teams are divided by power struggles and ideological disputes; when they are engaged in direct or even in quite covert conflicts with each other; when there is hidden sexual misconduct: patient behavioral problems escalate. Patients intuit these struggles and they react to them with difficult behavior – even when they as patients have no conscious awareness or accurate information that conflicts about power and control have divided the staff from each other across ideological grounds.^{lxxxviii} Often, but not always, it is possible to diagnose supervisory problems by the precise nature of the behavioral problems among the lower staff and the patients. When there is “acting out” in human social or institutional environments, it is essential to diagnose systemic problems as well as individual ones.

As an experienced mental health practitioner and patient care supervisor, I could, therefore, monitor and buffer my inner psychic and emotional world to some degree. The learned skills of my profession could be applied to my feminist activism on behalf of raped or beaten or otherwise violated women. But there was something both threatening and disheartening about the reality that every raped individual I met or heard about was female that made this professionalized distance more difficult to achieve. The feminist sense that *every woman is myself* speaks not to the unified experience and voice of every woman. Class, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation issues separate women. Rather the maxim speaks to the ever present possibility of being victimized by sexual and gendered violence. No girl or woman, no matter how privileged, is ever spared the dangers of her patriarchal culture.

The 1980's:

Central American Encounters with Systemic Violence



Nicaragua in the 1980's lxxxix

During the middle years of the decade of the 1980's I supervised small groups of undergraduate students in a Central American setting. As part of their thirteen week program of language and cultural studies, each student was required to do a six week unpaid internship. Because of the proximity of neighbor nation war zones, refugee camps were springing up in our host country only to be filled immediately. I approached the local United Nations Refugee Organization in Costa Rica (ACNUR) officials and asked if I might assign mature upper level students to refugee camps as unpaid volunteer workers. Such a work assignment provided a Spanish language internship and it provided additional workers in the camps. Not every student was ready for such an experience and not all students wanted such an experience. Consequently, these internship assignment negotiations were initiated and controlled by me.

Because of the intense nature of these camp situations I modified the rules of the sponsoring college in North America which preferred students to be placed individually in geographically-separated communities in order to further their language acquisition skills. These total immersion programs increased students' second language skills. As the on-site program director I made the decision that any student who worked in a refugee camp would do so in same gender pairs. They would have individual living spaces with local families to facilitate language acquisition but they would not be isolated from using English with each other on a daily basis if they needed a peer's help and emotional support.

Once students were accepted by ACNUR and assigned, I supervised their practicum work inside a variety of Spanish-speaking refugee camps. I was provided with a card which allowed me to enter and re-enter the individual camps. In this particular context, the host country – Costa Rica, fearing it would be overrun by refugees and that the Nicaraguan civil war's violence could spread, isolated the camps and guarded their inhabitants so, that once settled inside, refugees were not allowed to leave the camp's boundaries. In essence, no work or travel permits of any kind were issued to refugee families. Each of the camps I visited was in a different geographical zone of the host country. Each

camp was culturally isolated from ordinary host nation citizens. Each camp held unique challenges for students.

In every situation when I made supervisory visits I found compassionate North American twenty-year olds who were emotionally overwhelmed by the human deprivation and suffering they witnessed on a daily basis. The stories they heard were beyond comprehension to young adults who had never seen the inside of a war zone. In consultations with their Central American mothers and on-site United Nations supervisors, I devised situation-specific escape hatch plans for these young adults. Together, the students' host nation mothers and I identified safe and local places for them to visit so that they could use the beautiful beaches and national parks of Central America as time-out spaces for rest and relaxation. We located hotels and motels where they would be safe. I negotiated times of absence from the camps with their local work supervisors.

In addition to debriefing each pair of students together, I spent personal time with each student as an individual – talking with him or her about what they were observing and experiencing. I asked them to talk about how they were putting things together inside their own heads. We would sit in local soda shops and I would read their homework assignments. This provided an open doorway for in-depth conversations about how they were changing and growing and what they were learning. It allowed them time to ask questions or share unflattering commentaries about the camps' personnel or residents. What was most necessary in my perspective was that they needed a non-judgmental adult presence to help them integrate what they witnessed and to mitigate the impact this witnessing had on their personal selves.

Sometimes the most important thing I could do, therefore, was to encourage them to talk to me in English about what they were experiencing in Spanish. These conversations were a way for them to externalize the inner turmoil and emotional pain caused by seeing human suffering they could not adequately describe even to themselves in Spanish or alleviate in any way. As they debriefed their daily activities, tears of sadness and tears of rage were often present.

A Personal Example

During one student supervision visit, I spent several hours in a shabby warehouse building which had been very hurriedly converted into a refugee camp. The students' internships in this camp meant they were each assigned to help several refugee families with childcare. For several hours that afternoon, while the students played with and supervised a small group of refugee children, I sat on one old blind man's bunk bed – his only personal space in a building holding hundreds of these beds. We held hands and I listened to his stories and his daughter's accounts of their desperate flight from an active war zone less than two hundred kilometers away. Since the family's children were well-

occupied and safely out of hearing range, our conversations were those of adults. We talked about what daily life was like – as she needed to take care of her aging blind father as well as her young children. We talked about the absence of schooling for the children. We talked about the absence of needed medical care. We talked about food shortages. Since many Costa Ricans harbored deep racial prejudices about Nicaraguans, we talked about hostile race and class prejudices as these were expressed by some of the local staff members who had been hired by ACNUR to provide basic services inside the camp. Holding the old man's hand, and listening to him recount the human tragedies and losses he'd so recently experienced, my heart broke wide open and I began to understand personally the realities that these refugee camp student interns faced every day. The stories individually were overwhelming. Collectively, the presence of hundreds of stories challenged and then threatened to overpower the students' emotional maturity and resiliency.

In the years since then, I have carried that war-displaced old blind man inside my heart. Because of his age then, I know he has died but to me he is still as alive as he was on that day when we sat on his bunk bed – tightly holding on to each other's hands - and crying together. My memories of my feelings of helplessness to do anything meaningful to make his life easier or better or less difficult travel with me and surface with my memories of his stories.

A complex blend of compassion and helplessness – these are the experienced emotions of vicarious trauma. All I could give that old man and his daughter that day was my undivided attention and my willingness to listen to both of them sort through their lives out loud so they could make less desperate decisions about how to live in the present moment.

While I could not change his life or his family's life, I could use the voice of my North American privilege to protest the violence of this particular war in this particular era. As a teacher, I could use my life's vocation to teach students to think about the wars of their era in history. As a theologian, I could avoid invoking God's name as the rationale for war. As a Christian I could find ways to financially support other war-traumatized families.

Whenever I think about or write about vicarious empathy disorders, this old blind man is my ever-present teacher. I have never been a refugee from a war zone but through his stories and his daughter's stories I have seen war's terrible human consequences. To me he was not an example of war's dehumanized collateral damage. He was its embodied victimized human face. In a certain way, over the years since then his face has become God's face. Even as I recall and write, he continues to be my teacher.

The Late 1980's: Writing a Dissertation on Rape

Engagement in this work poses some risk to the therapist's own psychological health. The therapist's adverse reactions, unless understood and contained, lead to disruptions in the therapeutic alliance with patients and to conflict with their professional colleagues. Therapists who work with traumatized people require an ongoing support system to deal with these intense reactions. Just as no survivor can recover alone, no therapist can work with trauma alone.

Judith Lewis Herman^{xc}

As I sat in the Hesburgh Library at the University of Notre Dame doing the basic reading review that accompanies all dissertation research and writing, I immersed myself in the emerging professional literature about rape and rape trauma. I followed the thread of research literature that was accompanying the development of the PTSD diagnosis. I saw emerging intimations about the roll of cellular memory. I read medical literature; I read literature from the other clinical sciences; I read literature from the social sciences. I read the emerging body of demographical research. I read criminology literature. I read feminist social critiques of sexual violence and a culture of violence against women. I read rape fiction. I read several pornographic novels. In addition, because of my personal commitment to narrative stories as another form of truth-telling, I actively sought out and read first-person accounts of violation and its aftermath in the lives of real women and children.



Hesburgh Library
University of Notre Dame^{xc}

In the course of these many months of study, I grew increasingly paranoid about sexual victimization and concerns about my personal safety spiraled out of control. One day as I read a particularly gruesome rape, murder and dismemberment narrative, I knew I needed to immediately leave the library. If I didn't, I felt certain that I would be attacked, raped, and murdered. I was suddenly paranoid about who was lurking in the almost empty and always poorly lit stacks. In an emotional state of panic and terror, I gathered my things together

and bolted. I felt much as I had in that men's psychiatric ward when I was twenty. Reaching the privacy of my car, I sobbed. Gradually, I recognized that my overwhelming sense of personal terror and rage was not rational. I was sitting in a major Catholic university's public parking lot in broad daylight and no assailants were present.

Driving home, I knew I needed help. I drove to the home of a friend of mine with good clinical skills. When she opened the door, I blurted out, *women always tell each other the worst story of violation they know. Whatever happened to the usual or the normal story? Why do we women activists and clinicians need to terrify each other?*

That afternoon in my friend's house I alternated weeping, cursing, pacing, and talking. I made several attempts to coherently explain my agitated state. I was a good enough clinician at that time to understand that I did not need to corrupt her consciousness by re-telling her the details of the brutally gruesome story that had just totally colonized and disrupted mine. She was a good enough clinician to know that I needed time and non-judgmental support. I needed simple friendship. She cooked dinner, we played mindless card games for several hours, and then, much calmer, I was ready to drive to my own home. Over the next several days, she checked in to make certain I was still OK. Hearing me joke, giggle, and talk about ordinary things in my life, she gradually stopped worrying about me and watching over me and we resumed our ordinary friendship.

The Worst Story We Know

There were no ready answers for me on that day. But the question remained with me. How do we educate each other about the realities of sexual violence? Do we need to tell each other the worst stories we know? Just perhaps, is this extreme story-telling a way of purging our consciousness? If so, it spreads the disruptive power of the narrative much like a manure spreader works to fertilize a field. Do such *worst story* narratives spread terror among women? Are they helpful? Are they needed? What is their real purpose? Is it, perhaps, an effort by the story's second-hand narrator to detoxify the story so it can be borne? Is it an attempt to get other's attention and warn them? Is it an effort to repair an already damaged inner consciousness? Do these worst scenario stories act like a flu or AIDS virus inside the community of women? Do they, perhaps, even serve to immunize their hearers against empathy? Do they dissuade women from being brave enough to help each other? Do they turn ordinary women into women who deny the power of the story to touch them and the women they love? Do these *worst stories* serve the patriarchy or do they serve to challenge the patriarchy?



No Quieren (They do not want!)
Goya, *Disasters of War Series*^{xcii}

In the years since my abrupt terrified dash from the UND library I have frequently returned to the question's paranoia, terror and pain, its disillusionment, and its transformative power. If I was going to continue to work in sexual violence studies and if I was to continue to work in anti-violence activism as well as in clinical and teaching contexts, I needed to come to terms with any rape narrative's power to elicit the raw emotions of fear, rage, dismay, and terror. I needed to learn how to manage their emotional and reactive consequences in my own body-Self. I needed to learn how to navigate their power in order to help other woman and to teach students how to do so as well.

Learning to Manage the Worst Story

Over the years I have evolved some general principles for my professional life as I have sought to understand this raw and searing question about worst stories. It was so real and so spontaneous and so very un-nerving on that cold Indiana day. Learning to manage the vicarious trauma of violence we have not personally and directly experienced is a lesson that everyone who deliberately chooses to stare into the face of evil's violence must learn. This is particularly so if one's life work involves helping victimized individuals deal with and manage their wounds. Being overwhelmed by paranoid hopelessness; being overtaken by a spirit of warrior-like vengeance; or becoming alienated, embittered, and silenced by the evil which victimizes: these understandable human responses represent a failure of the human spirit to cope. They have the potential to disable the witness and to make her ongoing work either totally ineffective or impossible.

In addition, these very human responses represent the active potential for the spirit of evil and malicious, retaliatory and avenging violence to colonize our own spirits and the spirits of our communities of reference. Every time I hear a-rape-narrative-enraged-woman say something to the effect that *all men are the devil and every last one of them should be castrated*, I pull back in disagreement. I understand the lashing spirit of her fear and anger but I know it is counterproductive. I know it actually serves the patriarchy because it is a spirit

which cannot transmute evil or neutralize its power. Violence, even when only imagined, as the solution to violence is not the solution. Indeed, this imagined revenge-violence contaminates our inner self in ways which are quite harmful.

Evil and the desire to do evil in return for the evil done to us (or others) begin to reproduce and spread. The transpersonal sea of human consciousness begins to be increasingly toxic and healing the wounds of individual and collective violence becomes more and more difficult. Over time I have worked out some basic ways of understanding my own response patterns to sexual violence in the lives of others.

The Most Violent Story Belongs to its Victimized Narrator

In order to escape accountability for his crimes, the perpetrator does everything in his power to promote forgetting. Secrecy and silence are the perpetrator's first line of defense. If secrecy fails, the perpetrator attacks the credibility of his victim. If he cannot silence her absolutely, he tries to make sure that no one listens. To this end, he marshals an amazing array of arguments, from the most blatant denial to the most sophisticated and elegant rationalizations. After every atrocity one can expect to hear the same predictable apologies: it never happened; the victim lies; the victim exaggerates; the victim brought it upon herself; and, in any case, it is time to forget the past and to move on. The more powerful the perpetrator, the greater is his prerogative to name and define reality, and the more completely his arguments prevail.

Judith Lewis Herman^{xciii}

The *first* understanding, therefore, is that the most violent story belongs to its victimized narrator. It deserves to be told *and* it deserves to be compassionately heard in its full complexity. The goal of our work as healers and witnesses in the work of sexual violence studies is not to silence and abrogate the victim's voice. The goal is not to protect our own self from hearing the most violent and worst story. The goal is not to avoid knowing. Rather, the task of all healers and witnesses is to listen to the story in all of its complexity with the goal of helping the victim learn to manage her (or his) life experiences in ways which do not further victimize the self or others. The goal is victim empowerment – not additional disempowerment. As we stay focused on the complex tasks of healing and advocacy, it is very important to enable the victim of violence to tell her story and to assist her in the complex processes of personal growth - of helping her learn to manage it for her own healing. At no time is it helpful to take ownership of the other's story as if it were our own. The immediate task for the listener, therefore, is to learn how to manage the inner empathic responses in such a way that the healer's self is able to do its work in a situation appropriate manner.

The Witness's Inner Story

Only in recent years have I more adequately comprehended that to be effective healers over time we must also learn how to manage our own inner story and response patterns with the same kind of compassionate care that we provide to others. Informed empathic care for the other; self-aware compassionate care of the self: both are essential aspects of bearing witness.

The *second* understanding is simple to explicate but difficult to embody. As professional witnesses to another's stories of violation, we must learn how to bracket the client's narrative from contaminating or taking over our own inner life story. We must learn how to bracket the emotional impact of victimization narratives in such a way that we do not minimize or deny any aspect of the victim's experience. It is essential not to blame the victim in any way for her experiences of victimization. It is not that the client's story can be so totally bracketed away that we deny its existence. Rather, the principle is that every sexual abuse story that we hear affects us. As we listen to this story or that story, we need to concomitantly monitor these narratives of sexual violence, their emotional effect on the storyteller *and* the impact they make on our own psyches and emotional self. In short, we need to manage our empathic self and its responses to others' life tragedies.

I've come to think of this management process as one of opening and shutting emotional dampers. Deciding to work as witnesses to sexual violation, it is essential to be able to open one's empathic barriers in order to understand the other. It is also essential to be able to close one's empathic barriers in order to protect the self. In my mind this process of opening and shutting is like an intricate ballet – a dance of responding to life in compassion, integrity, and realistic self-other relatedness.

When we recognize that the story belongs to its teller, we do not need to make that story our own. We do not need to internalize and then carry the other's story for her. We do not need to introject, feel and subsequently carry the narrator's intense emotional responses to having been victimized and traumatized by violence.

Here too I have continued to mature in my understanding of this principle. To do competent work with others, we need a relatively healthy self. We need, therefore, to nurture healthy relationships with a wide variety of others. We need professional consultants. We need to do active proactive self-care. We need, therefore, to design and provide our selves with appropriate escape hatches from our work.

The *third* understanding is that some sexual violence stories are *worst stories* because they are incredibly toxic stories. Others are *worst stories* because of the precise way they intersect with or interact with our own life history and personal

life narratives. Because of the nature and quantity of the violence they describe, worst stories can cause us as listeners or readers to shut down emotionally. They elicit severe or intense anxiety states. They can create an internal state of acute paranoia. They can, and often do, activate severe empathic distress.

Thus, these stories of sexual violation and human betrayal need to be approached with cautionary care and managed with competency. Our comprehension regarding the nature of their toxicity means we listen not only to the story but to the reverberation of its consequences inside the community of women. This kind of psychological and emotional management is not unlike the physical management processes utilized by the world community when a nuclear power plant breaks down and contaminates the water, air, land and destroys or damages all life forms inside its circle of influence.

The outworking of this principle is that not all clinicians can work successfully with all clients. A worst story for me may not be a worst story for a colleague. A worst story for me today may become a more manageable one for me as I mature in my clinical skills. In addition, some clinicians cannot ever work with *worst stories*. A solid referral, supervisory, and consultation network is needed in order to help clients find someone who can listen to their story and not be destroyed by it.

Just as a massage therapist or body worker will not undertake complex brain neurosurgery, therapists and other victim witnesses must have an accurate working knowledge of their own skills, personal fault lines, and their psychosocial and emotional limitations. They need to be securely grounded in the theory base of their professions. This principle provides for the utilization of experts to supplement ordinary and usual clinical practices. It also protects practitioners from malpractice complaints and compassion fatigue.

Opening Narrative Flood Gates

Over time another principle became quite evident to me. When an individual begins to talk about sexual violence in a manner which indicates receptivity and competency, many more stories will appear in their relational inbox. Every activist, every speaker, and every teacher I know confirms this. Speaking about sexual violence in any context or in any format means that individuals within hearing range will decide, for the first time in their lives that it is now safe to talk about their own personal experiences.

This presents witnesses and victim advocates with a personal dilemma: what is the best way to manage accessibility to victimized individuals, their personal abilities and tolerance levels for careful listening and their personal needs for time-outs from the issues of abuse so they can do careful self-care; so they can avoid becoming (1) overwhelmed, (2) immobilized and (3) vicariously traumatized

by the violent and malicious (evil) stories which they hear as a result of their work and finally (4) a carrier of vicarious trauma that then infects other lives.

Concluding Remarks

Empathic disorders are essentially disorders of anxiety and compassion fatigue. Individuals who seek to work inside the enchanted and very toxic forest of sexual abuse narratives need to understand these disorders in order to manage them. The secondary victimizations encountered by witnesses to stories of violence and victimization are wounds as real as those wounds of individuals victimized by betrayal acts of violence. Not only do our clients need to learn to manage their wounds so as to *bear that which is unbearable*, so also must we who work as witnesses and healers manage our own fault lines and our own wounds.

As a mature clinician, the issue is no longer avoiding the stories that so shatter the commons but of being an observant and alert and compassionate listener – one who does not bolt and run because of anxiety and one who does not self-destruct because of rage and anger.

Learning how to be a Good Samaritan who bears witness and who bends the universe in order to help is a life-long activity. For, as Dr. Herman taught her continuing education classes: just when you think you have heard every kind of story of evil in the enchanted forest, a victimized individual tells you a new story – one that challenges every personal fault line and every belief system one has created to manage such stories.

The Witness's Dilemma^{xciv}



xcv

Diversionary Tactic or Essential Work

Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you. I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

Jeremiah 2: 5

One of the questions which individuals face as first witnesses or as long-term victim advocates is the question of the personal costs of their work on behalf of others. When Father Thomas Doyle, a long term advocate for clergy sexual abuse victims in the Roman Catholic Church, spoke in Tucson in 2006^{xcvi} an audience member asked him about the personal costs of his work on behalf of his denomination's clergy sexual abuse victims.

Such questions were, I thought then, a diversionary tactic, a way to escape, even if only momentarily, the pain of knowing and attending to the suffering of sexual violence survivor's stories. In responding to the question, Doyle replied that in general he believed that talking about his own personal life in public settings both could and would distract a listener's attention from learning about and identifying with the issues faced by the victims of his church's clergy and its hierarchy. Such questions allowed the audience and the speaker to leave behind the pain of the victims' suffering, the pain of empathy. I immediately understood and agreed with his hesitation. He was speaking to a group of Roman Catholic lay individuals in a city where the local Catholic diocese had credible complaints lodged against thirty or more sexually abusive priests and members of religious orders.^{xcvii} In such a situation, it was, I thought, inevitable that victimized individuals were in attendance – whether they were known as such or not.

Doyle then went on to give a generic factual answer to the question. The removal of his faculties as a priest by the Catholic archbishop who denominationally supervised his work in the United States Air Force (where he served as a Roman

Catholic Chaplain) was by this time public knowledge among Roman Catholic insiders. He briefly discussed this recent event and then asked for another question.

Having Second and Third Thoughts

Yet, during the years since his presentation and personally guarded but thoughtful answer, I have continued to return to that afternoon's gathering of concerned Roman Catholic lay persons. It seemed clear to me that they wanted to understand this complex international story of clergy sexual abuse and abuse cover-ups. In the years since then I have continued to question my own reactions and their underlying assumptions about the need for the witness's silence about his or her own personal life experiences in the extended realities of advocacy for truth and justice inside corrupted institutional structures.

The Sexual Violence Survivor's Story Belongs to Her

I am increasingly convinced of the principle that a survivor's story belongs to the survivor. She deserves the right to remain silent, or even invisible, if she needs to. The communal temptation to tell a survivor's story without his or her permission turns the story into a commodity of detoxification or a commodity of persuasion. As a commodity it can, therefore, be freely traded in the public arena. I think witnesses to the violence narratives of others must always resist their individual or their communal appropriation of another's story in (1) their efforts to detoxify it and/or (2) in their efforts to persuade others about the story's evil presence inside the human commons.

The harm we do when we appropriate another's story lodges inside the quite natural human temptation to objectify survivors as a warning or as an object lesson. When we do this, however, we participate in their dehumanization and depersonalization in ways which perpetuate the dehumanization and depersonalization they encountered as they were abused. In particular, the temptation to accuse and blame victims is very strong inside human communities. Emptied, in the public arena, of the complexity of their lives, victims become a stationary icon rather than living and suffering human beings.

This means, I have come to believe, that the only story I am free to tell is my own story. To tell this story well means that I must first seek to understand it and then secondly I must be willing to tell it.

Exceptions to the Principle

Obviously, there are exceptions to this general principle. When victims of violation choose to break open the containing cell of anonymity, they do so with the knowledge that their story will become common information in the public arena. In a certain way, they know that they will lose control of the story even as,

in the telling of it, they gain more freedom from its secretive powers in their lives. In their own courageous attempts to create awareness or to bring justice and accountability to perpetrators, their survivors' choices to tell their own stories includes the knowledge that others will talk about their sexual abuse story in order to (1) sympathetically understand it or to (2) unsympathetically deny it or to (3) attack it with venomous hostility.

But, without the survivor's permission, witnesses, even with the best of intentions, who tell other's particular stories of victimization, have, in essence, stolen the survivor's story and have made it their own. They have begun the processes of making it a commodity to be used for their own purposes rather than the victim's purposes and welfare. This is, I believe, a very subtle process of disempowerment. It most likely happens as witnesses seek to detoxify these stories in order to manage them. But spreading the survivor's specific stories around without permission may just spread the virus they contain.

I make one additional proviso or exception to this principle. When witnesses to victimization can abstract the essence of a story by deliberately concealing its origins, then it becomes a teachable story. We need teachable stories. This is how human beings learn. Abstracted stories are, in a sense, one step removed from their originating stories. The details of identity are often deliberately manipulated to conceal the victimized individual's identity. Usually this kind of work is done with great care to protect survivors from the intrusive public glare of celebrity or additional victimization.

The Witness's Dilemma

There is another way of answering the question, *how has your work on behalf of victimized others in the world affected you?* It is one which does not alienate survivors or deny them their suffering rights to be heard. It does not make a victim's story the witness's personal story. It does not take the victim's or survivor's story and make it the common property of all.

For me, this new way of thinking understands that it is from the foundation of our own story that we can speak about multiple forms of abuse with forthrightness and candor. When we do this, we need to understand in advance that we too bring our personal stories into the public arena. Here they may be misunderstood or judged. But they may also educate, inform and inspire others to take up the causes of justice and healing.

Over time I have come to believe, therefore, that the healer, the prophet, the witness, the anti-violence activist, the victim advocate, and the peacemaker can answer the question of personal costs in such a way that they provide informational guidance markers about how to work and survive inside the enchanted abusive clerical forest. These markers can provide active help to other

idealistic and morally-principled individuals who also seek to be helpful but who are fearful about personal costs.

An honest personal story honestly told usually inspires others to honesty. A personally courageous story told honestly can inspire others to acts of courage. A story of principled perseverance, even in the midst of personal failings and emotional fatigue, when told honestly can provide practical guidance about how to persevere in situations of great difficulty. These kinds of stories can help to create alliances of people all working towards a reasonable and permanent solution.^{xcviii}

Clinical wisdom

During the past six years of research and writing, I have reflected on some odds and ends of knowledge and personal experience. Working with survivors of abuse has been one aspect of my professional vocation. I know firsthand that helpers can bear a personal testimony to our own experiences as a hologram of victim experiences. The institutional calumny which is heaped on witnesses and helpers in situations of structural or systemic violence is very similar to the personal abuse and calumny that victims and survivors experience when they first tell their story. As the institutional church rejects its whistle-blowers because of their efforts to invite compassionate justice, personal healing, institutional reform and full accountability from perpetrators, so too does it reject the church's primary victims – the men and women who have been directly and personally abused by the church's religious and spiritual leaders.

Not only do outspoken victims and survivors of clergy sexual violence and gender abuse become pariahs and outcasts and religiously homeless individuals within their abusive denominational communities: so too do whistle-blowers and other protesting activists. The institutional pushback against victims, witnesses and prophets can, at times, be an extension of the act of sexual violence experienced by the abused other.

Thoughtful reflection, therefore, on our own story as witnesses and whistle-blowers can help us locate missing pieces from the understanding and comprehending puzzle box. As we question our own experiences and responses, we learn something about human experiences and responses. When our friends and colleagues, share what they know and opine, they elicit our own stories and illuminate our own stash of personal wisdom stories. As compassionate and witnessing individuals seek to understand the larger public narrative of corrupt church institutions they need an opportunity to share and compare stories. They are, in this manner, given permission to identify and share their own perspectives and wisdom – thus enlarging everyone's own perspective.

The Johari Window

As we begin to reveal our life journeys first to ourselves and then secondarily to each other, we soon discover that while we know and understand some aspects of our lives and personalities, some aspects remain hidden to us. We also discover the wisdom of the community – that knowledge which it has about our actions and our motivations that we may not know or choose to recognize. As we become more skilled during the course of our lives in being emotionally and intellectually intimate with each other, we encounter a deep awareness of each others strengths, wounds, and undeveloped gifts. We slowly, in each genuinely collaborative relationship, learn how to work together in ways which further the common good of all.



The Johari Window^{XCIX}

What is essential in anti-abuse and anti-violence work, I now believe, is the ability to trust each other with the most difficult dimensions of our personal story. That which is most hidden or most painful in our own lives may, in fact, contain revelatory and healing power for the lives and work of others. That which we carry in grief, in hidden rage, in sadness, in shame, and in secrecy may lose its capacity to hobble us as we begin to work together. For such honesty to emerge, we need to learn how to make ourselves visible to each other.^c We need to learn how to encourage others to make their life's wisdom visible to us and to the whole. In terms of the model above, the goal is to increase the information we have in the free zone and to decrease the size of the hidden, blind, and unknown zones.

In retirement I am slowly learning to listen to and engage with those thoughts that carry deep emotional charges with them. These deep emotional charges signal, I have come to believe, the presence of deep wisdom as well as the presence of deep wounds. If I am talking with a friend and the well of emotion surges, I have choices about how I will deal with this. I can choose to bracket the emotion and return to its narrative at a later time or I can acknowledge the emotion with my friend and we can both examine it as an element of our friendship. I know some of my friends are uncomfortable with deep surges of emotion. In general I tend to

spare them from needing to deal with these aspects of my personality. But, over the years I have learned, that the friends who are most comfortable with all of the edges of my personality are those friends who are comfortable with their own emotional selves. These are the friendships and colleague relationships that are truly intimate ones. They are, therefore, the most supportive and productive relationships in terms of the outer world and its work.

Since many witnesses and whistle-blowers in the process of bearing witness to the suffering of others lose their primary communities of reference, it is essential for their personal well-being and physical or emotional health that they begin to build new communities for their ongoing lives. One of the logical places to build such a community of support is with other people who are engaged in doing the same kind of work – perhaps in different settings.

The Survivor's Story and Our Story

If we begin with the principle that both stories (the stories of survivors and the stories of their witnesses, advocates and helpers) deserve a hearing in the human commons, then we must struggle with the questions of timing and appropriate places for the emergence of each kind of story in its turn. There is a way for whistle-blower story telling to totally co-opt the witness of victims and survivors. Clearly this is counter-productive and undesirable.

Yet, as I have thought about these issues, it has become clear to me that whistle-blowers, witnesses, advocates, allies and friends also need a place and time to describe and debrief their own encounters with the toxic stories that inhabit the enchanted forest of religious leader sexual abuse and institutional clericalism. There is collective wisdom and it cannot be accessed in total isolation from others.

A Clinical Analogy

Good clinicians know that therapy is always a two way conversation. They know, as well, that they bring their personal selves to the clinical interaction as a tool of change. Both parties change in the course of successful therapy. While the purpose of therapy is to help the client, good therapists often experience the reality that in the middle of the therapeutic relationship they too learn something life-changing about themselves. In fact, some of my most powerful teachers have been clients and students. This generalized awareness about the interpersonal nature of good clinical work can be usefully exploited as a therapeutic tool.

Aware of her personal inner shifts, the therapist can be alert to similar shifts in the client, and to shifts in the interpersonal space between them. If the client makes a perceptive, perhaps even confrontational, observation, the wise therapist acknowledges the truthfulness of the observation and reinforces the perceptiveness of the client's insight. Unwise therapists deny the lived-reality of

counter-transference and thus deny their clients the right to know that their apperception apparatus is intact and on-target. Therapeutic humility in the face of accurate and appropriate client confrontations is an essential demonstration of therapist integrity and maturity. No therapist is helpful or even minimally perceptive 100 percent of the time. Mistakes of diagnosis, treatment and interpretation can and will be made. Honest therapeutic work means the ability and willingness to acknowledge this reality. Where appropriate, it means apologies and other forms of making amends. At the very least, it means acknowledging the complex interpersonal realities that pervade the relationship and mark its outer boundaries.

A personal example

In Vancouver, Canada during a particularly grueling and, therefore, viscerally disturbing, conference on sexual abuse and domestic violence inside Mennonite communities, I became aware that as one of the program's speakers and consultants I needed a different kind of supervisory relationship and conference debriefing process than the Mennonite sponsoring agency was providing to the speakers they had hired and brought to the Canadian Coast. At a leadership team meeting that evening, I voiced the need for this international sponsoring organization to create a safer place in which the speaker-consultants could talk personally and confidentially with each other about the spiritual and psychological or emotional impact of doing this work. I commented that I felt a personal need for a different kind of de-briefing conversation than we were having and made a professional observation that the hired witnesses – what I often privately called the hired mouths - needed time to deal with our own experiences of vicarious trauma if we were to continue to be helpful to survivors of sexual and physical abuse inside the Mennonite community of faith. We needed a place, a time, and a community of safe witnesses where we could debrief without the usual Mennonite gossip mill leaking our personal concerns and needs to conference attendees or to the wider church. We needed a confidential place, separate from the spaces we were creating for victims and survivors, where we could examine our own and others responses to the conference speeches and stories.

Each speaker I knew personally in this network of Mennonite women activists, clinicians and theologians reported that after each lecture, they were privately approached by others – often many others – who wanted and needed to tell their abuse and violence story for the first time. In multiple settings, in my role as speaker (the hired mouth) and consultant, I had witnessed severe dissociative disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, self-destructive rumination, anxiety disorders, addictive disorders, and suicidal ideation. In most of these communities I was an outsider. I had, therefore, no practical awareness of clinical resources which could be called upon. I felt that I was often eliciting severe and potentially harmful and definitely abreactive transference reactions – just by

speaking candidly and openly about sexual abuse and domestic abuse inside the household of faith.

I had also witnessed and experienced direct hostility to the sermon or conference address I had just completed. Being dissed in hostility for my work was, in some church locations and conference environments, as ordinary an experience as being thanked. I knew what it was like to have complaints about my denominational work lodged with my employer. I knew first hand what it was like to be called to account for my self to a college president because a board member had complained about a conference sermon I had just preached.

That evening I personally was experiencing two powerful and contradictory forces inside my personality. My deepest, most introverted, and most self-protective instinct was to close my personal boundaries. My most aware professional intuition was that conference attendees needed and deserved a safe space in which to talk. Keeping them outside my personal zone of safety was, therefore, another way of re-victimizing them by communicating that their story was unacceptable or unbearable to me in some way.

Aware of both internal messages about my personal needs, I needed to find or create a pathway for myself between being open and receptive to the needs of others while I also cared for the inner self – a self which found these stories of my faith community devastatingly and overwhelmingly painful to hear.

One of the Mennonite women in the room that night was a survivor of sexual abuse and violence in late adolescence and after my observatory comments about my personal sense of need she took over all verbal space in the group for the next ten or twenty minutes. My self-observation, rooted in my own uneasy sense of speakers' and consultants' needs for a different kind of peer support before the next sessions began, in some manner or other, both offended and re-wounded her. My observations and questions ignited her anger. As I listened to her rant, it was clear to me that she perceived that I was either (1) totally clueless or (2) malignantly malevolent and evil. Her accusations that by my observations and comments I was detracting from the conference's survivors' stories were important ones for me to hear.

When I have heard these kinds of angry accusations about my character repeated inside my denomination on numerous occasions, I both agree with them in principle (I am human, fallible, mortal, sinful, and often clueless) and disagree with them in their specifics (I had, after all, been working with women's health and sexual abuse issues for more than a quarter of a century).

My personal belief is that while patriarchal cultures damage everyone's lives, not all sexual interactions of adult men and adult women are abusive. In addition, I was equally certain that some forms of interpersonal abuse were quite common inside women's relationships with each other and men's relationships with each

other. While abusive situations were always gendered in some way, they were not an ontological manifestation of gender. In addition, I did not agree with her message that I was hired to listen to other's stories and that my personal experiences of the conference were irrelevant to this task. Here I disagreed internally with her.

My comments about our needs as speakers and consultants for a different kind of confidential debriefing space than victims and survivors needed, it soon became clear to me, were totally unacceptable to her. In some way or another, it seemed to me then, that our needs as speakers and consultants for support and help somehow or other were perceived as competing with and thus invalidating her own needs or her perceptions about the needs of victims and survivors for support.

Witnessing and experiencing this mid-life woman's intense anger and assuming its roots in pain, I knew I could not and should not compete with her use of the conversational space in this particular between-sessions planning and de-briefing meeting. I returned to a position of silence and listened to what I perceived to be a ruminating, obsessive, dissociative and therefore, non-healing narrative and non-productive element of this planning session. I was not her therapist. I was not God. In a weekend conference setting I could not remove her pain. I could not, nor would I try to persuade her that not all men were enemies to be feared and distrusted. I was quite certain that during the limited time we had together, I could not even persuade her that non-victimized speakers and institutional whistle-blowers too had needs for emotional support that the conference planning staff members needed to respect.

Because I was only one of this particular conference's hired mouths and not part of its supervisory group of women, I bracketed my own sense of between-sessions dys-ease because of her obvious suffering anger in response to my commentary and my presence. I did, however, make a mental note that I personally needed to re-visit this new, and therefore disconcerting, awareness. After the conference ended, I promised myself would re-enter this conversation with my self and with the sponsoring agencies. I would consult privately with other women who were doing this kind of work to see how they managed these kinds of situations and personal needs.

Later as I reflected on these dual realities: the victim's suffering and the advocate's or witnesses' suffering, I became aware that the whistle blower's journey and the healer's journey as a witness to others' suffering and pain meant being very careful about the timing and place of revealing the personal and professional costs that are inevitably engendered by doing the actual work of advocacy, healing and witnessing. The whistle-blowers, healer's or witness's dilemma is always how to balance the needs of others and the needs of the self.

In the weeks and months after these events were history, I repeatedly reflected on this conference and my sense that I was emotionally overwhelmed by (1) the quantity *and* by (2) the violently toxic nature of the stories which had been told by conference participants. I began to intuit, feel, think, and then eventually came to know and believe that there had to be a confidential and personal safety zone for non-victimized activists, speakers and consultants to manage the vicarious trauma that was an inherent or implicit aspect of their role. Failing to find that or failing to create that, I was quite certain I was not going to continue to have the emotional and spiritual stamina to continue doing the denomination-based consciousness-raising work I was doing at the pace I was doing it.

Managing the Survivor's Story and Our Own Story

As the international sponsoring agency, over time, matured in its work – listening to speaker and community feedback - Mennonite agencies and sexual violence activists gradually evolved a set of practices which I believe is essential. In the background of this change is a profoundly simple awareness: there are no accidents among the individuals who choose to attend a sexual violence or institutional violence consciousness-raising conference, lecture, or any other form of public presentation. It is inevitable that victims of abuse will attend public information meetings in their search to understand what has happened to them; in their search to be understood; in their search for healing.

Since this is true, the real presence of victims, known and unknown, needs to be anticipated in advance and carefully planned for. The organizing principle is quite self-evident: public events that focus on sexual violence in any way will always have sexual violence victims present. Some of those victims may never have told anyone about their personal life experiences. Some may even have “forgotten” there were such experiences in their life history. Others will never have forgotten their violation and victimization and some may previously have sought therapeutic or pastoral help in meeting the aftermath of sexual violence in their lives. Because of this complex mix of violence survivors, any public awareness-building event needs to provide supportive structures for everyone in attendance – including the individuals who staff these gatherings.

I remember one conference which began with a survivor's story. The story contained such violence, such personal degradation and such evil. Listening to the mid-life man's soft voice detailing his physical and sexual violation in childhood, I could barely contain my tears and wish to scream or rip my clothing to shreds. Since I was scheduled to speak at the conclusion of this vile and toxic story, I needed rapidly to re-gain self-control. I began to focus on my breath as a prayer for wisdom and courage. What ever I was going to say needed to be both truthful and compassionate. But I have never forgotten this brave man. His story is burned on my heart and on my conscience. He taught me something about religious evil that I had not yet known. He taught me something about my denominational community of faith that I had never heard before. As I listened to

his story, I captured something about the ways in which the religious language of persons in positions of authority can be used in vile ways to maliciously and permanently damage others; it can be used by abuse perpetrators to claim that they are doing this evil in God's name, i.e. with God's authorization.

I gradually grew convinced that this principle of speaker care held. Speakers, just by virtue of being identified as someone with expertise in this complex area, would be sought out by individuals seeking answers to their own questions and problems – and these questions were often rooted in very disturbing personal experiences. Therefore, speakers and conference organizers, needed to confront the necessity of managing their own lives in a professional way during and after the conference ended. Issues of confidentiality simply had to be faced. Speakers and consultants needed private spaces and confidential times for de-briefing conversations. They needed to know and trust that these confidential debriefing times were designed to support them in order that they could support others. They should not need, therefore, to compete with victims for care.

By the turn of the century, Mennonite congregations and conferences were sponsoring such consciousness-raising events in a wide variety of English and Spanish-speaking Mennonite settings. Very liberal churches held events. Very conservative congregations held events. Our work went on from coast to coast and across northern and southern international boundaries. In each new community, stories of violence emerged. In each community, I personally experienced their disruptive emotional power.^{ci}

By the year 2000, in most of those settings, before the speaker's and consultant's presentations began, conference organizers or church pastors asked pre-identified individuals with clinical skills to stand. Everyone present was asked to locate the nearest conference-identified professional counselor with skills in sexual violence listening. Usually men and women were identified. In areas where there were strong and visible minorities, attempts were made to include counselors who represented these minorities. In addition, small rooms were set aside for individuals to use in whatever way they needed to be used – for meditation, for prayer, for weeping, for on-the-spot counseling. The burden on the out-of-town speakers to manage complex clinical transference issues shifted to local individuals and organizations. Nevertheless, some victimized individuals and/or their friends and families continued to seek out speakers for help.

My sense of this was that some individuals needed to consult with the *experts from a distance* before they could even consider entrusting their stories to local individuals who knew them. They needed a certain shell of anonymity as they considered opening or re-opening their stories in the commons. It was, perhaps, safer to do a first-telling of their story to a stranger.

Therefore, in my professional opinion, speakers still needed time and a supervisory process in order to abstract, debrief and consolidate that which they

were hearing. There were at least two reasons for this. *The first* was so that speakers were emotionally supported and, by this means, able to avoid, circumvent and appropriately manage compassion fatigue or traumatic vicarious trauma and traumatic counter-transference issues. *The second* was to provide an opportunity for the speakers and organizing committees to organize, collate (so-to-speak) and make sense of the information they were collectively receiving – essentially a data reception and organization process.

Good clinical work, in my opinion, always involves a process of learning more about the phenomena we work with. In recent years I have begun to apply this principle to sexual violence advocacy work. It is not sufficient to listen carefully, to do good triage work, and to help others find a pathway through the enchanted forest to healing.

As advocates and helpers, we must seek to learn from the stories we hear. We must continuously seek to understand the meaning of the stories which lie beyond the stories – the cultural narrative forms which sustain the presence of sexual and physical violence inside the commons.

Good theory building and theory revision must go on simultaneously with good advocacy work. Healing the wounds of individuals is important work. It is, however, incomplete work. The work of advocacy and healing must always examine and reach towards containment and prevention.

What Can We Learn by Pausing inside Hecate's Crossroads?

Ancient mythology teaches us that travelers and prophets usually began their journeys inside Hecate's crossroad. Beginning a journey with an uncertain future, propitiatory offerings were made for the favor of the gods as the traveling one set out. When the future was particularly fraught with dangers, invisible and unknown, urgent prayers for safety and divine guidance were offered there.

Each time a contemporary witness or prophet or victim ally is asked about the cost of her or his work, they enter a moment of uncertainty and decision. Is this a time to set a boundary by gently reminding the questioning others of the need to listen to and to hear the stories of suffering told by the victims of violence and violation? Or is this the time to teach others about how to survive and how to do the work that needs to be done? Maybe this is a situation in which self-revelation can illustrate the issues better than an abstraction can. How does the contemporary whistle-blower, witness, advocate, or healer balance the needs for self-revelation and self-care with the needs of others for accurate information and care?

An even more delicate question lies underneath these questions. How do whistle-blowers and speakers about sexual violence and clergy abuse manage the toxicity of the stories they choose to tell? How do they contain these stories

inherent evil without spreading it into the commons? In addition, how do they manage the inevitable personal attacks that are directed at them because of their works of prophecy, advocacy and healing?

What Ails Thee?

To love each other and to help each other is an aspect of the Soul's journey.

Jean Shinoda Bolenⁱ



Charles R. Knight^{cii}

A Story of Enchantment and Pilgrimage

A myth comes out of collective experience and we tap into it and this reflects the particularities of our own individual lives.

Jean Shinoda Bolen^{ciii}

As I exited the writing process for the first three *Elephants* books and as I began to think in visual images and in verbal metaphors, one of the strongest and most repetitive of these images was of the sexual abuse landscape as an enchanted toxic forest. A variety of these images and verbal metaphors surfaced most often just as I was waking. Throughout the day as I thought about these images, I recalled the polluted streams and rivers, foul swamps, de-forested mountains, and burned-out dead woodlands which I had seen in my travels. Eventually, one morning, the image of animal-entrapping tar pits emerged to join these images of toxic forests and polluted waterways.^{civ} As I thought about these clearly-metaphorical images of toxic and polluted places, it seemed to me that the tar pit metaphor was an apt one to describe the post-victimization status of religious-leader-raped or clergy-sexually-harassed children, adolescents, and adults. It

was equally as useful when thinking about experiences of traumatic counter-transference, compassion fatigue or vicarious trauma in the lives of witnesses to such violations.

Bearing Witness to Sexual Violence Narratives

As family members, whistle-blowers, caregivers and victim advocates, we initially enter such a toxic inner place when we hear the first stories of sexual violence or institutional corruption. At first we may be just as entrapped as victimized individuals inside a web of disbelieving, confusing and distressing empathic responses. These moments of disbelief, confusion and empathic distress are perhaps as harmful to us as the sexual violation web is to those it has captured - those who have been the primary victims and survivors of such violations. Yet, as professional helpers we begin to apply our professional training and we begin to reflect upon our profession's collective wisdom, we learn how to (1) exit the toxic and enchanted forest to replenish our own souls and (2) repeatedly and knowingly re-enter it to help others still trapped inside it.

These repeated journeys will challenge every belief we have about human goodness. They will challenge every belief we have in the gods. They will challenge every belief we have about that which is transcendent. They will challenge every belief we have in the essential trustworthiness of the social universe. These repeated journeys, which we make on behalf of others, carry the dual meaning of crisis and opportunity for soul-work. If we do not care for our inner self, our own soul, we may self-destruct. Unless we learn to care for our own inner psyche and spirit, we may become part of the problem rather than part of its solution. On the other hand, if we care only about protecting our inner self, we may lose our sense of compassion and, in so doing, we will inevitably lose our ability to be helpful. It is very easy in such a situation to become callous, uncaring and judgmental about the lives of others. When we do this, we often become carriers of the virus of sexual violence and systemic evil.

Our journey as witnesses and helpers – just like the victim's journey to differentiate her or himself from the act of victimization – can be visualized as a pilgrimage to full individuation, full awareness and to full compassion. Viewed in this way, it becomes evident that the healer and other victim witnesses are on a life-long journey to understanding. This journey will inevitably lead long-term witnesses and victim advocates to the necessity for self-care and self-healing. I personally believe that spiritual inner work must always accompany us as we do our outer peace-and-healing work in the world. Buddhist spiritual teacher Jack Kornfield's words advise us:

To make peace we cannot ignore war, racism, violence, greed, the injustice and suffering of the world. They must be confronted with courage

and compassion. Unless we seek justice, peace will fail. Yet in whatever we do we must not let war, violence, and fear take over our own heart.^{cv}

On this lonely and sometimes very isolated pilgrimage road to compassion, spiritual wisdom and informed service to others there will be many setbacks. Yet, if we persevere, each setback teaches us skills for the continuation of our work. As we learn from each setback and perceived or experienced failure, we grow stronger, more focused and more surefooted.

The Wisdom of the Grail Enters

There are many Grail legends and narratives. In 1997 at an Institute of Noetic Sciences conference gathering in Palm Springs, CA, Jungian Analyst Jean Shinoda Bolen re-told one that I'd not heard.^{cvi} In the years since then, I have often returned to her Jungian-informed reading and discussion of this particular Grail story and found it meaningful.

One morning just after waking Bolen's lecture (as I remembered it) returned to me. I immediately went in search of her recorded lecture in my library and have since then re-listened to it several times. As is often the case, what I remembered is not precisely what she said. But I follow the wisdom that what I remembered is what the remembering self adapted and found meaningful. In terms of this essay, therefore, my memories of her lecture are more important signposts than her actual words. Where I quote her, I attempt to do so accurately. Much of what she said, in the years since her lecture, has been incorporated in my own clinical and personal worldview.

In the background of Bolen's re-telling of this particular Grail narrative was her conviction and belief that we, as human beings, arrive here at our birth as spiritual beings on a human path. Our human task throughout life is to move continuously towards individuation. As we do this, we enter the spiritual path or quest of our lives. Will Oursler writes of this spiritual quest:

The road is for those who seek, those who are unsure, those who grope. The mountain way, in fact, is an ever-continuing process; we gain the goal only to lose it, to slip back, to regain it once more, stronger and more certain than the last time.^{cvi}

According to Bolen our human task is to uncover the reason for our being here and to begin to fulfill that calling. As part of that task, we eventually need to encounter that which is eternal – the *Soul* or *Spirit* which is transcendentally larger than the human ego or the small *s self* can comprehend or encompass. During this life, therefore, we are not tourists. We are pilgrims on a spiritual journey or quest. This is not extraordinary. Rather, each individual life is a quest in which she or he goes in search of the transcendent, the eternal, or the spiritual

meanings of our individual lives. Will Oursler writes of this mountainous spiritual path that:

The mountain is a summary of an infinity of purposes blended into individual purpose and fulfillment; it is the culmination of ourselves and the surmounting of our weaknesses. It is the searching out of ourselves in the inner fortress of being; it is an expedition none but we may pursue, a road none but we can follow, a reconnaissance in force of the soul.^{cviii}

On this life journey we can and often do get lost in the deserted and alienating wastelands of many different enchanted forests. We hold to illusions and these entrap us. We worship false gods – those we have made in our own image. Entrapped in the ideological tar pits of magical thinking, we may not see life's moral and ethical challenges with clarity. In addition, we often encounter and then trip over that which is disordered and deeply wounded – in ourselves, in others, and in our culture. We experience and encounter, therefore, deep Soul wounds. Until we learn to compassionately interrogate these wounds of the self, the other and our culture, we remain emotionally entangled and spiritually trapped inside the land of enchantment.

Now in my seventies, I share this perception with Bolen. We as human beings are profoundly more than the arithmetic sum of our body, our personality and our society or culture. We are more than a series of physical in-breaths/out-breaths and we are more than a series of heart beats. We are synergistic beings. We each carry a share of the divine – that which Jungians call the large *S Self* or the archetypal *Soul*.

However, I am personally less certain than Bolen is that we arrive at birth with a pre-identified or pre-ordained or pre-destined spiritual path that is unique to us – a certain sense of call or a specific soul song to sing which we must search for and find in order to encounter our large *S Self* or *Soul* or *Spirit*. But I do believe that we arrive with unique gifts and unique capacities. Each life will bring us unique opportunities as well as unique challenges and snares. As we move through our life's developmental stages, coming to understand our small *s self*, our interests, our passions, our dislikes, our alienations, and our wounds is essential. This is reminiscent of American mythologist Joseph Campbell's admonition that each individual needs to find his or her personal myth and, inside the living of that myth, to follow one's sense of harmony or bliss.^{cix}

That said, like Bolen I do believe that each human being is a manifestation of spirit and carries the divine spark or inward light within – a personal share of divinity which is observant, wise, and connected with the fundamental unity of all humanity. I am not, nor is anyone else, therefore, primarily a human body. I am, rather, an incarnated or embodied spirit. My spirit is embodied in human form and it is in this particularized embodiment that I encounter life in all of its complexity. My large *S Soul* is an omnipresent aspect of my identity. From the

moment of my human birth to the moment of my human death, large S *Soul* or *Spirit* is always present with me. This immanent and incarnated aspect of my identity continuously tugs me towards wholeness. When I ignore my large S Soul's subtle or not-so-subtle promptings and warnings, I endanger myself and often I endanger others as well.

Human Suffering

Examine the extreme in order to grasp the more usual.

James Hillman^{CX}

During the course of any given lifetime, each individual will suffer. This is the nature of human life. We will encounter the limits of our human finiteness. We will each experience times of alienation from others and from ourselves. We will each experience betrayal. It is likely that each of us will betray others. We will experience times of great inner turmoil and times of great loneliness. We will each encounter evil's face – in our own selves as well as in others. As a metaphor and as reality, we will each die.

Discovering that we have entered the psycho-spiritual underground of human evil and human suffering, it is essential to give up the belief that we are in total control of our own destiny, another's destiny or even our culture's destiny. The always constellating archetypal shadow is a contributing reality in each decision of our lives. We need, therefore, to look deeply into the matters that trouble us and that bring us suffering.

Our wounds and our suffering can become, I believe, our best teachers about that which endures and creates meaning in our lives. As we come to know our own fault lines, our personal share of human suffering and our own deep woundedness, we are enabled or called into compassion for all beings who are similarly wounded and who also suffer.

Bolen identifies and describes the reality that each of us will encounter life disasters. This means that each of us will encounter opportunities for the *Soul*, *Spirit*, or large S *Self* to begin or to continue the spiritual pilgrimage of individuation and service to others. Each disaster is, or can be, a potential doorway into liminal space and thus into encounters with the *Soul* and deep healing. There is, therefore, in each one of us a *Soul* that knows. I often think of this aspect of myself as the Watcher – that observant aspect of myself that seeks to move me towards wisdom and wholeness.

As compassionate beings we begin to look deeply into the culture of violence and violation which surrounds us. As we do this examination, we are forever changed. We lose innocence. We lose the naïve purity of spirit we were born with. We gain a certain hard-won knowledge of the fruits of good and evil.

Encountering the presence of human-designed and human-manifested evil; it is not enough to rescue our own selves. We have an obligation, as embodied spiritual beings making a spiritual life-pilgrimage, to reach out to others who suffer. In attempting to follow Jesus' parable about the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 28-34) we need to seek concrete, specific, and embodied ways to become the good neighbor close at hand.

Over the years a deep intuition has grown. Addiction to the notion of personal or communal success often transports us deeper inside the enchanted forest of abuse and suffering as we seek to impose upon others our own ordering and demands. While it is important, I believe, to set goals for our work by working within a framework of manageable and measurable objectives, success is not the singular criterion of faithfulness. At the same time I believe in outcome evaluation, I also believe it is important to remain flexible and open to the possibilities that our objectives and our desired outcomes are unrealistic or even harmful ones. Driven towards meeting our objectives by imposing our "wisdom" on the other, we can do incredible harm to ourselves and to others. Thus, during my lifetime, I gradually opened myself to the possibility that faithfulness to the inner call of service and compassion is more important than success defined in my or even in my culture's terms. Only recently have I begun to wonder if service to others, rather than personal encounters with transcendence, is the mark of the faithful and mature spiritual seeker. Seeking to be faithful to the inner voice of wisdom means that I can dislodge myself from the seductive outer voice of success as my outcome goal. Even in what appears to me and to others to be abject failure, I may, be demonstrating and living out the inner call to the fundamentals of faithfulness. And, in that faithfulness, there may be a greater success I can and will never know about.

The Wisdom of the Grail Legend



Paata Vardanashvili^{cxl}

Disasters that befall us remind us that we are spiritual beings on a spiritual path. Only we can find answers that we know to be true for us.

In the legend of the Grail, a young knight named Parsifal has begun a spiritual quest or a pilgrimage. Unwittingly he enters one of humanity's many enchanted forests. Totally lost he comes to a river and meets a man in a boat. In conversation, the man says *Just go up beyond that ridge and you will see a building. Go inside it and rest for the night.* Trained by his teachers to be obedient, Parsifal does as he is told. He goes to the top of the ridge and sees nothing but more mountains. Then, in a liminal moment, the scene shifts and, in the distance, he sees a castle set in the midst of a blighted forest.

Following the boatman's instructions, he approaches and enters the castle. When he gets there, he meets the same man that he met earlier at the river's edge. This time, however, the man is dressed as the Lord of the castle.

The castle, as well as the surrounding forest, is enchanted. The Fisher King is deeply wounded with a thigh wound that will not heal. As long as he remains wounded, his kingdom remains a wasteland where nothing can grow and no creativity of any kind can express itself. Nothing can change inside the blighted forest and the enchanted castle as long as the spell of enchantment remains unchallenged.

Parsifal sits down to dinner with the king and as they eat, he wonders what is wrong with his host, the king. But the young knight - on his first spiritual quest - was either too polite, too intimidated, too naïve or too inexperienced in life to ask observant questions about what has happened and continues to happen inside the enchanted forest and its castle.

As they eat together, the Grail processes in front of them. Once again Parsifal wonders about the procession, the enchanted castle, and the wasteland in which it was located. Once again he fails to question his host about what was happening. Just as when he earlier noticed the distortions of the enchanted forest and its castle, once again he did not choose to act.

For the Fisher King to heal and for his kingdom to heal, an *innocent* or spiritual adept needs to enter his kingdom, be spiritually astute enough to see and then to enter the enchanted castle. The *innocent* needs to be able to see the Grail. Only when this innocent one subsequently asks the Fisher King, *what ails thee* can the spell of enchantment be broken. Only then can the wasteland become, once more, a verdant forest filled with life and creativity.

Enchantment

Parsifal's reluctance to reveal his ignorance; his unwillingness or inability to be compassionately confrontational consequently doomed him to more years of lost

wandering and wondering in the enchanted forest. By not asking his host *what ails thee*, the forest remained enchanted, the castle with the embodied Grail disappeared from sight, the Fisher King remained wounded, and the young knight remained lost.

In this particular re-telling of the legend of the Grail, only years later when the now-mature knight re-encounters and re-enters the enchanted castle does he know what he needs to do. Asking the Fisher King *what ails thee* shatters the spell of enchantment and allows the King, the forest and the kingdom to heal. That which was blighted and toxic becomes a verdant living forest.

What Ails Thee?

Asking publicly *what ails thee* in situations of clergy sexual abuse and in situations of corrupted religious establishments (whether these be denominational headquarters, seminaries, service organizations such as religious hospitals, or individual congregations, honorable and sincere individuals seek to free and then to bear witness to the truth. As they publicly confront the acts of personal violence and acts of institutional corruption – becoming victim advocates and institutional whistle-blowers, they automatically become beacons of hope for individuals still entrapped in the enchantment that surrounds clergy sexual abuse and denominational abuse cover-ups.

A Beacon on the Edge of the Forest

Today's Roman Catholic scholars^{cxiii} and victim advocates^{cxiv} have been interrogating their institutional church about deeply embedded and highly rationalized instances of structural abuse. These hierarchy behaviors have targeted the church's most vulnerable people – its sexually victimized children, adolescents, and adults. Similar interrogations are simultaneously happening in other religious denominations and spiritual teaching centers. In short, they have been asking of their church's leaders, *what ails thee?*

Breaking the Spell

This world *breaks the heart as well as opens it*.

Joanna Rogers Macy^{cxv}

Asking *what ails thee* of their church or spiritual community in the Umwelt of the enchanted patriarchal forest and the hierarchical castles of religious tradition and colonized, therefore non-awakened, individual consciousness, these scholar-activists and victim advocates have, it seems to me, broken the spell of religious enchantment. They have created an alternative milieu and religious narrative inside which victims can begin to understand and then to heal their festering wounds. They have opened a space in which victimized individuals can tell us

what has happened to them. Since the telling of this particular story is needed for individual as well as for communal healing, it is essential to break open the magical thinking of enchantment.

It is important for anyone still encapsulated inside the ideologies or structures (cultural forms) of the sexual abuse enchanted wasteland to be able to learn from these trail-blazing and ideology-challenging prophets. The men and women activists, witnesses, advocates, prophets and whistle-blowers who broke open the story first for themselves and then secondly for others, did so by asking the vital and spell-breaking question *what ails thee*. Asking first themselves and secondly others, *how has this enchanted forest come about*, they have begun to de-construct the cultural ideologies and the religious theologies or administrative epistemologies which support affinity violence and systemic violation.

Inside the religious wasteland of clergy sexual abuse and inside the evil and enchanted forest of corrupted institutional management of abusers, any questioning voice and any protesting voice can break the spell of enchantment. The question is simple: ***what ails thee?***

The answer to the question, however, is complex. The answer exposes the ideology, cultural forms, and systemic pathology which has created and then maintained the forest's enchantment. The answer exposes the curse of sexual violence, which, in the name of God, transformed a once verdant landscape into a toxic tar pit.

The Wounded Healer

Therapists cannot do therapeutic work alone. When we are isolated in this, we give into despair. We do burn out. We lose our perspective. Ultimately if you are talking about horrible abuse of power, you're talking about the atrocious things that one person does to another person. And just when you think that you've heard everything, and there's simply nothing else that you can imagine that one person would intentionally do to another, somebody comes along with a story that just blows you away all over again. So, you're dealing with very profound questions of human evil, human cruelty, human sadism; the abuse of power and authority. And the antidote to that is the solidarity of resistance. Nobody can do that alone.

Judith L. Herman^{cxvi}

Introductory Comments

My ongoing commitment during my professional career as a clinician and as a theologian of healing was to be as good a clinician and educator as I had the potential to be. This commitment included a deep-rooted intuitive conviction that the healer and the teacher (or the prophet, witness or peacemaker) must take care of the inner, authentic self (what I sometimes call the soft self) in order to be helpful to others. Informed self-care in the face of our personal encounters with overwhelming individual pathology and social evil is not selfish narcissism – it is the energetic taproot of all service to others. Thus, it is an essential component of clinical maturity. This taproot provides the necessary emotional and spiritual stamina and reserves to care for others.

Vocal coach Bob Bernard's (Palo Alto, CA, 1996) wonderful metaphor during vocal coaching lessons in his studio has stood the test of time. The professional (or even committed amateur singer) must always be in control of her or his breath. The lungs – a living tank – must remain full and just need to be topped off with each new in-breath.

The goal – even on the most difficult of notes or the longest vocal phrase – is to avoid completely emptying the tank. With a reserve breath stored just below the threshold of awareness and use, the singer can remain comfortable and at ease as she or he faces the breath demands of complex music. With no stored reserves to support the voice, the singer inevitably fails to carry the music to its successful end. No matter how good the singer's intention, a condition of starved

breathlessness ruins the work. It also ruins the ecstatic joy of making music with the human voice.

When the singer is comfortable, the work of musical performance and interpretation flows. When the singer is anxious, uncomfortable, and breathless, the work of music-making falters.

Vicarious Counter-transference Trauma

What Christians are summoned to do is to confront the structures of oppression and the symbols of legitimating injustice within the Christian tradition.

Gregory Baum^{cxvii}

This analogy holds true for me in the field of sexual abuse studies. If the healer (witness, advocate, peacemaker or prophet) continuously cares for the inner reserve tank of her individual interpersonal and social wellness and her spiritual wholeness, then she can meet the psycho-spiritual demands of the work. If a healer does not take care of the needs of their inner authentic soft self for rest and personal rejuvenation, then he can very easily move into the dual emotional experiences of psychic numbing and compassion fatigue. When this happens, the inner soft self becomes vulnerable to a take-over by vicarious trauma.

The stories of sexual violence and the devastating empathic emotions that accompany these stories about the betrayals of affinity violence – these emotions that rightfully belong to their clients - begin to invade their own psyche. Unattended to and uncared for these destructive (and now internalized stories and empathically-transferred emotions that belong to others) begin to take over the listening self's and the witnessing healer's personal emotions and thoughts. As Herman so presciently notes above, when confronting the story of sexual violence, therapists, advocates, helpers and witnesses need a community of like-minded people and they need the solidarity of a community of resistance.

Medicine and Nursing Students Confront Disease Paranoia

Courage can be just as infectious as fear.

Alice Miller^{cxviii}

It is common knowledge among experienced teachers in the health care professions that as brand new professional students study diseases, they become convinced that they have these diseases. Studying brain tumors, every headache becomes a lethal symptom; studying menstrual disorders, every irregularity signals a life-threatening diagnosis. Every productive cough becomes

tuberculosis and every muscle ache becomes a hint of the disabling paralysis soon to come.

Eventually, young clinicians learn not to empathically identify with, internalize, and personalize their studies. They begin a life-long process of learning how to buffer their internal selves from being overwhelmed by the clinical stories they hear and the human tragedies they are called to both witness and manage. Medical students utilize macabre senses of humor as they dissect a body that was once a living human being. Nursing students (male and female) may faint as they watch their first autopsy but soon they can witness and then assist at surgery on a living human being without being personally distressed.

For the young or the inexperienced health care sciences student, the learning trajectory includes a cognitive shift from identification with human disease and psychological pathologies to becoming an investigator, an interrogator, and a detective – seeking to understand in order that one may then effectively intervene; so that one may help other individuals who seek their care and help.

Health care professionals know that health care practitioners must be able to both witness and manage challenging and often non-predictable life emergencies without *losing it* or *falling apart*. A successful clinical rotation is one in which students gain patient care skills. It is also one in which they learn self-management and self-mastery skills.

Learning to be a therapist involves a similar conditioning process. The first toxic sexual or betrayal violence story that any inexperienced clinician hears is emotionally disturbing. The first truly malicious and evil story a client tells them is a story that few clinicians will forget.

A Clinical Example

For example, during my early thirties, I attended an international child psychiatry conference in which a panel of clinicians described the ordeals of “Chicken Girl”. She was a small post-infancy child – at the time of the conference, an adolescent – who had been locked in a chicken coop with the chickens. From the moment of her imprisonment, she was never talked to. She was never held. She was never allowed outside the coop. She was fed what the chickens were fed. When authorities discovered her and rescued her, she was still in early childhood. She had no social skills and no language skills and her walking and movement skills were developmentally behind. Slides of the young girl’s treatment process accompanied their lectures. As I listened to world class psychiatrists, developmental psychologists and pediatricians discuss the girl’s condition and the overwhelming clinical problems needing to be addressed and treated I was just devastated. I could not understand how anyone could treat their own child in such a cruel and dehumanized manner. By the end of the conference I could join my colleagues in learning without sobbing. We had been warned at the beginning

of these presentations that their content was distressing. So, in some ways, we were each prepared for the unimaginable. This conference, however, was so distressing to me that I had trouble sleeping and managing daily life for several weeks. Thinking about this young, abused, permanently disabled girl, I would find myself in tears and knew intense personal despair about human maliciousness and the human capacity for doing evil. Even today my memories of this conference are largely visceral. By the end of this conference, I knew this young adolescent girl – would never reach her genetic potential; would likely never know spontaneous joy, the ability to play easily with people her own age, or gain a workable sense of trust in others. I felt then, and feel now, an overwhelming sadness when I think about her.

Unguarded and unprotected, any story of malicious evil can damage the clinician's inner soft self. Clinical supervision is essential to clinicians as they learn to manage their needs for self-control and self-care in order to be able to listen to multiple versions of *the worst story ever told*.

A Personal Example

I remember a personal experience. At the time this event happened I was no longer a beginner. As a student counseling program director, I was working in my office doing paper work. When the phone rang, I was not expecting bad news. A friend of mine at a great distance called to tell me about the gang rape of one of our mutual colleagues and friends – a rape in which our friend's life and her daughter's life had been threatened. She did not warn me to take care of my inner self before she blurted out what had just happened. At the conclusion of this phone call I was so distraught and so enraged, that I said to my secretary, *I need to leave. I don't know if I will be back today at all*. My self-control was so tenuous I didn't know if I could make it out the building door without screaming obscenities; without bursting into in enraged tears.

My office was in the same suite as the campus minister's office. She heard the disturbed tone in my voice and said *what is wrong? What do you need?* I had no answer but to say, *I have to get out of this office and this building right now! I have absolutely no words to tell you or anyone else what has gone wrong*.

She grabbed her coat and said, *I am coming with you!* We walked as fast as I could walk for more than an hour. Periodically she would check in and ask *are you OK? Can you tell me what is wrong?* Only as the adrenalin surge of my killing rage began to subside could I tell her.

She received my story with care and pressed me for no additional details. She simply signaled that she would stay with me until I could manage to handle this toxic, enraged, and grief-filled story on my own. As we eventually sat in my living room, I finally began to cry. I began to re-connect with verbal language in order to describe (1) what I knew about my friend's situation and (2) my inner world.

As my clinical and personal life skills began to re-emerge, I understood that my friend's experiences of rape and her life-threatening experiences of severe physical trauma were not mine to manage. I began the inner work (engrained in me by years of clinical practice) that would quiet me so that I could phone her and talk with her. The adrenalin-pumped enraged desire to kill her assailants ebbed into realistic thought and my intense grief-filled response to my friend's forever changed life began to quiet. I began to call upon all that I knew about these situations. My intention as I quieted myself was to be able to call my friend and to be her concerned and loving friend. I could not be her therapist and I knew that. But I could be a friend. I could not fix her life. Only she could begin to do that work. But I could say in one way or another. *I know and care about what has happened to you. I care about you and I will not abandon you.* I could listen to her story and I could manage my emotional life-responses as I listened.

Implications

The lesson of that unguarded phone call has stayed with me. When I need to tell people really bad news, I warn them first. This allows them time to adjust some intrapersonal psychic and emotional barriers in order that they can be ready to listen without being overwhelmed. This gives them time to protect the inner soft self. It allows their personal mental processes not to be overwhelmed and traumatized. Hopefully, being so prepared will lessen the life-long impact of trauma – helping to make it more manageable.

Another Personal Example

On another occasion, many years later, I needed to tell a friend about a mutual friend's suicide. This particular friend was a consummate multi-tasker. Using this hard-won knowledge about self care and self protection, it took me several attempts to catch her full attention so that she could hear that this was not just another social or business call. I said repeatedly, *I need you to sit down. I am O.K. but I have some very bad news for you. I need you to pay attention. I need you to be fully here with me.* The implicit message to a very good friend and a trusted colleague whom I knew really well was much simpler and the words didn't need to be said: *stop multi-tasking for the next few minutes so we can talk seriously together about something that changes both of our lives.*

Only when she verbally signaled that she had gotten a chair and was ready to listen with her full attention did I tell her that our beloved friend was dead. We spent more than an hour on the phone as each of us helped the other to adjust to the news. Over the next weeks, there were repeated phone calls – initiated by whichever one of us needed to talk most. While we did not live in the same town, neither one of us needed to be alone with our questions, with our anger at our friend's unilateral decision to end his life, and with our grief. Neither one of us needed to manage the pain, grief, and overwhelming sadness of this story

without (1) inner protection and (2) social support. Our magical, wonderful friend was dead. But we were both alive. We needed to teach ourselves – gently and lovingly - about how to survive this unbearable and unchangeable reality.

Empathic Transfer of Emotions

Once buffeted by terrifying stories that activate the healer's inner empathic paranoia or emotional distress with all of the accompanying despair and emotional numbing that can occur, professional healers (witnesses, prophets, advocates, and peacemakers) can and often do develop patterns of secondary abusiveness. They can then use their lifetime of interpersonal and clinical skills to turn on the victims of violation to drive them away. They can begin to mimic the predator's violation of his original victim. In some version of *I cannot bear to hear one more story* they buffer themselves by turning against the story-bearer who carries the next story to them. They not only protect their inner soft self, they turn off their metaphorical hearing aid so they cannot hear *one more story*.

Still others may begin to self-medicate the pain through the use of alcohol and legal or illegal drugs. There is, for example, a relatively high, albeit hidden, rate of alcoholism and drug abuse among physicians and nurses. Still others may become suicidal. Others may become emotionally coercive or physically violent towards their spouses or children. Others may shut down appropriate emotional responses and become emotionally unavailable to others who seek help.

This is a natural process: if I cannot bear to hear one more story, then I will begin to behave in ways which protect my need not to hear one more story. I will distance myself from the story and more importantly, I will separate myself from the storytellers.

Ray Mouton's wonderful novel, *In God's House: A novel about one of the great scandals of our time*^{cxix} describes the life and work of a young defense lawyer who is professionally confronted with the collective evils of clergy sexual abuse as admitted by his client and the cover-up activities of his client's denominational supervisors. In this novel, as the lawyer-protagonist encounters the church's attempts to deny its legal, social, and moral responsibilities to the victims of abuse, his professional and personal life begins to unravel and come apart. Increasingly he self-medicates his inner pain and stress with alcohol. His religious belief system shreds into tatters and the center of his Catholic spirituality does not hold. Eventually, as a way to reclaim his own life, he chooses to change professions.

The sense of helpless moral outrage that pervades this book provides an almost clinical description of compassion fatigue or vicarious traumatic counter-transference.

Vicarious Trauma

Clinical literature about vicarious trauma is quite clear. Those who hear hundreds or even thousands of stories are vulnerable to psychological burn-out and compassion fatigue. They are vulnerable to using anger and rage as the motivating or driving energy for doing their work. When they do this, they become, like the victims whose stories they hear. As they empathically internalize, and thus carry the other's story and emotional responses to being victimized, healers and other witnesses become prone to a wide variety of physical and psychological pathologies.

A variety of scholars and researchers in the field of sexual violence studies informally note that while clinicians and other helpers usually treat their clients with respect and care, these same individuals may become abusive to their personal intimates – work subordinates, family members, lovers, or close friends. Able to manage their activated anger and despair in the presence of violence's direct victim, they become a carrier of the violation's anger. One speculation about this is that the rapist's anger, for example, passes the empathic barriers to his victim who in turn passes it to his or her therapist, lawyer, or other helper. This individual, in his or her turn, carries the rage into personal relationships with others. The rapist's rage and desire to control and harm others, in such a model, is never stopped. Like a deadly virus, it passes through the human empathic barrier from host to host.

If this speculation has any merit, then it is essential for each clinician, each lawyer, each victim advocate and every other helping individual to understand empathic transfer and how that works in their own lives. Just as medical students need to learn how to manage empathic processes as they learn to provide care to deeply wounded and dying individuals, so too do individuals who hear, as part of their profession, the stories of sexual violation and victimization need to learn to manage their inner responses and reactions.

In light of this series of essays, victim witnesses are also prone to spiritual and religious pathologies. They can, and often do, become an ongoing and even obsessive part of the problem rather than part of the problem's solution. Metaphorically, they may experience the client's transferred emotional states as an internalized hologram. Without being aware of it, they may make the client's story their own story. They begin to respond inside their own personal life as their clients' respond to life. They may demonstrate, for example, an obsessive and intrusively paranoid response to stories of victimization. Thus, they may lose a needed sense of the world as both safe and trustworthy. At some point, they lose the needed objectivity to continue working with victims' stories of violence, violation and betrayal. The healer is now in need of a healer.

While victims know their own story with a kind of intimate immediacy, skilled healers, prophets, advocates, and peacemakers are called to listen to and respond to multiple stories. Over a lifetime, a clinical or a legal witness may hear hundreds and thousands of such stories. Compassion fatigue and vicarious

trauma can, and often do, set in. The concomitant cynicism and despair about human goodness – or its absence - which develops can interfere with the helper's ability to trust the future and bear hope for victims who cannot yet hope for themselves.

Just as victims of sexual predators need safe places and safe people to begin their healing processes, so too do healers, prophets, professional witnesses, victim advocates, and peacemakers need to cultivate inner *and* interpersonal resources – some spiritual, some emotional, and some social – to manage their despair, anger and rage at what they witness. Not only victims of violence can lose faith. Not only victims of corrupted religious or spiritual institutions are wounded by the presence of evil. Witnesses, helpers and victim advocates can carry profound psycho-social and spiritual wounds – what I sometimes call emotional stigmata - because of their work. With insufficient support and self-care, witnesses and healers can get hopelessly lost in the toxic enchanted forest of sexual violence. They then begin to experience themselves as victims.

A Personal Detour

Many years ago, just after the United State's Supreme Court decision, Roe vs. Wade, a good friend of mine, an obstetrics nurse administrator, asked me if I would do some clinical group work with her staff. She would manage to cover staffing for her unit for 90 minutes once a week and she would pay off-duty staff members who chose to attend. Staff participation would be entirely voluntary. This intervention was not to be construed in any way as a disciplinary situation. Nor was it to be a motivational seminar. Rather, she was concerned with the mental health status of the obstetric unit nurses she supervised – especially those who assisted physicians in the new practice of legal medical abortions. She, like me, believed that medical abortions were at times needed. We were both relieved to see fewer coat-hanger abortions. She hoped I could provide members of her staff with some tools for managing stress.

As legal medical abortions began to be performed in medical centers and hospitals, members of the nursing staff became stressed. For some, this was a religious or spiritual stress – abortion in their world view was a sin and they were, therefore, complicit in sinning. Unlike physicians who had the option of not performing abortions, hospital nurses were called upon to assist without consideration of their religious values and personal belief systems.

For others, the choice of obstetrics had begun in their professional desire to help mothers and babies make it safely into a healthy post-partum status. They found professional satisfaction in helping new life to enter the world. For them, the stress was seeing a now-ended life and knowing they had helped to end that life. These individuals were much less likely to believe that all abortion was sinful. But, nevertheless, there was a sense of deep sadness or grief – for this particular fetus.

As I sat with this group of Ob/GYN nurses, in an eight week series of conversations, what I heard were stories about the clinician's own stress. For the women who had religious objections to helping with abortions, it seemed quite clear to me that they were in a situation of serious cognitive dissonance. These women would eventually need to revise their religious ideals or their professional choices. Some chose after this eight week process to (1) move to Roman Catholic Hospitals where abortions were not performed or (2) move to another but related clinical field such as pediatric or obstetrical doctor's offices.

The symptoms of these women's occupational stress were quite similar to the sequelae from a wide variety of stressors: inability to fall asleep or to stay asleep, nightmares, recurring visual memories and dreams of aborted fetuses, episodes of crying, feelings of depression, obsessive thoughts, unexplained episodes of uncontrollable anger, alterations in weight and the development of eating disorders, and a generalized irritability.

As I worked with them, I came to see what I was doing as a form of mental health triage. I was assisting them to name their experiences and then explore their interpretations of those experiences. I sought to empower them to make decisions for themselves about their professional identities and work situations. In addition, I tried to represent them to their supervisor so that she could begin to make decisions about staffing that did not create such deep wounds in nurses' personal lives and in their professional careers. One change that began immediately was with new hires. Individuals were informed about the precise nature of the work environment and conversations about helping with abortion procedures were included in these pre-hire screening interviews. In-hospital staff transfers were facilitated. In addition, staff members whose religious beliefs interfered with this kind of work were helped to re-locate.

Together we evaluated the intervention. The obstetrical nursing staff and their shift supervisors all agreed that the intervention had been needed and was timely. As the group sessions ended I made myself available on an individual basis for a period of four or five months but only a couple of individuals utilized that option. It seemed clear to me that together the staff members who continued to work in this particular obstetrics delivery room had formed a supportive internal culture and that they now turned to each other for support.

In retrospect, it seems to me that I learned more in this situation than the staff members who were looking to me for help and support. I think I was quite helpful to them but this was one of those unique opportunities to examine severe internalized stress as it was happening. It was one of those unique opportunities to do preventive emotional health triage work and to help basically healthy individuals make decisions that furthered their own mental health *and* facilitated their patients' health and well-being.

In addition, I learned that abortion as a health care issue contains more than politics and ideology. The presence of an actual abortion had immediate consequences not only in the life of the woman and fetus. It also had consequences in the health care professionals who chose to help the pregnant woman end her pregnancy.

Abortion, therefore, is a potential wound in the life of pregnant women and in the lives of those who help them. It is, I believe, a necessary wound in many situations. I believe, therefore, that each woman should have the right to make this decision with her primary medical care practitioner. It is, however, not a casual decision.

In addition, I strongly believe that no health care professional should be coerced into assisting with medical abortions. Each individual practitioner must be enabled to make moral decisions for herself or himself just as the pregnant woman must be enabled to do this for herself.

By using this example, I am addressing, albeit indirectly, the issue of women impregnated by religious leader rape. When clergy sexual violence of adolescent or adult women is followed by impregnation, victimized women need as many options as possible for managing the long-term consequences of this form of violation and violence. These complex moral decisions are decisions which must remain open for women. Women should not be coerced into an abortion to protect their church or their abuser. Neither should they be prohibited from obtaining a legal medical abortion to fulfill the anti-abortion ideology and rhetoric of their church.

Wounded Healers

*Open now the crystal fountains
Whence the healing waters flow.*

William Williams^{CXX}

In reading widely in Catholic sources, it has become quite clear to me that many of the witnesses and helping individuals who have repeatedly sought to help their institutional church's victims have become wounded healers or wounded lawyers or wounded victim advocates. Seeking to help others, they may lose track of the need to care for their own selves and their loved ones. They may lose track of the need for supportive and trustworthy colleagues. This is, I think, at least partially so because there is a kind of personal crazy-making quality that is always present in the stories one hears about sexual violence. In situations of great social evil, it is impossible to wrap one's minds around others' lived experiences of human deceit and moral depravity. Inside the world view of decent people, well-meaning people, loving people; it is extraordinarily difficult to both attend to and then comprehend what the victims of violence have

experienced. There is, I think, inside many of us a deep self-protective urge to deny the presence of evil in other people's human transactions with each other. We don't want to get too close to these stories because of the self and world shattering these stories do.

When stories of sexual violence and religious institution cover-ups are first encountered, appalled disbelief and severe episodes of cognitive dissonance litter the intrapersonal emotional or spiritual landscape. All that one is, all that one thinks one knows, and all that one believes gets called into question. Initially, a deep sense of pessimistic helplessness to change or transform the situation at hand is often present. Unexamined and unmanaged, this may lead to terminal cynicism.

On the other hand, there may be the unrealistic expectation that as the healer or as the first witness, one can fix the life of the victimized other. One may have grandiose expectations for the self that within days or weeks the victim will recover and all will be as it was before his or her rape. When these fantasies fail to materialize, the temptation is to walk away saying, *well I did everything I could do*. The temptation is to abandon victimized individuals so that the inner self can be protected. The temptation is to harshly judge the victimized individual and blame her for her non-return to a pre-rape personality and life status.

I want to be specifically clear here. While witnesses, helpers, and victim advocates inside the American Roman Catholic communion have become wounded healers and wounded witnesses, they are not, themselves, primarily disordered. They are not crazy. Living in a crazy-making cultural environment, they have refused to yield to the negative powers of the clergy sexual abuse story.^{cxxi} They have in some manner or other that is not well understood (at least to this writer), transformed their own fears and their own disbelieving reactions and their own cognitive dissonance and their own empathic energetic distress responses to human betrayal into service and dedication to the welfare of the victimized other. They have begun the alchemical spiritual process of transmuting their deep awareness of evil into human compassion and their intense awareness of another's personal suffering into healing love.

It is important to learn from them how they have done this work of self-management and self-transformation.

Deep Mourning

In one sexual violence conference sermon I preached, I chose to talk about complex issues of bearing witness and healing in terms of a biblical metaphor. I asked conference attendees, many of them victims and their counselors, and members of the local congregation to reflect upon the question, *where are the twentieth-century's collective liturgies of anguish, lament, and mourning? What is our communal culture's equivalent to the biblical culture's custom of ripping one's*

clothing, dressing in sackcloth and anointing one's head with ashes. How do we individually and collectively bear this terrible knowledge of the evil of sexual and physical violence in our presence? How do we begin to heal this wound... and ourselves?



The next morning, a mid-life woman appeared wrapped in burlap from head to toe. She had smudged her face with ashes. Her visible yet non-verbal presence that morning made visual the previous evening's lecture and its rhetorical but real question. By this spontaneous act of embodiment, she created a liturgical moment for all of us who witnessed her entrance and who lived in her presence during that day. Collectively in her presence we became a community of lament – if only for that brief moment in time.

Social and Religious Consequences of Activism

Witnesses, healers, advocates, prophets, and peacemakers include, therefore, a group of very knowledgeable individuals. They know the toxic enchanted environment of sexual and institutional abuse. Because of their professional work in the world, they have met the victims of violence first hand. Many of these individuals make the decision, therefore, not only to help their individual clients but to also protest the complex, even convoluted, forms of systemic or structural violence which often surround clergy sexual abuse victims. These toxic cultural forms of socially structural or systemic violence in a religious or spiritual teaching environment can be called clericalism.^{cxxiii}

This small group of individuals includes people who have actively protested the evil and have sought to push back against it. They also include those who, with integrity, can no longer practice the religious faith which once they believed and trusted without question.^{cxxiv} In the face of their knowing, their own religious and spiritual lives have had to change in order for them to endure and to do their work in the world. Father Thomas Doyle talks about this process in his own life as moving beyond the institutionally coercive spirituality of magical thinking into a personal spirituality of care.^{cxxv}

To my knowledge, there has been no systematic examination of compassion fatigue (vicarious trauma or traumatic counter-transference) and the loss of a religious or spiritual compass in the lives of those who seek to be helpful to victims of clergy sexual violence and to the whistle-blowing victims of corrupted institutional response patterns. It is my opinion that such a study is now needed. It can be done by well-written biographical case studies or by more empirical survey methodologies.

Abandonment and Personal Loneliness

Loneliness is a bitter thing and an acrid taste in our mouths, more bitter when you think you have been freed from it and find it returning again.

Anne Cameron^{cxxvi}

Roman Catholic priest Henry Nouwen^{cxxvii} and Roman Catholic Trappists monk Thomas Merton^{cxxviii} have both written extensively about loneliness as one aspect of the monastic and priestly spiritual vocation. This experience of existential loneliness is equally present for any informed witness to another's violation and victimization. Those of us who are clinicians must carry these stories in perpetual confidentiality. This is the sacred trust of our licensure to practice. This is the bondage of the professional oaths we took on that day when we became recognized by society as ready to practice our professions. There will be many times, therefore, when we must carry other's pain-filled stories as a vessel of their healing and, for at least a short while, we will do this work in isolation from others. Lawyers have a similar dilemma to that of the healing professions. They too hear dismaying and disorienting stories they cannot share with others as a method of personal disengagement from the highly toxic and emotionally charged nature of these professionally-received stories.

I know of no resource that talks about the inner experience of deep loneliness and a subsequent loss of religious faith and religious community in the aftermath of bearing witness to others' stories about clerical sexual violation or stories about corrupt and hostile church management practices. I know of no autobiography that describes the path through the emotional and spiritual wilderness of bearing witness and the loneliness of knowing that which one may not speak. I know of no sexual abuse literature which describes the dark night of the soul of the witness – who on encountering evil, feels abandoned by his or her community *and* the divine source.

I have seen no pastoral care articles about how to survive the knowing of hundreds and thousands of stories – with one's sense of self and spirit intact and un-shredded. Consequently, I believe there is a need for a well-informed and trusted insider to both study and address these issues in some detail so that we can see whether or not the spiritual losses and religious losses of the healer are

functional holograms of the victim's experiences of loss. If they are, then we will know that at least one manifestation of vicarious trauma or compassion fatigue or traumatic counter-transference represents what psychiatrist Judith Herman calls the third party in the therapeutic counseling room – the sexual violence perpetrator.^{cxxix}

Clinicians in the medical model have long understood the need for peer help in dealing with medical failures and difficult medical treatment issues. Medical grand rounds, for example, not only provide an opportunity to discuss troubling diagnostic issues. They also provide a community of peers in which it is safe to talk confidentially and openly about one's diagnostic questions and the complexity of a specific patient's responses (or, more likely, unresponsiveness) to medical treatment. Physicians and nurses have long understood that it is as important to deal with treatment failures as well as with successes. They have long understood that they can learn more from their treatment failures than they do from their ordinary and everyday successes. The best physicians and the best nurses understand that their own inner self-awareness and self-perceptiveness is a powerful diagnostic tool. Learning how to hear, honor, and then validate one's experience-driven inner intuition by scientific evidence-based methods is essential.

In addition, therapists and counselors are routinely taught in their original clinical rotations that therapists must avail themselves of supervisory processes throughout their clinical lifetimes. Therapy as an occupation is a life-long process of being committed to continuing education and to personal growth as a therapist *and* as a human being. Some of the most effective of these supervisory processes are well-managed group processes. Sometimes these are supplemented by individual clinical and therapeutic work in which the therapist continues to heal her or his own life wounds. In both forms of supervision (personal therapy and supervisory group work) clinicians can identify their own processes of counter-transference. These forms of supervisory support enable clinicians to continue to effectively provide services to very disturbed and disturbing individuals.

Over time, the therapeutic practitioner develops well-functioning therapy muscles inside the personal self. As one matures, the therapeutic intuition matures and the therapist moves into a kind of personal safety zone – the boundaries between the self and the client are both more permeable and more securely anchored in ways which allow the therapist to listen with deep empathy and thus help their clients to bear that which Eastern spiritual teacher Ram Das sometimes refers to as *the unbearable*.

Learning to *bear the unbearable*: that is as good a description of the spiritual journey of victims *and* the spiritual journey of a victim's allies, advocates, helpers and healers that I have seen. Very few of us – if indeed any of us – can learn to do this without others to support us.

I see almost no evidence in the Roman Catholic literature I have read that there is any organized and orderly attempt to provide on-going supervision and help to the prophetic witnesses regarding priest violence and bishop corruption.^{cxxx} I know there is no such consistent support structure inside the Mennonite tradition. I hypothesize that advocates inside both traditions do this on an ad hoc basis – when they suddenly in the middle of ongoing life and work realize that they are overwhelmed. For some individuals, physical illness may be the wake-up call that their body/emotional Self has been invaded by the negative energies of the stories they have attended, the stories they have listened to. For others, it may be a transient and yet insistent inner voice that tells them it is time to take a break and do something very different – go scuba diving in Haiti’s off-shore reefs, hike the sacred mountains of the Himalayas, do parachute jumps out of airplanes or go on a vision quest. For others, the call may be something quite simple – bake chocolate chip cookies and throw an impromptu coffee klatch gathering, go to a movie, play a rousing round of tennis, hike a challenging but beautiful trail, phone a trusted friend to gossip about life in general, or join a choir. Emmett Miller, a body-mind physician, used to talk with me about an ICU nurse he had met. She had taken up clogging as an avocation. Walking from one room to another, one bed to another, she would listen to clogging tapes. While she could not clog in the ICU where she worked, listening to clogging tapes for twenty or thirty seconds allowed her to re-connect her body with her clogging self. Thirty seconds of imaginary clogging allowed her to move between patients without carrying their problems, as hers to manage, with her throughout the day. This short *time out* allowed her to see each patient fresh. He talked with me about keeping a stash of sea shells on one’s desk – shells from beloved beaches - which could be touched and sifted through one’s fingers, however briefly, allowing the mind and body to take a fifteen second rest from its ongoing stress and work.

In reading Roman Catholic literature, it is quite clear that a variety of twelve step programs have provided an alternative spirituality and support system for many victim advocates. In *working the twelve steps* individuals are actively engaged in spiritual growth work and in spiritual maturity work. They are engaged in becoming transparent and accountable to themselves for their own actions in the world and open to others for support and healing work.

The Model of Deep Ecumenism

As I have read Emmett Coyne,^{cxxx} Thomas Doyle,^{cxxxii} Ray Mouton^{cxxxiii} Mary Gail Frawley-O’Dea,^{cxxxiv} Eugene Kennedy,^{cxxxv} Richard Sipe,^{cxxxvi} Geoff Robinson^{cxxxvii} and many other Roman Catholic authors on the topic of the spiritual and religious wounds that have derived from their encounters with a corrupted church, I have become more and more convinced that a community of intentional, faithful – and therefore healing - individuals is needed. Where Matthew Fox^{cxxxviii} describes spiritual deep ecumenism as needed to heal the global Western spirit, I see the

need for deep ecumenism to both support and heal the psyches and spirits of individual victim advocates, healers, witnesses, prophets and peacemakers.

An individual who bears witness inside one denominational structure has more in common than she knows with other individuals who bear witness in other denominational or spiritual groupings. There is a need, I believe, for mutual support groups and networks to form and these can demonstrate deep ecumenism. Buddhists, Christians, Jews, Moslems, Hindus, Zoroastrians, and solitary mystics can all teach each other ways to survive the painful and often personally devastating knowing that comes with effective witnessing, healing, and peacemaking work in situations of religious or spiritual institution structural violation and clergy sexual violence. These can be virtual conversations or they can be small in-person gatherings. The vessels for holding such supportive gatherings are the vessels of collegiality, confidentiality *and* the vessels of trustworthy, non-judgmental, supportive compassionate listening. These conversations can be deliberately political conversations about how to bring about permanent change or they can be support networks of care and solidarity. They can include informal and probing conversations about the supportive cultural forms and ideologies of violence.

This reasoning is based on experiences of my twenties and thirties. In working with dying patients, it was quite possible to grow very emotionally attached and involved. When they inevitably died, there was a sense of personal loss and grief. One night a good friend of mine, a nurse, called me. She had just witnessed the death of a client she had come to love. We spent a long time talking that night. After she hung up, I realized that just as she had supported her beloved patient's dying process, she now needed support in her grief. Much later she and I talked about this evening's conversation. She told me that my non-judgmental and supportive care about her grief and my clinical skills had helped her to process this *loss* in her clinical life. She said that she had learned from this intensely personal conversation with her how to help members of the nursing staff whom she supervised – helping them to process and manage these inevitable losses and grieving moments in their own professional careers and personal lives. Not only does toxic pathology have the potential to spread via the empathic barrier, so too does loving, and compassionate care.

In addition, I personally believe that we need to deliberately create inclusive and repetitively available rituals and liturgies of healing which can continue to provide us with a spiritual resource when we are most needy. Witnesses and healers and prophets in need of healing should not need to deny or hide this need for personal support and healing from themselves or from others. The best way to manage traumatic counter-transference is to open it to the light of truth and to the compassionate and healing presence, wisdom and love of others.

Encountering the Transcendent

Many years ago, I was at a secular clinical conference in which breath-based meditation and image-engendered relaxation skills were taught to health care providers. While not a skilled meditator or guided imagery practitioner my basic “skills” were in place. As this learning community of more than 500 physicians, therapists, clinical psychologists, nurses, social workers, etc., sat together gaining teachable skills in breath-based meditation and imagery-based relaxation skills, I became very aware that my personal experiences in this communal setting were very different than my personal experiences as a solitary meditator.

At the end of the first workshop session, I sought out a colleague who was a long-term Zen practitioner. I said, *can we do lunch?* So we did. We explored my beginner’s perception and it fit her more advanced personal experiences and perceptions as well. There is something about a unified community – unified by breath and silence – that is very different than an individual alone using the same methodologies of breath and silence. This difference is not a simple matter or one plus one equals two. There is a collective synergy that goes beyond simple addition.

Never a member of any Friends (Quaker) meeting, I have nevertheless attended worship services in several different Friend’s communities. Here too, the listening silence of the gathered community is quite different than private listening contemplative prayer.

Riding the Breath of the Whole

When later, during an academic sabbatical, I began to examine the question of healing and wounding liturgies in medicine and in religion, I built upon these prior experiences.^{cxxxix} I call this breath-based experience of transcendence *riding the breath of the whole*.

Collective Liturgy as Healer

Metaphors are hatched in the unconscious, accrue their rich and fruitful meaning there, and carry out their function mainly at hidden levels of the psyche, not readily accessible to conscious analysis or discipline.

J. Harold Ellens^{cxl}

My own personal experiences in a wide variety of healing rituals is that the power of collective ritual and liturgy can facilitate individual and communal healing and it does so because the wounded individual can ride and be supported by the living and transcendent breath of the whole. These rituals can occur in religious settings. They can also happen in secular environments. Usually they are deliberately created by a small group of individuals for the benefit of the whole.

On occasion, however, an entire group of people can do the planning and implementation stages of healing liturgy work. When done well, no matter what the setting, the collective integrity of the whole can support the integrity of the individual.

The Teaching of Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios Verghese

Many years ago Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios Verghese (1922-1996) of New Delhi, India befriended me during a week-long visit to our mutual alma mater. He was the campus' honored guest and I was his much-younger assigned go-fer. In one of our lunchtime conversations he began to talk about entrainment – the process by which pendulum clocks begin to mutually adjust until they all demonstrate unified and in-sync pendulum movements. This was, not an academic discourse about clocks. Nor was it a discourse about entrained atoms – the next example he explained to me. It was a discussion of communal and mystical spirituality. In meditation we learn to entrain our breath to the breath of the living whole. For Gregorios this was the nature of meditation and prayer – to entrain our lives with the whole and, thus, with the transcendent.

Liturgy, when done well, is a process of social and spiritual entrainment. As we ride the communal and transcendent breath of the whole, we can enter into the deep sea of transpersonal consciousness and find a unified self there. We, unlike the mechanical clocks and entrained but now-separated atoms, will never permanently live there. But, as we enter and re-enter this interpersonal sea of deep consciousness, we also encounter a compassionate deep awareness of our essential human unity. In this place of a unified self, healing energies can flow unchecked. Knowing and understanding the realities of human suffering, we encounter deep healing. As transcendent healing flows into our lives, we find courage to go on.

Collective Liturgy as Wound

Morality is not innate. There are times and places from which it disappears. These instances are awesome. They are the reverse image, the diabolical mirror image of the holiness of God.

Tom Driver^{cxli}

Current Roman Catholic activists and clergy victims are rightly suspicious of their church's hierarchy's misuse of liturgy and ritual as a device of administrative denial and victim manipulation.^{cxlii} When any church or spiritual institution wishes to avoid full accountability for its criminal behaviors and its acts of systemic violence, by means of its traditional liturgies, victims of clergy or spiritual teacher sexual abuse rightfully perceive that this is a systemically corrupted liturgy and its performance is a further act of assault and betrayal. They rightfully perceive that to participate in such deceit-filled liturgical experiences is to betray the self.

This *riding the breath of the whole* also has the capacity to further betray and further wound individuals. The very same words and the very same movements can both wound and heal. My sense of this – now deeply intuitive and not very well formed into words – is that issues of intentionality matter immensely and that the human context matters immensely and that simple human integrity matters immensely. Being honest with ourselves and honorable with other members of our community are both essential precursors to our individual and collective liturgical encounters with the healing unity of the whole. Just perhaps, the essential foundation for healing liturgical work is individual and communal integrity and a transparent accountability towards the whole.

Top-down ritual-making, deceitful liturgies, and denial or control-oriented liturgies, in general, participate in re-wounding victims and in re-damaging communities. Routinized, uncaring, and uninspired - and by their very nature - dead liturgies filled with spiritual clichés further disturb and disrupt the community rather than heal it. The tendency to routinize and manipulate the liturgy for false purposes; the urge to deindividuate victims by treating them as objects to be manipulated; a decision to pretend liturgy is a form of accountability, and the religious impulse to control by emotional manipulation have no power to transform.

Liturgies driven by needs to deny victimization or to exploit others serve to wound the liturgist's self by his willingness to participate in cynical manipulation. They tend to wound others by the liturgist's lack of human concern for the victims' and survivors' emotional, physical and spiritual well-being. The implicit lie of false and manipulative liturgies of healing means that they can never transform the wounds of the deeper lie – the cover-up that has protected sexual abuse and violation.

The Power of Metaphor

My friend Nelle Morton, a Southern Presbyterian theologian and anti-racism/anti-apartheid social activist in the American south, used to talk with me about the transformative power of metaphor. Metaphor begins in our ordinary, daily life experience – deep inside the unconscious - and, by its imaginative verbal constructs, carries us to new internalized knowledge of our selves or breaks open new understandings of others and the divine source. When the transformative metaphor takes off, we are one person. When it lands, we are another. When it begins we are in one place and when it lands we are in another. This happens because our understanding of the self and the world has forever changed. In these discussions Morton was adamant: when a metaphor becomes a cliché, it no longer carries any transformative powers in our lives. It is dead salt which should be tossed because it has no more ability to season a life. If we think of liturgies as embodied metaphors, then the principle becomes clear. When a liturgical act becomes a form of manipulative control or participates in

the denial of truth, it becomes a useless and perhaps even harmful cliché. It is dead.

This is how healing liturgies operate. They begin in moments of our individual and collective need or in our historical experiences of being victimized and wounded and they carry us to a new awareness, a new strength and a revised sense of community. They participate in our healing.

However, when liturgies become clichés, they have no transformative power. Filled with corrupted human desires to overpower, to control and to rule, they damage the individual spirit and they damage the transpersonal collective whole.

If we apply Starhawk's wisdom that genuine human empowerment involves power-with rather than power-over,^{cxliii} then it seems obvious to me that those who would create transformative rituals and liturgies must consult with and include all of those who participate. If the liturgies of healing are, in reality, liturgies of institutional self-protection and deceit, they can only participate in further violation and re-victimization. They become part of the denied lie. They become cultural forms of secondary victimization.

I personally do not argue with the power of ritualized liturgy that is repeated and repeated inside a specific community. I know that Mary Daly who as a Roman Catholic theologian and philosopher had much more exposure to liturgical repetition than I have ever had sometimes lectured against any introduction of liturgical ritualizing inside the feminist women's community.^{cxliv} The potential for liturgical abuse, in her opinion, outweighed any active potential for transformation in women's individual and collective lives. In the long-run, therefore, liturgical events could work against a woman's movement towards freedom and obstruct the collective goal of women's liberation – further enslaving them.

As a member of a relatively non-liturgical Anabaptist-Mennonite community, my feminist sense of these matters is something different than hers. Both voices in this debate are probably essential voices to consult as we think about creating and then embodying collective liturgies. Daly's point that religious liturgies *can and often do* wound, damage, enslave, and destroy is essential to understand. As a clinician, however, I also believe that they can also free, repair, transform, and heal.

My personal experience with rituals and liturgies inside the feminist community *and* inside the healing community, therefore, has been somewhat different than Daly's. I have found healing and strength inside a variety of women's communities that *do* ritual. I have found healing of deep personal wounds inside conferences of healers and health professionals where our teachers and consultants experientially taught meditation and imagery practices as ways to heal ourselves and others.

For Example

Chanting with a group of feminist women on a mountain top at daybreak on the winter solstice in 1983 changed me and it healed some unavoidable loss of self that had happened during graduate studies in a very hierarchical and patriarchal setting. This was a group of women who regularly chanted in a variety of outdoor settings. I was invited to join them on the solstices and the equinoxes. Their skill in chanting carried the momentum for a novice who often stumbled in the chanting process. By repetition and devoted practice they'd created a skill that could then be set free to transform. In their own theological studies, they'd found women's words that could be chanted. In this particular situation it was the words (from the writings of Julian of Norwich) *all shall be well; all shall be whole; all manner of things shall be well/whole*. By naming each woman in the circle in turn – *Ruth shall be well; Ruth shall be whole* they sought to mediate healing energies from the collective group of women into each woman's life. By their use of the ritual of chanting, they'd created a vibrant and mutually supportive and healing community of academic women. Many of these chants accompanied me as I physically moved away from this particular group of women. Even today, I often chant one or more of them in my car as I drive. This is particularly true when a friend of mine is in some form of physical or emotional or social trouble. For example: *Susannah shall be well; Susannah shall be well; all manner of things shall be well. Susannah shall be whole; Susannah shall be whole; all manner of things shall be whole*. With each repetition, a prayer of intention is sent into the universe for Susannah's wellness and wholeness. It is both a particularized prayer and a universalized one. For me, as the one who chants, it re-connects me to that circle of chanting women I once knew and loved.

In addition, I have, on rare occasions to be sure, experienced a transcendent reality during liturgical moments in communal worship. These have re-shaped me on the spot. As an Anabaptist-Mennonite from a communal heritage that emphasized the a cappella human voice raised in song, I have been captured by and then transfigured by the liturgical music of communal worship in ways I have no words to describe. Singing, for example, the great Protestant hymn *God of Grace and God of Glory*, I encounter a transcendent reality that is beyond my words to describe. All that remains is to allow the encounter.^{cxlv}

The hymn's heartfelt plea for wisdom and courage transforms me. It becomes a prayer.

I am not grasped by this transformative power each time I sing the hymn. Sometimes I am flying my life-plane on automatic pilot and other noisy conversations are happening inside the monkey mind. But hundreds of repetitions of singing this hymn over the years have prepared me and then one day as I sing from memory, inside my community of faith, the beauty of this song grasps and transfixes me with awe. When this happens, I know I am not alone in the world. I belong to this community. I am riding its collective breath. I am, in

ways I do not understand, supported by the community. I am transformed. I am healed. I am whole. The hymn's metaphors leaped and I was moved from a there position outside the hymn to a here position inside its prayer.

In addition, this hymn often accompanies me in daily life. I may begin singing it as I drive across town. Sometimes I sing it at home and all of a sudden I am overwhelmed by tears of grief and anguish or by deep feelings of my total inadequacy for life. Sometimes I am enraged at witnessing evil I feel powerless to change. Sometimes the malicious stupidities of the world's nation-states or my denomination's religious leaders seem overwhelming. This claim on the divine for courage and for wisdom: there are days when this is an urgent personal need with such deep roots in my life experience that I have no words other than this hymn to plead for my life.

It is not uncommon in my experiences with this hymn for the melody to announce itself first in my inner consciousness. The melody without words attached becomes a humming sound inside my mind. Then the inner and always restless mind begins its search for the words. These words do not always represent the precise words of the hymn's lyricist. They do, however, represent a personal metaphor arriving in one moment and carrying me to a second moment. At times when this happens, there is a sense of a greater reality than myself praying through me for the wholeness of the world.

Back Stories and Personal Reflections

When I think about the power of liturgy and ritual to heal and to transform, I have two referent back stories here. Neither story, however, relates to clergy sexual abuse. The *first* involves my dying father. Twelve or fifteen years before his final illness, in a church fight of mammoth proportions, he had become estranged from his denominational church. He and more than 1/3 of the congregation's members walked out during a Sunday morning service after a very offensive and personally attacking sermon had been preached. As part of this dramatic small town exodus, my father's entire clan exiled themselves from collective religious participation of any kind. In addition, a large number of friends and business colleagues also walked. These were the people who had been serving on various governing committees of the church. Their exodus decimated a living and growing church. These lay individuals had been, in a certain way of looking at it, the quintessential church insiders and its lay leaders. At the moment of this exodus, they all became outsiders. They, of their own choice, became religious or spiritual expatriates and exiles.

In 1962 as my dad entered the final stages of suffering and dying, my mother brokered a conversation between my father and the offending minister of his former church. She had become convinced that until their estrangement was mutually discussed and perhaps healed, my father could not die. She contacted the minister and he willingly (perhaps even eagerly) agreed to visit my father.

While this reconciliation action did not make best buddies out of these two men, it did allow my father to have regularized and ordinary access to the Eucharistic meal at his bedside.

Over the course of time, I saw how much my father relied on the re-enactment of a familiar sacrament to prepare himself for death. As he softly recited the creed, his restless body grew quieter. On days he received the Eucharistic meal, he seemed to experience less physical pain and to sleep more soundly.

When he died in 1963, this minister helped my mother's church and its ministers to bury him. That final action of my dad's life allowed the remainder of his family and extended clan honorable choices about returning to regular religious worship in this particular congregation. Some did; some did not. Some could forgive the minister for his earlier very public and very aggressive assault on my father's character. Others could not.

In a course which I took with him, Protestant liturgy expert and hymn writer Brian Wren emphasized to us that in writing creedal formulations and communal prayers, we should not force people to declare beliefs they do not hold nor to confess sins they did not do. This is as good a beginning principle as any I know.

I am convinced, therefore, that the Eucharistic meal and a creedal formulation that is honest can serve as a healing and unifying rite for Christians of many traditions. For this to happen, however, both creed and Eucharist need to be re-conceptualized, re-theologized, and liturgically re-invented to meet the needs of individuals in today's widely varying life situations. Rather than being boundary markers of exclusion, they need to become welcoming markers of full inclusion and healing.

The *second* back story is quite personal. After surgery for a malignancy, my body was wounded. My spirit was even more wounded. I was now terrified of my body and I was in active grief for the aspects of my life that were forever changed.

I was on an academic sabbatical when I saw that Matthew Fox was lecturing at a Body and Soul Conference on the West coast. I enrolled myself in the conference and in his workshop.

In this conference program in Seattle, he not only lectured about liturgy and ritual, he involved us in the planning and the doing of it. Under slides thrown on the walls and ceilings, he organized us into a spiral dance. He asked people in attendance who wanted physical, emotional, or spiritual healing to sit in the center and to absorb the healing energy created by the swirling and chanting dancers that encircled them. He asked the dancers to be focused, intentional healers in their dancing.

For all of a nano-second, I thought about this choice he offered to each one of us and decided it was more important to me to actively dance my way to spiritual, emotional and physical healing than it was to sit quietly and absorb others' intentionalities.

As the spiral dance began, we chanted a simple refrain: *earth I am; fire I am; water, air, and spirit I am*. Singing and dancing, I began to believe that one day I might again be well and whole. Tiring as the singing and the spiritual conga line kept moving faster and faster, I stepped out of the dance and sat outside on the margins. With my body's still open wound, I could not keep pace with the speed that was gradually evolving as the dancers chanted faster and faster. A woman looked directly at me and said, *I will slow down this dance. Come back in if you can*. Embraced by her awareness, perceptiveness and spirit of caring inclusiveness, I re-joined the line and danced/sang my way back into the moving spiral. I was an integral part of the community. Stepping out, I was missed. Coming back in, I was included.

That evening instead of taking public transportation to my temporary home – a bed and breakfast inn about three miles away – I danced myself home. I ecstatically sang and chanted my way across bridges and across intersecting roads. Stopping for red traffic lights, I danced and chanted in place. I skipped, danced and chanted my way up and down Seattle's hills. I was becoming transfigured. My feet and my chanting voice led the way. I was becoming whole. I began to believe that my physical body was healing itself and that one day I would once again have an intact bodySelf. *I would be well; I would be whole. All manner of things would be whole.*

The Healing Power of Communal Liturgy

Some requirements exist: the healer, the witness, the peacemaker, and the prophet must be willing to open the boundaries of the self in order to examine, with surgical and analytical precision, the inevitable wounds that accompany this work of bearing witness to other's violation and victimization. This means taking the time to stop one's external work long enough to do genuine and usually painful inner work. It means admitting to ourselves and to others that we have been wounded by the work we do. It means admitting to ourselves and others that we are powerless to change the world, or even ourselves. It means finding a way to be emotionally open to others. It means learning how to honestly support one's colleagues and co-workers. It means learning to be trustworthy in everyday social and professional relationships with others. It means learning to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries for the self – knowing what one can do and what one cannot do; knowing what one should do and what one should not do. It means learning how to take care of one's own needs at the same time one seeks to learn how to meet and care for the needs of others. At its core, such healing work involves trusting that which is transcendent to be trustworthy and

honorable. It means taking risks. It means being willing to try, fail and to try again.

If we see personal and spiritual maturity as including the responsibility to honor the needs of the self *and* as a life-long process of learning how to responsibly honor others' needs for our support, then we can begin to build deliberate communities of support and conversation. These communities can search for ways to transcend ordinary reality. They can experiment with liturgical resources – adapting them to the needs of each present moment.

We know that the intrapersonal and interpersonal needs of the direct victims of sexual assault are to come to terms with their factual life experience as it was actually lived *and* to learn how to bear the unbearable.^{cxlvi} They need time to cope with their rage. They need time to grieve that which was destroyed in their lives. To do this they often seek secular therapy to help them learn how to manage and then transcend their wounds.

We can intuit that this is equally true for the victims' witnesses who seek to serve a wide variety of victimized individuals in a variety of helpful ways. The religious and spiritual wounds of the victim will inevitably, I think, seek to recreate themselves by empathic transmission inside their witnesses' religious and spiritual worlds. Denying the presence and the legitimacy of their wounds is not a safe path for victims of violence through the enchanted forest of corrupted religious experience. The same is true for the healers, the prophets, the witnesses, the advocates, and the peacemakers.

Archetypal Wisdom: spirit of predator and spirit of prey

The hologram of the archetypal predator and the hologram of the archetypal prey each seek to reproduce not only in each victim but in the psyche or spirit of each witness, advocate, healer, peacemaker, and prophet. To the extent that a vengeful, angry, cynical, despairing, and hate-filled spirit takes root in the healer, the prophet, the witness, and the peacemaker, the more likely it is that they will eventually become vengeful and predatory tigers themselves. In Jungian theory, they will begin to constellate and then behaviorally re-enact the archetypal shadow.

The Religious Machiavelli: Splintered Communities

One of the things the religious and political patriarchy does best in the face of challenges or threats to its power and influence is to counter-attack. By means of its push-back attacks, it seeks to splinter truth-bearing, witnessing and advocacy communities. The patriarchy seeks to isolate and contain those who bear effective witness against its evil. It feints. It rationalizes. It minimizes. It seeks to distract. It seeks to derail. It seeks to dismantle. It seeks to dissuade. It seeks to disempower. It denies. It disinform. It dissembles. It lies.

When it succeeds, the patriarchy is then free to continue its practices – unchanged, untransformed, and unredeemed. Each successful conquest and each successful defense attack further consolidates the power of the patriarchy.

I saw this reality first hand and up-close inside active war zones such as the Central American dictatorships and oligarchies of the 20th century. The Machiavellian tactic of divide and conquer is as politically effective now as it was when Machiavelli advised his prince about how to conquer and rule. The politics, ideologies, rhetoric, and methodologies of the state's political war zones can, and often do, invade the politics and praxis of the church.

This kind of subterranean attack was manifested by powerful individuals within the Mennonite hierarchy from 1975 until 1996. Activist women, as individuals, were targeted for character assassination or economic reprisals with a cynical precision that has been personally devastating and collectively destructive. In the aftermath of this institutional campaign to disavow, dishonor and then silence prophetic and reformist feminist women's voices, women began to divide from woman. When the personal cost of helping victimized women and baring witness to the corrupted church about structural violence inside Mennonite Church agencies got too costly in terms of personal ambition, religious faith, institutional power, social or family position, positional authority, or any other marker such as marital cohesion or family and clan security, then some women moved away from victims needing help and from each other. The community of victim supporters fractured.

A commonplace truism is that betrayal can only occur where once trust thrived. We do not expect our enemies to act any better than they actually do. Thus, we are not betrayed. We do expect our friends to act as friends act. When they turn against us and use what they know about us in individual or collective efforts to discredit or to destroy us, we know the acute personal wounds of being betrayed.

Deliberately turning ones back on another's suffering means that one begins deep and long-lasting processes of psychological denial and emotional numbing. One resolves cognitive dissonance by refusing to see, to hear and to understand the cries of the victims for justice. In addition, one refuses to comprehend and to honor their desperate pleas for healing.

Choosing to deny justice to the oppressed inevitably means, I think, that one becomes an active oppressor or a supportive ally of the active oppressor. Even those who seek the peace of neutrality become complicit allies of the oppression and disregard for the wounded other.

Each of these choices has spiritual as well as emotional consequences. In the process of denial and absenting oneself from the table of common justice and

compassionate humanity, an individual takes on the personal identity of victimizer or, at the very least, the supporter of the victimizer.

The constellating archetypes and their associated shadows become more and more a determinant of one's inability to stand strong in the face of injustice and social violence. As one makes choices to take up one's own residency among the powerful, one inevitably takes up their weapons of injustice against the vulnerable. This is so because the victimizers need allies in their fight against the wounded.

Lessons from Alta Verapaz, Guatemala

When the personal costs of activism and compassion are seen as too great, people are capable of doing great personal and social harm to others. These compounded betrayals become more and more resistant to healing. In totalitarian states this kind of betrayal can be witnessed as individuals betray others to stay alive: brother informs on brother; colleague denounces colleague; child betrays parent; friend turns friend over to the authorities.

The emotional and spiritual wounds of such betrayals last long after the totalitarian and corrupt state falls. I remember using a teaching video about a specific civil war massacre zone in the indigenous sectors of Guatemala. In the documentary film an adolescent boy talks about the men of the village who betrayed his father and many other men in the village's outlying cornfields during harvest. He said, in essence, *I know who they are, we all do, - these village men who betrayed my father to his killers; who betrayed all of our fathers to the massacre - but I can do nothing. I have to live here. I need to walk and talk very carefully. I need to say hello to them when I meet them on this path. My mother needs me and we have no other home.*

This is a prototype of what it is like for clergy sexual abuse activists and victim advocates who, protesting clergy violence against the laity, choose to remain inside their religious denomination as a religious or spiritual home. They know precisely and in great detail the individuals who have victimized others. They know in painful detail those previously trusted friends and colleagues who have subsequently betrayed and abandoned them. If they wish to live inside their faith community and continue to work on behalf of its victims, there is nothing they can do but to continue to live in their village. They have to learn how to say hello on the path.

This is a tremendous burden to carry alone. It can mean that there is no one to trust but one's own self. This kind of spiritual and social abandonment and isolation can break open and destroy the most resilient spirit.

The Solidarity of Resistance

The wounds and inner world of the witness, healer, advocate, prophet and peacemaker need careful, deliberate attention. To deny this principle is to invite the predatory, revengeful spirit to take up residence in our own hearts. In Guggenbuhl-Craig's thinking, we then begin to constellate the deep shadow of the healing, prophecy or peacemaking archetypes.^{cxlvii}

In Matthew Fox's discussion of this principle, he notes that those who act only from anger and rage towards their victimizers do not have the staying power of compassionate loving and spiritually motivated service.^{cxlviii} He quotes environmental activist Julia Butterfly Hill as saying,

I began to pray. I knew that if I didn't find a way to deal with my anger and hate, they would overwhelm me, and I would be swallowed up in fear, sadness, and frustration. I knew that to hate and strike out in violence was to be part of the same violence I was trying to stop. And so I prayed, 'Universal Spirit, please help me find a way to deal with all of this, because if I don't it is going to consume me' (p. 420).

Later in this interview Hill continued.

I see this in a lot of activists. The intense negative forces that are oppressing and destroying the earth wind up overcoming many of them. They get so absorbed by the hate and by the anger that they become hollow. I knew I didn't want to go there. Instead, my hate had to turn to love – unconditional agape, love. One day, through my prayers, an overwhelming amount of love started flowing into me, filling the dark hole that threatened to consume me. I suddenly realized that what I was feeling was the love of the earth, the love of Creation (ibid.).

Over and over again I return to this example because it is so simply and so clearly stated. Working from a spirit of self-righteous indignation may be dangerous to the spiritual well-being of the activist. It may shorten their physical lives. It may destroy their inner spiritual well-being. Eventually, it destroys their effectiveness as a witness and activist.

While, as an Anabaptist-Mennonite pacifist, I distrust and resist Fox's patriarchal metaphor of the spiritual warrior for truth as unwittingly harmful to the truth he is seeking to teach his readers, my own thinking about these issues is similar to Guggenbuhl-Craig's, Butterfly Hill's, Fox's, and Kornfield's. If the spirit of hate and rage informs my activism and motivates my on behalf of others; if it is the fuel that compels me to act: then that spirit of hate, anger and rage will eventually destroy me and invalidate my work. This is also the premise of Thich Nhat Hanh's important work on anger.^{cxlix}

If I do not learn how to transmute my experiences of anger and enraged hatred into compassionate love, then eventually I will mutate into a predatory tiger. If I do not learn how to open my spirit to the transcendent power of love, I will become unable to function as a healer, as a peacemaker, or as a prophet. Unable to fulfill my calling and the work of my true, inner self, it is quite likely that I will become a vengeance-seeking vigilante.^{cl}

The Wounded Healer

Henri Nouwen's concept of the wounded healer is appropriate.^{cli} In the context of these essays I include the wounded advocates (think plaintiff's lawyers), clinicians, support group members, any given victim's family members or friends, and prophetic whistle-blowers. Those individuals who work in the arena of sexual violence must allow themselves to be repeatedly and deeply touched, or perhaps even wounded by the suffering they witness. Initially, rage, anger and despair at the damage done to their victims by sexual predators are, I think, inevitable. But witnesses and helpers must learn to manage these personal suffering wounds of rage, anger and cynical despair in ways which do not detract from the victim's stories of her or his suffering and wounds. When, for example, as healers we seek to manage our lives as witnesses, peacemakers, healers, and prophets in a way which allows for sustainable activism and healthy spirit-bodies, we are inevitably called to the spiritual path of learning how to compassionately interact with all parties in the sexual abuse and corrupt church scandals. Judgment and blame-casting are, in my clinical opinion, unhelpful.^{clii} What is needed is discernment. It is not a sentimental or pitying love that is called for. It is a compassionate love, perhaps even a suffering tough love, which knows that responsibility for the self and full accountability to others is the only path in the enchanted and wounded forest where healing can occur in the predator's consciousness. The dangerous work of holding perpetrators fully accountable for their destructive behavior inside the community is, therefore, an act of love.

Keeping Our Story and the Victim's Story Straight

The victim's story is not our story as witnesses and healers (unless, of course, we also were once equivalently victimized). However, the sexual violence story's embedded rage, anxiety, fear, despair, and other intense emotions can cross the permeable empathic barrier between our selves and others.

As an undergraduate student I was taught that anxiety is one of the emotions which pass through interpersonal boundaries between people. I was taught ways to distinguish between my client's stash of disturbed anxiety and my own personal stash. My teachers told me repeatedly that it was my job – as a clinician – to know how to manage my own anxiety so that I could adequately help my clients learn how to manage theirs. These rudimentary lessons about vicarious empathic transference are essential ones for all witnesses, healers, prophets, and peacemakers to learn. Psycho-socially and emotionally we human beings

have very permeable personal boundaries. Any intense human emotion can spread unchecked through an entire community if we are unaware of its presence.

Over more than forty years of clinical practice and classroom teaching I have added anger, grief, despair, depression, rage, terror, cynicism, disrespect for others, and fear to the list of emotions that can enter the self's internal environment from being near others who are actively experiencing or expressing them. Our emotional and physical bodies are, it seems apparent to me, permeable receptors as well as senders of emotional messages.

It is this awareness that can guide experienced clinicians to intuit the interior world of victims. Sensing, for example, his own personal inner agitation, the clinician learns how to question it: is this inner agitation a manifestation of some unmet or emerging need of the self? If not, then experienced clinicians make the assumption that their client is agitated. This assumption can then be tested inside the clinical hour by conversations. This back and forth interrogation of the inner clinical or intuitive self and the consequent external dialogue with the client is one mark of a seasoned clinician.

One of the easiest ways to examine and begin to understand the social transmission of emotional states is to think about a successful comedian. If she or he can get one or two key audience members to laugh uncontrollably, then soon the audience as a whole will be laughing uncontrollably. If key members of the audience are, however, hostile and resistant to the comedy act, it is likely that nothing the comedian can do will yield more than perfunctory or even bored laughter. In such a situation, the comedian needs to wait for another night for his reward – laughter. This was a principle that Johnny Carson both understood and mastered. Facing an unresponsive or even hostile audience, he simply commented on it with self-deprecating humor. Acknowledging that a joke or a monologue had failed or was lame, he acquiesced to the inevitable “off night” and went to his desk. At times he and his guests were able to rescue the situation and turn a hostile audience into a laughing sympathetic one; at others they were not able to do this.

Another example for understanding the interpersonal permeability of various selves and their emotions is to recall a dramatic performance when the audience – collectively as one living cell – sat in absolute silence as the impact of the play was absorbed into each individual psyche *and* the collective body of the audience as a whole. In such a silence, not one person shuffles about, sneezes, or reaches in her purse for a candy. The audience is, in essence, one transfixed entity. When the silence is finally broken by applause, this too is a collective applause – bursting out of the silence with one voice of appreciation for the actors whose work has united many people into an organic whole. Professional actors all know and report that such moments of a living silence and spontaneous applause provide validation to their work. This dense but very

collective silence reveals that the just-performed work has deeply touched every member of the audience – simultaneously and pervasively.

Personal Boundary Setting

It is a necessary warning that each helper and witness to another's suffering needs to be aware of maintaining appropriate personal and professional boundaries in order to avoid being overwhelmed by the complexities of transferred emotional states. It is, in a sense, a truism that not only our minds can betray us. Our emotional body and our energetic body can as well. If we act only from rage or hatred for the predator-perpetrator, we can easily become occupied by the emotions of rage or hate. If we only symbiotically identify with and pity the victim of violence we become enmeshed in their experience as it is filtered through our own. The victim's story, now internalized inside our own emotional responses, becomes our story. Neither rage nor pity is helpful. It is always essential for helpers to recognize the other's human story as belonging to them and to understand that ultimately they will need to learn how to manage their own story. While therapists, victim advocates, lawyers and pastoral counselors, etc., may serve as temporary caretakers of the story, it is never the witness's story to manage. The story belongs to the individual whose life experience it both carries and reveals.

We must engage ourselves in long interrogating conversations about our personal shadow and our own almost inevitable temptation to become predatory in some manner or other as we seek to heal the individual and social wounds of sexual violation. A spirit of vindictive revenge heals no wounds. In fact, it creates more wounds.

Clinical Example

I was doing a clinical practicum with a well-seasoned clinician. Women's anti-rape activism efforts in the United States were barely ten years old. Consequently, feminist therapists were constantly improvising by applying what they knew about therapy groups from other settings. In this particular practicum two feminist women were co-leading rape survivor groups. Our clinical backgrounds and experiences differed quite widely. I became concerned at the amount of personal anger my partner poured into the group's discussions. My personal intuition was that the intensity of her personal stash of feminist anger about the rape of women and the sexual or physical abuse of children was frightening some of the group's rape survivors. Since she was my practicum supervisor, I was a bit intimidated by the idea of confronting her about this. But I also trusted that I had as much clinical group experience under my belt – and maybe even more – than she did. When I raised the topic, it was as if I'd lanced a boil. As professional colleagues we talked for several hours and the consequence of our conversation was that as co-leaders we stopped introducing out feminist angers about rape into the group situation. Almost immediately, the

survivors in attendance began to deepen their discussions of their post-rape lives. No longer frightened by our anger, they could begin to acknowledge their own. Another consequence was that our post-group debriefing sessions with each other deepened into new layers of trust. Together we supported each other in the ongoing process of becoming more intuitive and responsive group leaders.

It is essential to our own personal physical and emotional health *and* to our spiritual well-being that we learn to manage our personal wounds and life responses in ways which do not wound or re-wound others. We must learn how to deliberately and meaningfully open and then shut the permeable barriers between our authentic empathic selves (and our own wounds) and the emotional and psychological worlds, words, and wounds of others. We need to learn how to recognize, name and manage the various contradictory parts and aspects of our inner world. We must learn how to avoid transferring our rage and our anger, our suffering, and our grief - as witnesses to other's suffering - to those we love and care about. Part of being mature peace-makers, mature prophets, or mature healers is that we continue to learn how to manage the vicarious trauma of what we know in ways which subvert its evil power to mutilate our own lives or the lives of others. In short, we continue *to learn how to bear the unbearable*.

The Messiah Sits outside the Gates of the Temple

Henri Nouwen's re-telling of an ancient Jewish story is simultaneously helpfully instructive *and* dangerous to the self of the sexual violence witness.^{ciii} In Nouwen's version of this story, the Messiah sits just outside the gates of Jerusalem's cultic worship center. Here every day he unbinds his own wounds one at a time, examines them and then treats them. When this process of treating a specific wound is complete, he then rebinds it. In such a manner, he treats each of his wounds in its turn. By such a self-management protocol, he remains always visible and accessible to the wounded men and women that arrive at the gates asking him to guide their own healing.

While each justice-worker (attorney), each prophet (victim advocate), and each healer (victim therapist) in the sexual violence narrative is likely to be deeply touched and wounded by the victimizing story of their clients and must, therefore, learn how to manage his or her own wounds in such a way to remain accessible to the victims s/he serves, there is something false and dangerous in the ancient tractate's notion that the wounded Messiah is always and immediately available to others. This is an unrealistic self-expectation for victim allies, healers, advocates, prophets, and witnesses.

Periodically, the witness, advocate, healer, prophet, or peacemaker must absent himself or herself from the gates of Jerusalem's temple and its suffering world of wounded seekers and pilgrims. Taking deliberate time away from one's individual encounters with the suffering of others is essential to the project of keeping the story and spirit of violence from colonizing the helpers own heart and

consciousness. It is an essential skill to learn in order that one might be able to go the distance without self-destruction or other-destruction.

We must, as helpers of others, it seems to me, enter and compassionately re-enter the enchanted wastelands of our own personal experiences in order to name them and to provide time and personal attentiveness for them to heal and to be transformed into strong vessels of deep awareness and deep compassion for ourselves and for others. I also believe that if we were to set our collective minds - and bodies - to it, we could begin to create healing liturgies – liturgies that provide each of us with a gate of access to the deeper wisdom of the transcendent universal sea of human consciousness.

In our personal attention to our own woundedness what we learn is our common human solidarity with all beings who suffer. If we seek not only personal healing but communal healing then one pathway is the construction of healing liturgies and rituals which allow for, or even seek, transcendence so that the healing energies of the universe can begin to flow into our individual and collective lives. Based on my personal experiences with deep wounds and with deep healing, I believe that amazing healing energies of the universe can be made accessible to each of us – victim and victim-helper.^{cliv}

What I have learned in my personal life and in my professional life is that deep healing involves taking risks, changing thought patterns, and seeking healing wherever it might be found. In addition, for me, it has meant learning to ride the liturgical and transcendent breath of the whole.

A Riff on Structural Violence



*Sem justiça e
amor, a paz
sempre será a
grande ilusão.*

Dom Helder Câmara

Dom Helder Camara^{clv}

Structural or Systemic Violence

Restructuring in social spheres involves restructuring power.

Joel Kramer and Diana Alstad^{clvi}

Dom Helder Camara was the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Recife in Brazil (1964 -1985) during a period of political repression when his nation was ruled by a military junta or dictatorship. In a short publication, entitled *The Spiral of Violence* (1971),^{clvii} he described three levels of violence in a spiraling process that is repetitive and which increases the amount of violence rather than ending it. In his lifetime Camara confronted a nationally oppressive socio-political milieu and its concomitant repressive realities for the poor. In his position as a spiritual father of his people, he reflected on the church's *preferential option for the poor*. Wondering why he was considered a saintly man when he fed the poor of his nation and why he was considered a Communist-sympathizer when he asked why they were poor, Camara's writings are clear, succinct, and to the point. His written work describes oppressive social system violence as a spiral structure.^{clviii}

In Camara's work, the *spiral of violence* contains three separate stages of oppressive-reactive human activity. These are evidenced in large social systems such as the nation—state or large multi-national corporations such as Christian denominations. Each successive stage in the spiral of violence responds to prior stages and builds upon them. Each stage sets in motion the actions of succeeding stages. In many situations the spiral continues to move through many repetitions of the three stages – each repetition intensifying and escalating the nature of repressive and oppressive violence.

I think it is perhaps easier to see the spiral of violence in socio-political systems at a remove from religious institutions. In part, this is so because we do not tend to focus on religious organizations as having a corporate institutional identity. We tend to spiritualize the church and its leaders and thus we overlook the corporate aspects of its institutional identity.^{clix}

In terms of this conversational riff the spiral of violence is seen as religious communities, particularly in their aspect as financial corporations, confront the reality of two forms of clergy sexual violence inside the community of faith. The *first* of these is the factual act of sexual violence by a religious leader. The *second* is the church's corporate or institutional cover-up actions designed to protect the church from scandal and financial accountability for its inept, faulty or criminal personnel management practices.

At times the end result of such a spiral is that victims of an individual abuser's sexual assault are abandoned, verbally attacked or blamed.^{clx} In addition, witnesses to their violation and corrective messengers of truth are verbally or economically assaulted. They may experience character assassination. They may be actively shunned by the community at large as it seeks to deny the realities of abuse and systemic corruption.^{clxi}

The presence of whistle blowers within oppressive organizations is aggressively managed by administrators and others who seek to keep factual truth out of the public's view.^{clxii} Reprisals against witnesses who tell what they know are swift and surgically precise. The goals of such strikes against witnesses are to discredit them and to divert attention away from the acts of organizational violence to which they bear witness.

As one example, Dominican Father Thomas Doyle's promising upwardly mobile career as a secretary-canonist of the Apostolic Delegation to the Vatican in Washington, DC was completely derailed after co-authoring a 1985 white paper on priest sexual abuse in the United States Roman Catholic Church which he and his co-authors submitted to all members of the Council of United States Bishops.^{clxiii} Twenty years later Doyle's career as a United States Air Force chaplain was similarly derailed by the archbishop who had denominational oversight of Roman Catholic military chaplains.^{clxiv}

In Camara's *first stage* we find injustice and active structural or systemic oppression done by one group, usually the elite ruling class or culture, toward a second, usually the ruled class. At stake are issues of oppressive behaviors or malfeasance behaviors by persons holding institutionalized and legitimated positions of power and authority. There may be socio-military or socio-economic or socio-cultural-historical or socio-religious or socio-theological components to the injustice. There may be racial, religious, ethnic, age, sexual orientation, or gender components. There may be personal identity components. In whatever form these unjust structures manifest themselves, they are rationalized,

defended, and maintained by individuals in power as *the way things are* or *the way things need to be* or *the way God wants them to be*. Positional structures of authority and power are used to maintain a status quo which benefits those in positions of power and authority.^{clxv} Where those who are powerful see the need to reaffirm their position, authority, and power, they can and will resort to structural or physical violence.^{clxvi}

In my personal observation of religious institution authoritarian structures and governing individuals God's name and authority is usually invoked when the human person in authority senses that his or her personal power and authority needs the buttressing power of divine authority in order to maintain a position of human power, authority and control of others. Oppressive dogmas and doctrines which actively dehumanize and oppress or exclude others are widely pronounced as God's will.^{clxvii} Obedience to the oppressive human individuals in control of morally corrupted religious institutions is proclaimed as God's desire.

In addition, it is common for organized religion to provide buttressing ideologies for its own socio-political practices of injustice and authoritarian control. It is common, therefore, for leaders of organized religion to provide theological rationales for their embodied, sometimes criminal, social praxis.^{clxviii}

As Brown,^{clxix} Gutierrez,^{clxx} Janeway,^{clxxi} Robinson,^{clxxii} Segundo,^{clxxiii} and Wink^{clxxiv} (1998) note these underlying structures of violence may be present in such a manner that their victims are unaware of the truthful realities or facts which surround their life experience of oppression and violence. They may be unaware of the cultural trusses that support and maintain oppressive structures in place for succeeding generations.

During the 1980's Latin American theologians, who lived in situations where the majority of people lived in abject poverty, described the need to conscientize the poor about the causes of their poverty and suffering. While this process was not exactly the same as mid-century feminist consciousness-raising groups in the United States, the aims of North American feminist consciousness-raising and Latin American conscientization were quite similar: (1) to develop awareness of and insight into the socio-economic and socio-historical-cultural roots of impoverishment, victimization and suffering and (2) to understand the politically repressive and oppressive social structures in which they and their communities lived their daily lives. By careful examination of these kinds of realities, underlying ideologies came into view – the long-lasting cultural or social buttresses of ongoing oppression in the name of God, or the fates, or the nation-state, etc. In a similar way clergy abuse victim support groups such as the Roman Catholic group SNAP^{clxxv} provide a place for awareness-raising and personal support as individual victims and their families begin to comprehend what actually happened to them during the primary act of sexual abuse and the secondary acts of institutional re-victimization.^{clxxvi}

In Camara's model, as Brown^{clxxvii} describes it, individuals and entire communities need to become aware of the truthful realities of their personal and communal life situations. They need to learn to distinguish reality from propaganda; truth from disinformation; facts from lies. By learning to report and then analyze their own life experiences, individuals and entire communities can begin to identify oppressive social structures that are at the root of their suffering. By careful analysis, individuals and entire communities can become awakened to the troubling socio-political and ideological-theological structures of their life history and pain. They learn by such a process that their suffering is neither accidental nor caused by gods or fate. They learn to identify specific individuals and specific institutional structures that have (or currently are) oppressing and exploiting them.

To summarize: in *stage one* of the spiral of violence, individuals and entire communities live within social structures where they are actively, but secretly, oppressed by those in positions of power, authority and social or religious control. As the victimized and vulnerable ones begin to interrogate the meaning of their suffering which usually means identifying its sources, they begin to come together. They move from explaining their life-situation to themselves and others in self-blaming individual models to exploring the socio-cultural realities in which they are embedded and in which they experience daily life.

In the second stage of the spiral of violence, victimized individuals began to organize their collective resources in order to resist further victimization. They began to speak out for their own basic human rights. Collectively (rarely individually) they began to protest against the encapsulating and suffocating nature of the socially organized and rigorously maintained structures of violence in which they suffer.

In South Africa, for example, we can see the important role of Archbishop Tutu in speaking out against apartheid and in mobilizing some parts of the Christian world in resistance movements.^{clxxviii} We can see his important role in organizing a world-wide boycott of South African goods and services as a form of pressuring the pro-apartheid government to change.

Roman Catholic clergy abuse information sites and victim support groups such as Bilgrimage, Bishop Accountability, Link-up, Voice of the Faithful and SNAP provide clear examples of individuals who have come together to challenge the socio-cultural and socio-theological realities in the organizational church which have buttressed the clergy hierarchy's unwillingness to appropriately supervise child sexual abusers inside the ordained clerical system of the Roman Catholic Church. In addition to their information-gathering and resistance activities, these organizations also provide victim support activities.

In the *third stage* those who benefit from the unjust and repressive structures and those who have initiated and maintained them (generally the members and entire

groups of the community's privileged elite castes) respond to their critics (and a perceived loss of power) with increased repression and outright violence. In locations such as army-controlled Guatemala or El Salvador, murder and massacres occurred. The most well-known and clearest example of this response is the assassination of El Salvador's Bishop Oscar Romero after he appealed during a Sunday homily broadcast to the nation's ruling elites and army junta to stop the government-legitimated massacres and disappearances of civilians.

Regarding this kind of violence Arendt^{clxxix} comments that the loss of power (and I would add the perceived potential for a loss of power) *becomes a temptation to substitute violence for power*. Repressive violence, Arendt notes, can destroy the people's individual and communal power but it can never create it.

For organizational elites (who are in the powerful position of social control of other's lives) the resort to excessive violence comes into play when power and control is being lost (or appears to be in such a situation of loss). Arendt, in this respect, claims that when elites begin to lose control (or in my experience, even have a perception that they might lose control) their individual sense of social impotence is one breeding ground for retaliatory violence.

Example: 2011 Report of the Philadelphia County (PA) Grand Jury^{clxxx}

The January 21, 2011 Report of a Philadelphia County (PA) Grand Jury provides us with additional examples of structural violence as it relates to clergy sexual abuse of pre-pubertal and adolescent children. The bullets below represent Brown's and Camara's categories. The illustrative examples are from the final grand jury report.

- *Spiral of violence and structural oppression, stage one:* diocesan re-location of predator priests without any warning to the new parish about past criminal behavior; offending priests were repeatedly re-assigned to new parishes or new pastoral tasks – often involving children.
- *Spiral of violence and structural oppression, stage two:* formerly victimized children, now adults, and their families of origin lodge complaints with the church's hierarchy and they are told that the church has no awareness of these alleged previous clergy violations or they are told that the church will privately take care of the problem so it doesn't recur;
- *Spiral of violence and structural oppression: stage three:* the hierarchy turns its diocesan staff and corporate lawyers loose for a hostile and well-coordinated attack on the victim's credibility;

- *Stage Two reprised:* As the victims continue to persist in seeking accountability, truth and justice, they turn to the civil courts to help them
- *Stage Three reprised:* As the church is pressured by the civil court system for information, members of the hierarchy resort to perjury and defense lawyers further attack victims in their testimony.^{clxxxi}

As demonstrated above the current clergy sexual abuse crisis in the American Roman Catholic Church fits Brown's and Camara's model for structural or systemic violence. Widely available documentation from expert witnesses and grand jury reports demonstrates the presence of an unresponsive church hierarchy who actively hid sexual predators from criminal prosecution and kept them in active ministry without warning the laity (stage one). As victims and their families began to organize themselves and confront the church demanding change (stage two), the institutional church pushed back by attacking the credibility of victims and the character and careers of their helpers (stage three).

Father Thomas Doyle writes,

in the 25 years that I have been directly involved in this issue, I have seen Church officials and their attorneys defame, slander, devalue and threaten victims, victim's families, their attorneys, their supporters and those who have advocated for them. All of this was done in the name of "defending the Church."^{clxxxii}

Later in this same document he continues:

*The objections of the Catholic cardinals, archbishops and bishops, expressed by their attorneys are based on their fundamental but totally erroneous belief that they are somehow above the laws of the State of California. This arrogant and unrealistic attitude has apparently blinded them to the essential fact of what this entire phenomenon is all about. It is not about money, or the image of the hierarchy or the power of bishops. **It is about thousands of innocent, vulnerable children whose physical, emotional and spiritual lives have been savagely devastated by Catholic priests and bishops and their rightful search for compassion and justice** (emphasis his).*^{clxxxiii}

Concluding Commentary

Hannah Arendt's work^{clxxxiv} regarding violence compliments our understanding of Camara's work. She notes that totalitarian and authoritarian governing bodies form and re-form themselves in their efforts to stay in power. In such organizations and governments, random as well as organized and well-financed acts of social and physical violence create fear and terror. These actions are designed to destroy truth, control the people and shut down all dissent. When all

dissenting groups cower in silence, the organization's internal and external institutional powers to govern successfully have died.^{clxxxv} What remains is the raw power of authoritarian violence as the solitary buttressing power for governance.

In the context of the church as a sociological organization, when dissent is not tolerated and the people cower in fear of the priest, bishop, God and eternal damnation, the spiritual mission of the church has died. What remains is a corrupt and violent human institution with only abusive, raw power and violence to defend itself.

While the cycle of structural violence is perhaps more visible inside of organized political states than in religious organizations, nevertheless, an understanding of these processes are helpful in recognition of various social maneuvers by corrupted social institutions. Coming to understand the manner in which organized religion has historically dealt with complaints of corruption and evil inside institutional religious structures can help individuals to move free of the noxious effects of such oppressive social realities.

As this chapter is being written (April, 2013), the international Roman Catholic Church is under intense world scrutiny for its administrative mishandling of clergy sexual abuse cases around the world.^{clxxxvi} As more and more factual truth about individual abusers and members of the church's governing hierarchy is uncovered by governmental investigations, activists and journalists, the church is unwillingly being forced into a position of accountability for its institutional behavior in pedophile priest cover-up activities. The institutional church's corrupt corporate structures and behaviors are now, partially visible.^{clxxxvii}

A Riff on Competing Ecclesiologies



clxxxviii

The Contribution of Liberation Theologies

When I fed the poor, they called me a saint; when I asked why the poor were poor, they called me a communist.

Dom Helder Camara^{clxxxix}

When I provided confidential therapy to the victims of religious leader sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual abuse, they called me a healer; when I asked in public why there were so many victims of religious leader harassment, sexual misconduct, and sexual abuse, they called me anti-church, apostate, unchristian and heretical. They said I had an anti-Christian agenda. They shunned me. Eventually, they fired me.

Anonymous^{cxc}

Introductory Comments

My previous exposure to Roman Catholic controversies regarding the church's ecclesiology – its theology about the sociological composition of the earthly body of Christ – the living people of God – included formal graduate study vis-à-vis post-Vatican Two liberation theologies in twentieth-century Latin America. I read Gustavo Gutierrez for one of my language exams and later heard him speak on a USA tour. In addition, certain aspects of my professional career as a college teacher took place on location in Central American war zones. My twenty-first century Mennonite reading about clergy sexual abuse in the context of Roman Catholic theology and ecclesiology, therefore, builds upon what I'd previously learned during my years of academic graduate study and what I'd experienced

first-hand inside the repressive civil war zones of twentieth-century Latin America.

Latin America's twentieth-century liberation theology focused on the poverty and political powerlessness of the poor. Its leading theologians exegeted and then developed a biblical hermeneutic in which the concept of a *preferential theological, ecclesiological and pastoral care option* for the poor emerged front and central (Medellin, Columbia, 1968).^{cxixcxii}

In the twenty-first century, another formulation of the preferential option for the vulnerable has emerged in North America. In this emergent version, the call is for the church's preferential option to lodge with the children, adolescents and adults who have been sexually assaulted and harassed by clergy. In many of his speeches, Dominican Priest Thomas P. Doyle expresses his belief that the church's mission is to support the vulnerable of any age and to attempt to heal their wounds, in this case, the wounds of sexual victimization which have been inflicted by Roman Catholic clergy *and* by members of the church's elite administrative caste and ruling hierarchy.^{cxiii}

A Civil Rights Movement for Children

During a panel decision in New York City in the spring of 2013, Plaintiff's Attorney Jeff Anderson of St. Paul, Minnesota stated his opinion that contemporary Roman Catholic activists such as SNAP founder, Barbara Blaine, and advocates such as Father Doyle and writers such as Richard Sipe have begun a much needed civil rights movement for all United States children.^{cxiv} In my theological-clinical reading of Anderson's declaration, Blaine, Doyle and their colleagues are preaching and embodying a preferential option for abused and wounded individuals, in this case the socially and culturally vulnerable ones are the victims of clergy sexual abuse.

Latin American theologies of liberation, as these emerged in Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions of faith, developed very complex and well nuanced theoretical models of poverty and systemic or structural violence.^{cxv} Economic theory, theology, and various aspects of the human social sciences were placed in dialogue with each other. It is my belief that it is now time to create similar models for analysis vis-à-vis societal and clerical abuse of children.

A Liberating Theology for the Church's Victims

In particular, we need a systematic look at the varieties of religious and spiritual problems caused by clergy sexual abuse *and* by cover-up activities by religious institution administrators. Theology, ecclesiology, the clinical sciences, social psychology, and the sociological-anthropological sciences need to be placed in active dialogue so that various aspects of these problems can be (1) identified, (2) described in a common language so that research protocols can be designed

and implemented, and (3) movement can be made towards resolution in three different vectors: healing the wounds of violence; curtailment or containment or quarantine of their victimizers, and prevention.

Needed Research Tools

Two aspects would be useful to further activism on behalf of victims and to future clinical work with victims. **One** is to create a **uniform research lexicon of linguistic terms** which can be used in multiple research protocols. The **second** is to create a **typology of religious and clerical abuse**. For example, a beginning typology would need to include and yet differentiate among (1) victims of clergy sexual abuse and (2) victims of administrative and systemic or structural abuse.

Developmental Factors to be Considered

Another dimension that needs to be included in such constructive theoretical work is a discussion of how direct experiences of clergy sexual abuse intersect with a victimized individual's age and developmental status. A child raped at 2 and an adolescent raped at 13 and a woman raped at 25 each has differing levels of cognitive and developmental mastery at the moment of their violation. Thus, each act of rape presents each individual with unique developmental and personal challenges. In addition to common reaction patterns during events of sexual violation such as fear, terror, and survival anxiety, each individual's unique and pre-existing personality fault lines will be assaulted and exploited.^{CXCVI} Each individual's ordinary life situation needs to be considered. What was life like for this individual before victimization happened? What changes have happened in the individual's life – changes which are direct or indirect consequences of their violation? How has their life trajectory changed?

For Example

For example, when a child lives inside an abusive family, his responses to clergy sexual abuse may compound a pre-existing betrayal trauma response which is has already overtaken his young psyche. In a situation of this type with multiple forms of abuse, the child is left totally on his own to figure out a pathway to survival. She will make whatever life compromises he needs to make to live and to survive.

The younger the child, the more devastating are these kinds of personal-compromises-in-order-to-live. Recent findings in medicine indicate that with early dissociative responses in situations of overwhelming violence and violation there may be permanent physiological changes in the limbic system, the amygdala, the hippocampus and the pre-frontal cortex.^{CXCVII}

Any theological or clinical typology of the spiritual and religious problems which arise in the aftermath of clergy sexual abuse needs, therefore, to be developmentally nuanced. This is also true for the problems which emerge in the aftermath of religious leader criminality and administrative malfeasance in the management of clergy sexual abusers.

Theological Disagreements

Invoking memories of Martin Luther's heresy during the Protestant Reformation, Cardinal Levada recently wrote from Rome and issued this opinion about theological disagreements inside the Roman Catholic community of theologians, religious and clergy. He wrote;

*If you hold these positions (on the Eucharist and nature of the priesthood) you are formally in heresy....priests, religious, and theologians – people who have been given a charge, people who have been given the work of speaking with the authority of the church behind them – cannot simply come out and say **I don't accept this** or **I don't like this**. They have a responsibility, otherwise they use their role to produce confusion, and people may hear them preaching from the pulpit or read what they write about something that's contrary to the faith.*^{CXCVIII}

If I properly understand Cardinal Levada's words, they imply that disagreements about theology, ecclesiology and practical ethics are to be solved in Rome and everyone inside the church must subsequently line up with these teachings or be in a state of heresy. Thus, to the outsider, these words seem to carry the ominous threat of excommunication. In such a situation, free debate is shackled inside of and trampled under a structure of authoritarian ecclesiological dogma. The living church in such a model is strangled as it confronts corruption at the highest levels of its organizational life.

Epidemic or Endemic

As I have been working on this conversation, a thought has continued to recur to me. Catholic experts' discussions of their church's management of sexually abusive priests have evolved from code language to crisis language to scandal language to phenomenon language to nightmare language as victim advocates attempt to describe the historical and socio-cultural realities of sexual abuse inside the clerical culture of their denomination. They have not, however, used language from the public health domain of science and research. There are two words or concepts, in particular, which might be useful. It appears that clergy sexual abuse of children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults is *endemic* in the Roman Catholic Church.^{CXCIX} The second term is epidemic.^{CC} It is unclear if the social reality of clergy abuse is an epidemic. To me it seems more like an endemic reality. In terms of the typology above, both terms would need careful definition work in order to be utilized properly across research protocols and

advocacy work. But careful elucidation of such language would be immediately understood inside the world's public health community and could, therefore, create research allies.

In my opinion, every endemic issue has cultural underpinnings. This is as true of clergy sexual abuse as it is of the physical plagues of malaria, typhoid fever, and polio. With physical disease issues, the world community knows how these diseases are bred, spread. There are now technologies available to prevent, control and maybe even eliminate their presence in the world economy and ecology. Thus, issues of culture and the political will to change the underpinnings of these diseases must also be examined and confronted.

Authors of the 2002 WHO *Report Summary* identify several working goals for work in violence prevention. In any work directed towards the prevention, treatment, control and eradication of violence, these are useful working goals or objectives to keep in mind.

- To challenge individual or cultural secrecy and the taboos that surround topics of violence
- To challenge the belief that violence is inevitable in human life
- To encourage discussion and debate in order to increase human understanding of the complex nature of violence in human life

To create working partnerships of all kinds and at all levels in order to work towards the goals of prevention, lessening and ending episodes of violence (pp. 1-2).^{cci}

In terms of sexual abuse and sexual violence issues, we are beginning to understand that world health principles apply to these endemic forms of cultural behavior. These social disorders of authoritarianism reap devastating health and wholeness consequences in their victims' lives. At this moment in our global history, we are in the very beginning moments of quantifying such damages in terms of emotional health, physical health, social-relational health and economic health. It is already apparent that these costs are debilitating ones to individuals, to families, and to entire communities.

Only very recently have religious communities begun to explore the religious and spiritual damages of such abuse to (1) predators and their families; (2) victims and their families; (3) worshipping communities in which abuse occurs; and (4) the larger civil order which surrounds each of these.

Even such a cursory exploration of the various forms of abuse, their developmental implications, and the consequent religious or spiritual problems reveals the complexity of the issues at hand. Any typology of clergy sexual

violence and religious abuse needs to consider these kinds of issues in order to formulate a framework for systematic study of these issues. Such study is urgently needed if we wish, as a society of the commons, to proactively protect children and to reactively quarantine abusers.

The Roman Catholic Situation in 2013

Dominating imperialism is always predatory and exploitive.

J. Harold Ellens^{ccii}

During the past seven years what I have found, therefore, is a different Roman Catholic conversation about the Christian Church's preferential options than the one that happened in Latin America in the middle of the twentieth-century. For one thing, the church's and the hierarchy's conversations about Roman Catholic faith and praxis in light of clergy sexual abuse are now taking place on a world scale. These conversations do not only include the denominational hierarchy. Contravening opinions about the church reforms begun with Vatican Two are being challenged at the highest levels of the denomination. In this denomination-internal controversy the theology and religious praxis of Vatican Two has clearly been under attack by the church's hierarchy even as it has been embraced by many ordinary lay Catholic individuals. During the papacies of John Paul the Second and Benedict the Sixteenth,, orthodoxy, in terms of doctrine, has taken precedence over the church's preferential option for the oppressed and vulnerable. In short, in terms of Rome's mandates to its bishops world-wide orthodoxy in doctrine has been defended while orthopraxis in terms of abused children has been ignored.

For priests hoping to advance in the hierarchy, what they say in public about what they believe or think is more important than what a priest does in his life actions. According to Andrew Greeley, this has created a complicit group of priests and church administrators who know about the sexual abuse of children, adolescents, and adults but who refuse to act because their career trajectory will be ambushed by their supervisors in the hierarchy.^{cciii} The cover-up of clergy sexual abuse is increasingly recognized as a world-wide problem.^{cciv} In early 2013, Father Thomas Doyle described the desired attitudinal and behavioral profile for upwardly mobile and career-oriented, ambitious priests as being docile, obedient, and invisible.^{ccv} Such an attitudinal and behavioral trajectory for promotion does not produce prophetic critics nor does it produce internal reformers. Most assuredly these kinds of docile, obedient and unquestioning followers do not create internal and external change movements. These kinds of internal organizational climates may, however, produce priest sycophants and power-and-money-and status corrupt bishops.

Priests add religious can be and are summarily and rapidly disbarred for writing about issues of theology and doctrine in ways which displease a bishop or the

Vatican hierarchy^{ccvi} while priests, bishops, and cardinals can institutionally hide the reality of clerical sexual abuse for decades and are never disciplined.^{ccvii} Lay individuals in blogs that litter the internet like fallen leaves in October are talking back. The institutional church may not be listening but it is clear that lay Catholics have claimed space for these discussions and that they are, therefore, introducing democratic elements into an authoritarian monarchical church structure and its efforts to stifle lay conversation about theological issues such as women priests and about sexual violence issues such as diocesan cover-ups of sexually abusive clerics..^{ccviii}

Authors in the field of clergy sexual abuse and denominational cover-up activities continue to document their informed opinion that the denominational hierarchy's current preferential option is for the powerful, the wealthy, and the elite members of their clerical caste..^{ccix} In such a situation, the ordained caste and hierarchy (priests, bishops, cardinals, and the papacy) represent the church. Such a view directly contradicts the view of Vatican Two that the people of God include the laity as well as the priestly caste.

In the twenty-first century Catholic Church, several official doctrines of the church are being re-thought and debated. In particular, inside Catholic doctrinal bodies, discussions include (1) the nature and meaning of the mystical body of Christ and its relationship to the human organizational church, (2) the nature and meaning of the mystical nature of the priesthood, (3) the nature and meaning of the mystical body of the church and its relationship to real people in the present moment, and (4) sociological or administrative applications of these theological understandings in church administration throughout the denomination's diocesan, national and global manifestations. This controversy about the nature of the church, the nature of the priesthood, and the nature of the laity colors all debates about the Roman Catholic Church's management practices of its sexually abusive clergy and religious.

What or Who Constitutes the Human Church?

To live a full human life, the individual must find herself "in company" or community.

Martin Marty^{ccx}

Does, for example, the church belong to the hierarchy which ontologically constitutes its real membership or does it also include the ordinary lay person in the pews? Another way to say this is to ask who constitutes the church? Does the ordained caste contain and represent the essence of the church as the body of Christ or is this essence manifested primarily among the ordinary, non-ordained people in the pews? Are priests and religious ontologically different from ordinary people in the pews? For example, does a solitary bishop create, manifest and represent the church? Is a bishop the only person needed to form

the church? Does the bishop or priest need the people in the pews for anything more than their money and their obedience?^{ccxi}

To Whom or What is the Institutional Church Accountable

Each person encounters society as a dimension of his or her own consciousness.

Gregory Baum^{ccxii}

Eventually this kind of questioning leads to the question of responsibility and accountability. To whom, and for what purposes, are priests and bishops to be held accountable for their individual behaviors and for their collective management or administrative behaviors? Are abusive priests only responsible, for example, inside the chalice of their ordination vows to obey their bishop and other administrative superiors? Or, are they simultaneously accountable to the people they lead in worship activities? Are they accountable to the civil order of the nation-state?

Are negligent or malfeasant bishops or church administrators only responsible to the Pope/Vatican and its ruling oligarchy or are they also accountable to the non-abusive priests they supervise? What is the nature of their responsibility to the laity in the pews? Are they only accountable to the Vatican political-religious state or are they equally accountable to the nation-state in which they reside?

What is the Church's Ecclesiology and Epistemology about Itself?

It is clear that much of this theological rule-making originates in Rome and that Rome's perception of twenty-first century orthodoxy is that answers to these complex internal questions are to be devised in Rome and then dictated or promulgated to the world church by the Pope, the Curia, the cardinals, and the bishops. One consequence of this particular form of religious authoritarianism is that rarely, if ever, does the doctrinal and theological church relate its theology to the real lived-life experience of sexual abuse victims. Indeed, as one reads deposition after deposition, it seems apparent that bishops and cardinals in their diocesan roles as church administrators go out of their way to avoid recognizing – much less having conversations with – victims and families of priest abusers.

When Roman Catholic authors such as Benkert,^{ccxiii} Berquist,^{ccxiv} Brunt and Burkett,^{ccxv} Breslin,^{ccxvi} Carroll,^{ccxvii} Chinicci,^{ccxviii} Coyne,^{ccxix} Dokecki,^{ccxx} Doyle,^{ccxxi} Frawley-O'Dea,^{ccxxii} Jenkins,^{ccxxiii} Kennedy,^{ccxxiv} Lobdell,^{ccxxv} Podles,^{ccxxvi} Robinson,^{ccxxvii} Steinfels,^{ccxxviii} Wills,^{ccxxix} and others discuss the sexual and clericalism abuses of their denomination and the fall-out damages they have done to Roman Catholic identity, faith, and religious practice, they do not focus diagnostically on their church's underlying ecclesiology, polity, and praxis. In their discussions of clergy sexual abuse, they do not focus their discussions on

identifying and then deconstructing its sequellae, the religious and spiritual damages to (1) the theological concept of the universal church, (2) the ecclesiology of the priestly brotherhood, (3) the individual and collective experiences of thousands of victims of abuse, (4) the presence of complicit or spiritually and morally immature laity in the pews, and (5) the responses of the larger community. Yet each of these dimensions vis-à-vis these questions must be raised and examined if we are to move towards a model of treatment, quarantine and prevention.

In a certain sense, many of these authors focus more on the need of the religious community of their denomination to engage in serious internal reform efforts – at the local level and at the level of the papacy and the governing members of the Curia.^{ccxxx} However, among victim advocates who are themselves members of the priesthood, there is a certain kind of wary cynicism that the institutional church will not change because the institutional church cannot change.

Summary Comments

This awareness of the inability of corrupted social institutions to change by a hierarchy-guided internal institutional will is very much in line with Latin American's theological awareness during the last half of the twentieth-century. Meaningful reforms or transformative change in the theological, ecclesiological and pastoral practices of a morally and spiritually corrupted church will not – indeed cannot - occur from the inside and top-down. A corrupted institution led by corrupt individuals is incapable of internal transformations. Instead, needed changes and corrections, if they are to happen at all, must arise within the oppressed community and spread both horizontally and vertically. Change to the bureaucratic and institutional church will, therefore, begin with the so called little people as they decide collectively to manifest themselves as God's people. Any meaningful and lasting change will be from the bottom-up. In my opinion, the change, if and when it occurs, will not originate within the corrupted hierarchy

Jeremiah, the Weeping Prophet



Michelangelo's Jeremiah^{CCXXI}
Sistine Chapel, Rome

Introductory Comments

*Women have been violated in Zion
And virgins in the towns of Judah*

Lamentations 5:11

It has been many years since I studied the life and times of Jeremiah in a seminary classroom. At this distance in time, I do not remember specific details of his life and message with any guaranteed accuracy. I do not remember any mention or discussions of raped women and children for I am quite certain there were no such classroom conversations. Nevertheless, the prophet, and his life, has had a powerful impact on my life since those seminary classroom discussions of his life and times.

Encountering systemic or structural violence, my thoughts turn to Jeremiah. Witnessing persecution of the morally-principled whistle-blower, my thoughts turn to Jeremiah. Becoming aware of moral rot or spiritual corruption, my thoughts turn to Jeremiah. Witnessing the various and multiple narcissistic profanities of idolatrous human authority, my thoughts turn to Jeremiah. Becoming aware of the unprincipled and ego-pursuit of power and control, my thoughts turn to Jeremiah. Entering moments or years of religious homelessness and exile, my thoughts turn to Jeremiah. Living now on the outer margins of my ethnic faith community, my thoughts turn to Jeremiah.

Like today's authentic Christian prophets, Jeremiah (ca, 650-570 BCE)^{ccxxxii} lived in very dangerous and precarious times. In his time, three predatory nations were interested in the people resources and financial tributes of the lands of Judah and Israel: Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon. In our times, the predatory church and its leaders are interested in the status, power, prestige, political influence, and financial leverage of a global church. As a nation state, the United States perhaps more in common with ancient Babylon than with the feudal states of Israel and Judah. But the world is filled with war and threats of war. The religious church and the political nation-state in much of the world have so interpenetrated each other that it is impossible to separate their influential powers in the world.

In both situations (Jeremiah's and ours), it is ordinary people – the citizens of these religious and political landscapes – who are forced into spiritual exile and religious homelessness. It is wives, sisters, and daughters who are raped in the commons. It is husbands, brothers, and sons who weep for that which is lost.

In the twenty-first century, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity all consider Jeremiah to be one of God's greatest prophets – second perhaps only to Moses. Some religious teachers think that perhaps it was the teachings of Jeremiah which sustained his exiled people and secured the survival of the Hebrew people and their religious heritage – securing his story in part as a warning for all future generations of YHWH's people. While this may or may not be so, I have heard very few honest and relevant sermons about the life and times of this tortured and reluctant prophet.

In today's language, we might see Jeremiah as a whistle-blower – addressing spiritual and moral corruption in the palace, in the temple, and in the homes of the ordinary citizen. As we all know, principled whistle-blowers are despised (and often directly attacked) in the commons of their community. They challenge the status quo and are rarely, if ever, welcomed into the living rooms and dining rooms of the powerful elites. They are disinvited from the inner circles or board rooms of institutional power and authority. They become – because of their message of warning in the midst of apparent prosperity and power – the embarrassing and despised pariahs and cranks of their community. Cast outside the gates of the city of their birth, nevertheless their message of self-correction is essential for the religious survival of their people. Their message is essential in the spiritual welfare of individuals who live in spiritual exile because of the corruptness of the religious institution.

Jeremiah's message is that when the spirituality of the people is corrupted by their lust for power and the idolatry of their religious and political leadership, the physical and social structures that buttress and support authentic religion and a concomitant spirituality that has integrity – these structures are already crumbling. The consequences of moral corruption and spiritual idolatry, for the leaders of a dead and dying heritage are dire. They will be overthrown by internal and external coalitions of judgment. They will be abandoned by those in positions

of authority. Some, perhaps many, will be imprisoned. Others will be force-marched into socio-political-spiritual exile.

Those disillusioned few who remain will be powerless to govern their ordinary lives and collective destinies. The gods of idolatrous power and the gods of dishonest and controlling rule will die an inevitable death. Their physical temples on earth will be emptied of the structures of spiritual power and religious authority.

Judgment of corrupt religion and idolatrous spirituality when it comes - as it inevitably will – this judgment will be swift and the unrelenting harshness of its physical or social or spiritual consequences will be devastating.

The Central Root of Corrupted Religious Practice: Idolatry

I hurt with the hurt of my people. I mourn and am overcome with grief.

Jeremiah 8:21

One of the religious-spiritual issues in the times of Jeremiah's life was idolatry – worshipping that which was earth-born and earth-created in place of that which was eternal, transcendent and holy. Because of its ideological fault lines and because of its oppressive governing and social structures, the security of the commons was imperiled from within and from without. One form of this idolatry was the sacrifice of children on the altars of Baal.^{ccxxxiii} Another was communal worship at shrines of golden bulls and golden calves. Because of structural or systemic evils inside the commons, inside the palace, inside the temple, the survival of the Hebrew religious heritage and tradition was imperiled from within and from without. When we look at the text, straight on, what we find are that princes and priests were surrounded by sycophants and followed the advice of false prophets. Religious and political leaders had lost the ability to discern real political dangers and spiritual dangers. They were willing to oppress the majority of their people and to socially ostracize and imprison individuals who sought to give them the advance warnings that might have saved their individual lives and their positions of rule.

When this geographic region was conquered by Assyria, Baal's altars' golden images were torn down and their gold melted as a form of tribute to the conquering armies and distant rulers.

Then Egypt, to the south, gained momentary dominance. But it was the great military empire of Babylon that eventually conquered the theocratic nation-state and took its people and rulers into exile – force-marching them away from their homeland to live in a foreign land. This trail of tears has yielded some of the greatest spiritual exile literature that we have: the book of Lamentations and some of the lament poetry in the Psalms.

A Reluctant Prophet

Put on sackcloth; roll in ashes, mourn with bitter wailing as for an only child, for suddenly the destroyer is upon us.

Jeremiah 6:26

Guided by his dreams, Jeremiah became a reluctant prophet. Speaking as God's voice, his words drew the ire of his nation's political leaders, his nation's religious leaders and the disdain of the common person living inside the nation-state's borders.

God's enduring message was that Jeremiah would be attacked for his message but that God and the truth of the message would protect him. As an unwelcome prophet, Jeremiah was punished by his nation's leaders and its people: death threats arrived in his in-box; he was placed in the stocks and mocked by his neighbors; false prophets contradicted his message; high-ranking officials in the religious temple and officials in the seat of governance, the palace, attempted to persuade the ruling class elites that he should be put to death for treason; in an effort to kill him, he was imprisoned in a cistern where it was hoped he would starve to death; rescued by a commoner, he was removed to another prison where he remained until Jerusalem fell in 587 BCE. The Babylonians freed him and he was allowed by them to choose the place of his residence (Mizpah). Later, in another round of political violence, he was personally forced into exile in Egypt. There is no reliable report of his death although there are numerous legends that his own people stoned him to death in (1) Egypt or (2) the Village of Anathoth – his hometown.

He left behind him the book of *Jeremiah*. His scribe was a man by the name of Baruch.

Sacrificing the Children



Golden Bull Altar at Dan built by King Jerobaum^{CCXXIV}
First Kings 12: 26-30

For they have forsaken me and made this a place of foreign gods; they have burned incense in it to gods that neither they nor their ancestors, nor the kings of Judah ever knew, and they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent. They have built the high places of Baal to burn their children in the fire as offerings to Baal – something I did not command or mention, or did it ever enter my mind.

Jeremiah 19: 4-5

Introductory Comments

In its religious leader sexual abuse phenomenon across the Christian centuries,^{CCXXV} the institutional Church's leaders have sacrificed generations of their church's children by not protecting them, by not defending them, by not attending to their needs and by ignoring their post-victimization wounds. It has sacrificed them by teaching and mandating violence as a desired form of discipline. It has sacrificed them by threatening them with the angry God and hell's fire as a way of controlling them. The institutional church has enabled the abuse and rape of its children and women by members of its elite caste of ordained ministers, evangelists, missionaries, priests and bishops. The human church has both colluded in and enabled the sins of individual priests and bishops. It has further enable those in positions of authority who refuse to be accountable for their sinful and criminal activity to the laity or to the greater social order of the commons. .

In 2013, Dominican Father Thomas Doyle criticized the contemporary Roman Catholic Church's administrative hierarchy for outsourcing the gospel to lawyers in order to protect the church's image and its financial resources and access to

capital liquidity; in short, *it outsourced the gospel for money*.^{ccxxxvi} Doyle has publicly commented that in his work with clergy sex abuse victims and their families for the past thirty years, the bishops have been primarily concerned with *their image, their power, their prestige, and their wealth*.^{ccxxxvii}

The Roman Catholic Church has a unique organizational structure and system of ecclesial beliefs. But they are hardly unique in their encounters with sexually abusive clergy and corrupted institutional leaders. A common pattern of behavior which is visible in many religious and spiritual teaching institutions includes (1) denial and disbelief: insisting victim's accusations have no credulity; (2) minimizing the quantity of abuse, generally by misrepresenting or lying about it when confronted; (3) blaming or vilifying victims and consequently re-victimizing them; (4) blaming or vilifying victim advocates and victim therapists and in doing so, creating acts and situations of secondary victimization; (5) marginalizing victim family members and supportive individuals - those who bear witness to the factual truth about victimization and its on-going damages; and (6) deciding to hide or destroy factual records that might open the situation to the light of truth and to institutional transparency and accountability.

My interpretation of this recurring pattern across the Christian centuries and denominations is that a corrupt church or religious institution produces corrupt leaders and in their time as leaders they further corrupt the church. This pattern can last for decades, centuries or even millennia.^{ccxxxviii} In this pattern, or cultural form, violent spiritual leaders and teachers harm children and vulnerable adults who, in their turn, pass on the cycle of violence to new generations of children. Unhealed wounds fester.

The point at which a corrupted institution such as the church becomes totally irrelevant and dies is unknown. But anthropology and archeology teach us that when great civilizations and powerful institutions fall under the weight of political and religious corruption (structural or systemic evil) and internal moral rot (hypocrisy), their gods fall with them.

The sacrifice of children (and other vulnerable individuals) includes malicious adult needs and motivating desires for domination and control. The simplest formulation I have been able to teach myself is that angry, controlling and victimizing adults abuse children, adolescents, and other adults simply because they know they can. The behaviors which result from these adult abilities and motivations include using verbal violence (threats and criticism), social violence (ostracizing and shunning), economic violence (firing people), emotional violence (attacking or vilifying their characters and personalities), interpersonal violence (malicious harassment) and physical violence (raping or beating) to reinforce *and* perpetuate the abusing individual's personal authority, power, status, reputation, and financial security. The will and subsequent ability to dominate others, in this case children, is deeply tied to authoritarian beliefs and authoritarian character structures. These beliefs and structures are both cultural and individual. Human

consciousness is invaded by cultural forms. In turn, human consciousness creates or recreates these very same cultural forms.

In a Dublin lecture (Spring, 2013), Father Doyle described the need of individuals to break the shackles of authoritarian belief structures and magical thinking in order to move towards spiritual maturity as individuals and as the collective people of God.^{ccxxxix} Moving away from the domination of corrupt religious ideologies and leaders, individuals move into the spiritual freedom in which the inner life of the human soul is nurtured. The outcome, according to Doyle, includes following the mission of Jesus Christ in serving the most vulnerable, the most unlovable, the most unattractive, and the most oppressed individuals – those real persons who share time and space with us inside our various human cultures.

Another motivating issue in institutional corruption includes demonstrating one's obedience and loyalty to an abusive institution by efforts to protect its reputation, status, and financial prowess. In play at all times in these contemporary situations is an ancient religious practice: the sacrifice of children and vulnerable adults for the sole purposes of self/religious institution protection or self/religious institution enhancement.

The Taproot of Child Sacrifice

The taproot of child sacrifice, I have come to believe, is manifested in the pragmatic institutional practices of twentieth-century idolatry. In the background of such idolatry is a teaching about the angry and demonic gods who occupy the distant heavens.^{ccxi} Bishop Geoffrey Robinson identifies this religious imagery of the angry God as one source of the Church's pathological power over and control of the laity.^{ccxli}

Worshipping false gods is not only a sin against the human community. It is a sin against the generative Source of all life.

In addition, in religiously abusive families and churches, abusive individuals often claim God's authority and God's prerogative to judge as their human authority and prerogative. In the commons, they are perceived to speak, therefore, not only with their human voice – which could be countered – but with God's voice which must not ever be countered. Children through the Christian centuries have been beaten in God's name: criticized and emotionally abused in God's name, raped or sexually abused in God's name; and religiously abused by religious or spiritual teachings that install the fear of an angry and irrational God.

In some situations, the sacrifice of a given victim is done to ensure continuing human control inside the interface between humanity and its angry and abusive deities. In others, individuals with narcissistic character disorders have invaded positions of leadership.^{ccxlii} Their maliciousness is agnostic. It is done for their

own purposes. These purposes include having power over others and having access to power, wealth, status, and deference from others.

Making an example of the one is usually done by members of the ruling castes and hierarchies (from the heads of the nuclear family to the pope) as an act of deterrence. Seeing the harsh realities heaped by the reigning or ruling powers on the one, the many retreat into submissive obedience or terrified silence.

Personal Commentary

The abuse of children exists because we allow it to exist.

Lonna Hunter^{ccxliii}

I am personally unsure about how to separate out all of the psycho-dynamic and archeological-anthropological^{ccxliiv} or socio-cultural^{ccxlv} roots of culturally-supported child sacrifices. It is clear to me, however, that the violence tree of child sacrifice and child abuse has a millennia old history. In the ancient Near Eastern world^{ccxlvi} archeological artifacts reveal many different kinds of child sacrifices. I am unclear about the importance of these ancient mythic-historical stories to today's acceptance of child sacrifice and abuse.

If we think about sexual abuse as a way to steal the abused individual's personal powers in the world for their abuser's use then one dynamic of child abuse is an abuser's disempowerment of an already vulnerable individual for the purposes of gaining even more power. This is, I believe, a structural definition of idolatry. As we look back into the Near Eastern cultures which practice child sacrifice, we find offering functioned as efforts curry the good favor of the gods in order to protect crop generation and guarantee the land's fertility,

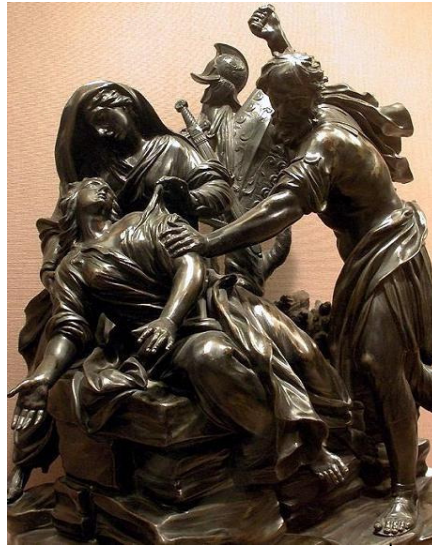
Hypothesizing that there are narrative and structural similarities between the stories of child sacrifice in antiquity and contemporary stories of child abuse, it seems to me, therefore, that there are some cultic similarities. It seems to me these similarities are likely archetype-related. Intuitively, it seems as if these two realities (child sacrifice in the ancient world and child sacrifice in the modern world) have much in common. There is, I assume, a common ideological taproot that is obscured because of the influences of cultural change and ideological rationales.

The Stories from Antiquity

The stories from antiquity appear, at least on the surface, as an attempt to pacify a mercurial and despotic deity. Burned baby bones, near abandoned altars, point towards actual burning rites. Unburned baby bones discovered in sealed ceremonial ceramic jars appear to have been used to thank the gods for plant and animal fertility or to request or to guarantee the safety of a new building and

prosperity for its occupants.^{ccxlvii} Biblical stories reveal God's commandments to slaughter the innocent^{ccxlviii} as well as human vows made to YHWH, a kind of ancient milagro, that if an individual is successful in some endeavor or another – a child will be sacrificed in appreciation.^{ccxlix}

The Slaying of Jephtha's Daughter



Massimiliano_Soldani_Benzi^{ccl}

The story of Jephtha's daughter is such a story.^{ccli} Unlike the story of the binding of Isaac, the heavenly beings did not intervene to save the girl child's life.^{cclii} According to these ancient narratives, God accepted, without critique or heavenly punishment, the sacrifice of a successful general's female daughter while cancelling the ritual sacrifice of a male son. Isaac's lineage will go forward in history while the lineage of the un-named daughter of Jephtha will end with her murder.

These ancient stories and their terror have been de-fanged by centuries of re-interpretation and excusing exegesis. But if one reads them without the benefit of a concordance or web-interpretive devices, the culturally accepted, abysmal and abhorrent cruelty of adults towards their own children becomes quite visible. In these stories, the child's life and welfare is secondary to the violent adult's motivations and deeds. Children, in this world view, are equated with property and can be used or discarded at their guardian's, no, their owner's will. The implicit and morally abhorrent humanly projected cruelty of their Gods also becomes visible.

Phyllis Tribble's^{ccliii} re-exegesis of the Jephtha's daughter narrative continues to set my spirit wailing every time I read it. Anguish is the only word strong enough to convey my reaction to this ancient text – in which the Hebrew's God YHWH did not choose to intervene to rescue a girl-child. Nor was the crime ever punished. Apparently YHWH didn't concern himself with the suffering and slaughter of girl-

children. Only boy children merited his compassionate intervention. In this ancient story, there is no mention of the mother's anguish at the murder of her daughter by the girl's father.

In encountering ancient stories of child sacrifice do we find archetypal realities which continue in different forms in the modern world? What is the impact on today's consciousness of these ancient biblical stories – so often uncritiqued and unself-consciously memorialized in art, literature, historical theology, and sermons?

My responses to today's stories of institutionally-sanctioned and culturally protected child and adolescent rapes inside the Christian religious community are those of lament and cries of anguish. My spirit bows low and my feet drag as they walk. I weep and I judge the patriarchal gods as inadequate. I am nearly consumed with anger at a secular society that tolerates a religious climate in which women and their children are violated – a society which does nothing to protect today's victims of religious sacrifice at the hands of its priestly caste. I ask where is God's face and where is God's judgment? I conclude that the gods are silent because they are powerless to intervene or that they are patriarchal tyrants who disdain women's lives and their children's lives. If (1) god is male and if (2) god demands these sacrifices of human children, as his human priests' embodied actions of sexual violence declare, then this god is a despotic and unworthy god.

The Sacrifice of the Cross

In a similar analysis of the sacrifice of the cross, Roman Catholic former Paulist priest-theologian-journalist James Carroll has explored, for example, the symbolic images of the cross and atonement theologies as a significant propelling imagery and instruction for Christianity's anti-Semitic hatred of the Jewish race and people.^{ccliv} Anti-Semitic pogroms, in his work, are rooted deeply in Christian soil. Most particularly, they are rooted in a racist and anti-Semitic theological narrative of crucifixion, atonement and salvation. In other words, God's deliberate, cruel and abusive sacrifice of his own son.

The Cross and Human Sacrifice: Auschwitz



cclv



cclvi

Auschwitz

Protestant theologians Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker have similarly explored issues of redemptive suffering in two of their books.^{cclvii} Both women are interested in aspects of violence against women as a contemporary inheritance from Christian iconography, dogma, and theology.

As I read these contemporary critiques of Christendom's traditional interpretation of salvation history and crucifixion theologies, I become quite certain that the influence of these iconic stories of divine-human sacrifice influence and condition the common Christian psyche towards cruelty. As the most vulnerable members of Christian societies, children are abused in Christ's name.



cclviii

There is a sado-masochistic element that is unmistakable in the bloody iconic images of Jesus' crucifixion. These images of the bloody Jesus have colonized and saturated the consciousness of Christendom. Rather than salvation from violation and violence, these images appear to romanticize, sentimentalize, justify and sanctify an ongoing stream of crucifixions through the Christian centuries: the inquisition, the martyrdoms of the Reformation era, the witch-burning centuries, the twentieth-century holocausts, and the continuing centuries-long history of rape of the church's laity and its children by insiders from its leading, hierarchical and priestly caste.

Baal and the Bible

Ancient cultic practices in the Near-Eastern cultures which worshipped Baal – the god who controlled devastating weather such as droughts and famines or floods and famines deeply affected and interpenetrated the Abrahmic-Hebrew nations of Judah and Israel. As the priests, kings, and people merged and syncretically blended local tribal religion's ideas of child sacrifice into the worship of YHWH as a way to promote financial wealth for themselves and the security of the nation-

state. In the Jewish scriptures we read that practices of cultic child sacrifice had times of rapid ascendancy that alternated with times when it was forbidden. It is likely, however, given the archeological findings of this geographic area that worship of Baal and other local gods was never totally obliterated by YHWH's most devoted kings and priests. The bones of their nation's sacrificed children bear their own witness to us today.

The ancient prophetic literature of the Jewish Scriptures – that set of texts which Christians call the *Old Testament* - is filled with warnings that child sacrifice will bring divine judgment and, in most cases, this judgment meant a destruction of sacred groves, shrines and temples. One consequence, according to this prophetic tradition was that the nation was overpowered and ruled by conquering nations who worshipped other Gods, and imprisonment or death of the Hebrew people, their political leaders and their priests. In some situations, these prophetic historical narratives tell us, the rulers and a significant number of the people were force-marched into captivity by a conquering nation's military forces.

Engaging in human sacrifices in order to promote human purposes of wealth enhancement, institutional security, or to serve the divine in sacramental cultic worship practices, is explicitly forbidden by these ancient Hebrew prophets who (these ancient texts tell us) spoke in YHWH's voice and in God's name to the people. In these ancient and prophetic texts, the God of prophetic Jewish scriptures refuses to accept human sacrifices of children as a means of gaining spiritual and social control over nature and over one's human enemies. The sacrifice of children or other human beings is explicitly forbidden.

***Abuse of Children:
A Contemporary Form of Child Sacrifice***

*Your children
Are not your children
They are sons and daughters of life's longing for itself
They come through you but not from you
And though they are with you
Yet, they belong not to you*

Kahlil Gibran^{cclix}

I first heard these words sung by Sweet Honey in the Rock^{cclx} in a large black church in Watts (Los Angeles County) during my graduate school years at Claremont. I immediately memorized and then began to sing these lyrics. They became one of the national anthems of my personal household's spirituality. Whenever I thought about child abuse in its many forms and when I thought about the malicious actions of adults in denying the basic human rights of children, I would begin to sing these words.

Adults do not own the world's children. They do not own the child's body. They do not own the child's soul. They do not own the child's future. No adult has the spiritual or moral obligation or the religiously-granted right to abuse a child for any reason at any time.

Adults do not have the right to sacrifice their own or others' children for their own mean-spirited and idolatrous purposes. Ordained clergy, therefore, do not have the right to celebrate obscene and privatized sacramental rites of sexual and physical abuse of children.

The altars of Baal are forbidden to the followers of YHWH^{cclxi} *and* to the followers of Jesus.^{cclxii}

Every abuser of a child (or vulnerable adult) needs to be called up short by his or her community and she or he must be held personally accountable for the unspeakable evil that she or he has done. Since abusers do not usually have an internalized morality of self-control, the community must guarantee that no future abuse will be done.

The same is true of all human organizations which supervise adults who work with children. If they enable child abuse by secretive or inept management practices, they must also be held accountable by their communities of reference for the unspeakable evil they have both enabled and perpetrated inside the human community. The surrounding community must guarantee that no future abuse will be done.

Much of the world's violence is perpetrated by individuals who have been abused, in one way or another, in their own childhoods. If we wish to prevent many different forms of adult violence, it is essential that we work together to stop the abuse of children in whatever form that abuse takes.

It is, therefore, essential that we seek to help the victims of abuse to heal their wounds so that the rich possibilities of their private futures do not remain sealed shut.^{cclxiii} The world needs their unique gifts and it needs them, therefore, to be healed and whole.

The children's collective and individual voices must be heard into speech.^{cclxiv} We must hear their suffering and we must seek to bind-up and to heal their wounds. We must teach ourselves – as adults – how to recognize the presence of sexual and physical abuse and we must intervene.^{cclxv}

It is way past time to end the practice of child sacrifice on the altars of greed and lust for adult goals, purposes and motivations. The false and idolatrous gods of abusive authority and control must be named and they must be forsaken.

Dreams as Portals of Knowing



St. Peter's Square^{cclxvi}

Introductory Comments

Believers can have more than a little to do with the birth of atheism. To the extent that they neglect their own training in the faith, or even teach erroneous doctrine or are deficient in their religious, moral, or social life they must be said to conceal rather than to reveal the authentic face of God and religion.

Guadium et Spies^{cclxvii}

Not too many nights ago I was dreaming. As this complex dream began, I was in a very large and very elegant wood-paneled conference room. This was the kind of room that is found at upscale conference hotels. Everything about this room proclaimed wealth, power, and privilege in an understated way.

The room was filled with people milling around. From this group of people, the resident choirmaster selected maybe twenty or thirty of us. Immediately he organized us into a choir. I knew no one else but I took my assigned place in the long line of singers.

As the dream shifted, I was standing in the middle of a much larger group of singing people. We were being taught a new chant. In the dream I somehow knew that those of us who were learning the chant were to become its teachers to others.

While it was a relatively simple chant, I was having trouble learning one phrase. The choirmaster was patient and we went back to the place where I was having trouble. All of a sudden my friend Eliana - not her real name - whose genetic feet, like mine, reach deep into conservative Mennonite a cappella musical soil, was standing to my right. Her soaring soprano voice pointed the way for me. I could follow and learn from her voice.

In seconds, with no struggle at all, we were all chanting in unison. The music was so beautiful. It was so healing. The choir's voice – as one voice - just floated.

Immediately the dream shifted and I along with a small group of chanters – none of them known to me - was in a very crowded St. Peter's square. We were surrounded by people on all sides. Bodies pressed against bodies. No inch of space was left unfilled.

The colors all around me were somber and subdued ones. I saw no liturgical golds, purples, reds, orchids, or greens. There was no white visible. There were no priests, nuns, bishops in their miters, cardinals in their flowing robes, or even a pope visible on his balcony.

The sky was deeply overcast with thick black clouds. Heavy storms were imminent.

As I write, I think, it was as if all of these ordinary people – this densely crowded sea of humanity – were all in deep mourning. No one was laughing. No one was talking. It must have been winter. We chanters were all wearing identical dark navy woolen pea coats, mufflers, mittens, and knit hats.

Our small group of chanters was chanting the new song in unison. Our song filled only a tiny segment of this vast open square surrounded by Christian buildings – not one of which had any light inside. Nevertheless, as one voice we continued to chant in unison. There was no contrapuntal harmony. There was just the solemn and steady voice of the Choirmaster's soaring and beautiful melody.

As I write, it seems to me that Matthew Fox's (2011) vision of a collapsed and crumbling Vatican has come true inside my dream. In the wake of the sexual abuse and cover-up scandals in many denominations, the Christian Church as we know it has died and a new song – one that soars with transcendent beauty – is being taught to a grieving and struggling humanity.^{cclxviii}

Religious and Spiritual Problems



cclxix

A Conceptual Framework

God told me to do this is different from you must do what I say because God commanded it: the first is either the act of faith or the act of lunacy; the second is a bartered transaction in which one person is the arbiter of orthodoxy [for the second].

Rafael Chodas^{cclxx}

Religious and Spiritual Problems

Religious or Spiritual Problems: This [diagnostic] 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

American Psychiatric Association^{cclxxi}

In 1994 the American Psychiatric Association added the diagnostic category of “religious or spiritual problems” to its fourth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*. The diagnostic category results from transpersonal psychologists (and other clinicians) who described distress or spiritual emergencies associated with individual and communal spiritual practices.

According to psychologist David Lukoff^{cclxxii} this diagnosis differentiates between religiosity and spirituality. *Religiosity* is defined as being associated with religious

organization(s) and religious personnel. *Religious problems*, therefore, involve a person's conflicts over the beliefs, practices, rituals and experiences related to a religious organization or institution. Examples of religious problems can include (1) the loss of or questioning of faith, (2) changes in denominational memberships, (3) conversion to a new religion, (4) intensification of adherence to the beliefs and practices of one's faith, (5) joining, participating in or leaving a new religious group (p. 2).

Spirituality, on the other hand, is defined as the degree of involvement or state of awareness or devotion to a higher power or life philosophy (p. 1). *Spiritual problems* involve, therefore, an individual's relationship with a higher power - one which is not necessarily connected to a religious organization. Examples of spiritual problems can include (1) loss of faith, (2) near-death experiences, (3) separation from a spiritual teacher, (4) a questioning of spiritual values which is commonly associated with loss, (5) leaving a spiritual teacher and moving away from communities where they previously found spiritual meaning and teaching, (6) loss of previously comforting religious or spiritual tenets and community (pp. 4-7).

Religious and Spiritual Sequellae of Clergy Abuse and the Betrayals of Clericalism

Some of the most central and vexing issues that our society faces about childhood sexual abuse [are that] the injury is extensive, pain endures, victims are stigmatized, denial persists, victims are further injured through denial, and perpetrators continue to victimize children.

Jennifer J. Freyd^{cclxxiii}

In this essay I bring my Mennonite theological and professional clinical sensibilities into a deepening conversation with my Roman Catholic brothers and sisters, those committed individuals who are doing sexual violence activism and healing work inside their own faith tradition. I also look outside Christianity's borders to see how other communities understand these religious and spiritual wounds of experienced violence and the wounds of committed activism.

During all of the preliminary reading I did while writing the first three volumes of *The Elephants in God's Living Room*^{cclxxiv} I tripped over the clinical and theological idea of religious and spiritual sequellae in affinity abuse situations. These situations and their aftermaths are particularly troublesome when affinity abuse originates inside a specific religious or spiritual teaching community; where believer assaults believer. Spiritual or religious problems often occur after an individual experiences affinity sexual assaults or sexual harassment. They may also originate from abusive encounters of the laity with many different types of institutional leader abuse done in God's name.^{cclxxv} In addition to complex post-traumatic stress disorders,^{cclxxvi} direct victims of religious abuse and indirect

victims of the church's hierarchy, such as whistle-blowing victim advocates, can and often do experience betrayal trauma.^{cclxxvii cclxxviii}

In the aftermath of affinity violence or in the aftermath of institutional betrayal, an individual's (or sometimes an entire community's) internal conceptual map of the world can be forever altered or even completely destroyed. That internalized map contains information about an individual's sense of the trustworthiness of a relationship or his or her sense of the social world which she or he *knew and therefore believed* as trustworthy. After victimization and ostracization this previously trusted internal map of how things are or should be is no longer credible. When this internal topographic map crumbles, the inherited gods of that worldview often also crumble. No longer can belief and trust in human beings or the gods be innocent. Trust in one's fellow human beings and the gods must now be earned. In addition, trust in the gods and their trustworthiness likewise, will need to be tested by the now-internalized awareness of human evil in its individual manifestations and in its cultural forms.

In the current sexual abuse phenomenon inside the Roman Catholic Church, Catholic authors persuasively describe the reality that the combination of clergy sexual abuse and abusive or dishonest institutional cover-up behaviors have created more complex forms of betrayal trauma precisely because of the religious and spiritual culture and contexts in which these multiple abuses occurred.

This presence of religious and spiritual problems while identified by people such as Marianne Benkert, a psychiatrist,^{cclxxix} Barbara Blaine, the founder of SNAP,^{cclxxx} Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea, a clinical psychologist,^{cclxxxi} Andrew Greeley, a diocesan priest and academic research sociologist,^{cclxxxii} Thomas Doyle, an ordained Dominican priest and canon lawyer,^{cclxxxiii} William D. Lindsey,^{cclxxxiv} a Roman Catholic theologian, Geoffrey Robinson,^{cclxxxv} a retired Australian Catholic bishop, A. W. Richard Sipe, a formerly ordained Benedictine monk and a psychotherapist,^{cclxxxvi} and by Patrick Wall,^{cclxxxvii} a formerly ordained Benedictine monk and contemporary victim advocate, appears to be a subtext of their work. The presence of religious and spiritual problems or disorders is named but not described in formal ways. There is, as far as I have been able to ascertain no agreed upon typology of spiritual or religious problems and no commonly agreed upon taxonomy or theo-clinical language to describe and discuss religious or spiritual sequelae to religious leader and religious institution betrayal and abuse.

It is clear that these various authors, victim advocates, and activists seeking religious reform are aware that the Roman Catholic context for abuse is unique because of the denomination's unique theological construct of the Christian church and its unique doctrinal construct of its priesthood.^{cclxxxviii} However, as I read about sexual abuse inside a wide variety of religious traditions, it becomes clear to me that this issue of spiritual and religious problems surfaces within other

religious communities. Whenever and wherever sexual abuse of religious people and spiritual seekers occurs at the hands of their community's leadership caste; wherever and whenever cover-ups occur; wherever and whenever domineering and theologies and authoritarian world views prevail; wherever and whenever narcissistic religious leaders or spiritual teachers are prevalent and in control: the behavioral phenomena are quite similar.^{cclxxxix} In each denominational sub-group or each different world religion, there are unique cultural issues involved but the underlying structural issue of trust betrayed and the consequent realities of trauma-and-betrayal-activated victim wounds are present. In such a situation, the victims' loss of access to an inner spiritual rudder cuts across religious denominations and world communities. A number of authors use the metaphorical phrase *soul murder* to describe the severity of these spiritual damages.^{ccxc}

Roman Catholic children and pre-majority adolescents who are sexually abused by priests or members of religious orders and children who are sexually abused by other non-ordained adults share many of the same emotional, physical, and psychological aspects of simple and complex post-traumatic stress disorders. Many, perhaps most, of the symptoms of these disorders persist into adult life.

A similar reality likely exists for Roman Catholic adults of either gender who, as adults, are sexually abused by priests and secondarily re-victimized by corrupted institutional management practices. At this time, much less is known (or has been published) about this sub-group of sexually victimized Catholic individuals although their presence inside the Catholic Church is known, recognized and reported by therapists, lawyers and other victim advocates.

In all situations of affinity sexual abuse, betrayal trauma is common. Because of the repetition aspects of clergy sexual abuse, a form of complex post-traumatic stress syndrome is likely.^{ccxci} In addition, there has been some exploration of the commonalities between abuse inside incestuous biological families and clergy abuse inside Christian churches in as much as the cleric represents the father role in God's family.^{ccxcii}

A Victim's Voice

For thirty years I tried to forget what that priest did to me. During that time I tried to forget, but it only made matters much worse. I felt guilty. I hated myself for what he did to me. I even called myself the Antichrist because of it .I actually took the name of Damien from The Omen series for my name. This is how evil I thought I was for what the priest did to me.

Yes, I have spoken out in harsh language and foul words against this, because in my mind, my heart and my soul, nothing is more heinous than raping a child. Nothing deserves more condemnation than rape or any harm done to a child.^{ccxciii}

Trust Betrayed – Collateral Damage

When God's human priests and God's human institutional spokespersons can no longer be believed or trusted, it is quite likely that faith in God becomes a collateral damage casualty of abuse and betrayal. When the religious community becomes complicit with the abuse by denial, disbelief and/or by direct interpersonal or economic attacks on victims and/or their advocates *and* when religious institutions cover-up specific situations of abuse, abused individuals become cynical about the people of God as spiritual resources and the institutional church as a religious home. Post-victimization, previously devout individuals enter, therefore, an experience very similar to the dark night of the soul. The religious, spiritual, cultural, and social resources of their faith heritage are now, and perhaps forever, closed to them.

A Victim's Voice

We have been called liars, we have been told because we did not fight back, we are guilty of what has been done to us. Imagine being told this! The thing is when this is said of other victims of rape, people come to their defense and say how shameful this is. We who speak out about our crimes done to us at the hands of the Roman Catholic Church sadly do not get the same treatment. We are victims of one of the most heinous evils that can be perpetrated against another so much so that it is spoken of in the catechism.^{CCXCIV}

Abuse Consequences for Victims' Helpers

Witnessing the damages done to the victims of abuse, friends, witnesses, helpers and victim advocates can also lose a sense of belief or trust in the clergy and in the institutional religious structures they represent. Witnessing and experiencing the push-back violence of institutional clericalism, whistle-blowers, victim advocates and healers can also enter their own version of the dark night of the soul. Experiences of traumatic counter-transference, compassion fatigue, or vicarious trauma can compromise the inner world, the emotional well-being and even the physical health of these individuals as well.^{CCXCV}

Inside the enchanted forests or toxic tarp pits of sexual assault, gender harassment, and/or institutional abuse done in God's name, it is common for victimized individuals to lose trust in the goodness and the active presence of God. The collective spiritual, interpersonal and social resources of this particular community or that particular community are lost to victimized individuals and their helpers.

To summarize: in addition to post traumatic stress disorders and betrayal trauma disorders, the short and long term effects of clergy, guru, or religious leader sexual abuse also can create paralyzing religious *and* spiritual disorders for

survivors of these complex, interpenetrated forms of affinity religious leader abuse. These paralyzing disorders can spread to victim helpers in a variety of ways. The three most common ways, it seems to me, are (1) transmission through the interpersonal empathic barrier; (2) witnessing and experiencing the push-back techniques of the religious or spiritual institution; (3) severe episodes of cognitive dissonance as individuals seek to come to terms with what they now factually know in the context of what they once believed and thought they knew.

Mennonite Life and Personal Experience

In thinking about many of the raped, harassed, abused, betrayed, and clergy-or-religious-leader-victimized individuals I know inside the Mennonite Church, it has grown clear to me over the past six years of research and study that this issue of spiritual and religious problems is an important one. Just as many Roman Catholic individuals have removed themselves from worshipping within their denominational faith community, so too have many abused individuals removed themselves from the Mennonite community. Some of these individuals have found a sheltering faith home inside other Christian denominations or inside various Eastern religions. But many have simply moved away from any formal religious or spiritual practice.

When one surveys official church press journals, there seems to be almost no awareness that this particular religious community is aware of these realities. In a similar manner secular clinical literature does not really address these aspects of human experience except in passing.

A Religious Problem Examined

There is no cosmic evil: the suffering of the world arises from our own actions or our failure to act, either from inadequate or bad will, or from inadequate or bad information, or from inadequate or inefficient effort, or from lack of power or ability to do better or differently.

J. Harold Ellens^{ccxcvi}

As described above, a religious problem involves one's relationship to an institutionalized form of religion or spiritual community such as a denomination, congregation, temple, mosque, zendo, or meditation center. This relationship between individuals and their spiritual community is a complex one. It involves connections to spiritual leaders, fellow religious believers and seekers, worship programs and rituals, buildings and other spatial facilities, social gatherings, doctrines, dogmas, seasonal liturgies, special texts or scriptures, and more subtle factors such as how individuals order their lives on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

Regular church or mosque or synagogue attendance, for example, provides individuals with a community of like-minded individuals. It provides them with regularly scheduled events that provide structure to their daily lives. Religious teachings provide individuals with a means by which they know the spiritual and moral “oughts and shoulds” of their communities and their daily lives. These teachings shape a communal sense of morality. They shape a communal sense as well as an individual sense of the pattern of relationships that runs through life-long religious practices. Religious practices help families welcome babies and communally celebrate this new life. They help individuals and entire families bury their beloved dead. They provide support in times of deep wordless grief and loss. They provide practical resources in times of trouble. They provide a safe place in times of trouble. Religious practices provide inner rudders and gyroscopes to help people navigate the sometimes confusing and often times difficult aspects of their personal lives *and* their communal lives with others. It is quite common for deep and lasting personal friendships to form – friendships which provide stability and a sense of connectedness and meaning to the self.

When instances of sexual abuse or instances of institutional cover-ups occur, victimized individuals and their helpers find that the religious world they have known has forever shifted. They may be unable to accept the religious teachings of abusive teachers. They may be unable to participate in religious practices which once were meaningful to them. They may discover that trusted friends disbelieve them or abandon them. They may find that the community blames them for the breakdown of the church as a trustworthy place and attack them for ruining the reputation of a respected clergy person. They may be seen as trouble-makers to isolate and shun.

A Spiritual Problem Examined

Perhaps the most baffling and trying aspect of twenty-first-century spirituality is the disparity between spiritual teaching and the behavior of teachers. Men, women, Western, Eastern, fundamentalist, New Age, modern, indigenous – none have escaped the temptation to abuse power.

Elizabeth Lesser^{ccxcvii}

The Reverend Dr. Thomas Doyle has described spirituality as the *inner life of the soul*.^{ccxcviii} A spiritual problem, therefore, involves one’s relationship to the deity, higher power, the Almighty, Allah, YH-WH, the Great Spirit, Jesus, The One, or God. Obviously these two categories (religious and spiritual problems) overlap in human experiences and perception.^{ccxcix} While religious practices often shape an individual’s personal sense of his or her relationship to that which is transcendent, spirituality and religiosity are not the same human phenomenon. Historical Reformation era Anabaptists such as Hans Denck sometimes identified this spiritual or transcendent dimension of human life as the living voice of God in the soul, an inner witness, a spark of the Divine light living within each human

being, an inner guiding word.^{ccc} Literature from the North American Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) often describes this teaching as the inner word or the inner/inward light.^{ccci} Former Roman Catholic Dominican brother and currently ordained Anglican priest Matthew Fox writes and lectures about the deep ecumenism of spiritual experience – that internal experience or awareness of the divine which is rooted in the soul's internal connection with all humanity.^{ccci}

Not only religious scholars and spiritual practitioners are interested in the soul. So too are contemporary clinicians – most particularly those who are depth psychologists and psychoanalysts in the Jungian tradition.^{ccci} The Western world's preoccupation with the soul has roots deep in the pagan worlds of antiquity – most especially Greco-Roman era philosophies.

Yet, when we look directly at the soul or even at the concept of the soul, we find that it is quite evanescent. It cannot literally be grasped and it cannot literally be seen and it cannot literally be felt. Its presence must be perceived by intuition or by deduction.

There is something which animates each human being and this something is more than an intake breath and a heart beat. What that something is, however, is largely ineffable. Each individual will perceive its presence or its absence in unique ways. We must address, therefore, the issue of spirit and soul by means of metaphors.

The Soul's Loss of Trust

For each of us there is the mountain, and its road of faith, the crags and crevasse, the plunging cliffs, the sudden vistas and outstretching horizons. And each of us, young and old, artist or scientist or businessman must find his (or her) own pathway to his (or her) still uncharted stars.

The challenge of the road – the issues – the decisions – are inescapable. For we must live as though a universal consciousness we call God, a power of meaningful purpose, to Whom we can turn is a fact or is not, exists or does not, is or is not. The meaningful character of our lives, or the lack of it, is the core of the question. We cannot avoid an answer; we cannot hope to remain contented for a lifetime – or longer – perched in indecision on a cosmic fence.

The mountain is a way, a goal, an achievement. It is an awareness and synthesis of the whole that gives reason and meaning to the particular.

Will Oursler^{ccciv}

Losing a sense of trust in their human religious leaders and religious communities, it is also common for practicing, previously devout and religiously

pious individuals to lose their previous sense of belief in or trust in a divine being and in divine love – that transcendent being that cares for them and watches over them. In a metaphorical sense, they lose their surefootedness, their sense of rootedness or groundedness. Some individuals may feel as if their inner spirit has been murdered.

Because of distrust they may no longer be able, for example, to utilize prayer as a helpful practice in times of deep personal struggle, pain or confusion. Their inner world may be numb and they may become incapable of deep feelings. They may lose their ability to connect with other people in helpful and growth-inducing ways. Religious practices which nurtured their personal spirituality such as participation in the Eucharistic Meal or saying the Rosary or even the recitation of a simple table grace may become spiritual impossibilities to them. They may be unable to enter religious buildings because of flashbacks. They may be unable to participate in familial moments of transition such as baptisms, confirmations, a sibling's ordination, weddings or funerals. Encountering individuals – even total strangers - in religious apparel such as the priest's Roman collar or the monk's flowing saffron-colored robes, they may experience overwhelming rage or enter a state of severe anxiety and panic.

Victimized individuals may find communal experiences of worship and the communal search for and manifestation of transcendence as a gate that has been closed – leaving them outside the human community they once trusted. Consequently, they are on the outside of the household of faith and cannot find their way back inside. They may come to believe they are also outside the circle of God's loving graciousness and cannot find their way home. They may believe in some way or another that their experience of abuse has made them an evil person – outside the capabilities of experiencing God's gracious love. Some individuals may describe this in terms of spiritual homelessness or exile. They may experience this as a time of deep loneliness and intense depression. Some individuals may become suicidal. Some may abuse drugs or alcohol as a way of self-medicating the inner void. This is a time of spiritual crisis which is often described as spiritual dryness. It can be experienced and described as a spiritual death. In classical Christian literature they have entered the *dark night of the soul*.

A Victim's Voice

I once loved the RCC with all my heart and soul. When I was a young boy taking my Catechism and doing my First Communion....I was hooked to the beauty and the mysticism and most of all....the love of God and Jesus Christ. That I just had the incredible honor of my First Communion, of taking the Holy Body and Blood of my Lord and Savior into me and that meant the world to me at that moment.

That was taken away from me in one night due to the perversities of a priest. How can I ever forgive this priest when he himself will not even

admit what he did to me? How can I forgive him when the church fights me at every step just to obtain some justice for the crime that was done to me?^{cccv}

New age spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle describes the dark night of the soul as a time of crisis and of opportunity; this as a time in which there is a collapse of a sense of personal meaning; a deep, pervasive sense of life's essential meaninglessness; everything and every relationship is absurd, nothing makes sense anymore; one loses a sense of connectedness to the whole and a sense of internal balance and purpose. In some situations, one's internal gyroscope collapses and one is unable to find, locate, or re-create an inner rudder to guide daily life. Another aspect is losing the ability to create or locate a sense of meaning to life. The emotional state of despair takes over.^{cccv} About this experience, Tolle comments:

It can happen if something happens that you can't explain away anymore, some disaster which seems to invalidate the meaning your life had before. Really what has collapsed then is the whole conceptual framework for your life, the meaning that your mind had given it. So that results in a dark place.^{cccvii}

In this same article Tolle adds the comment that this loss is a kind of painful death of that which is, in reality, illusory. This is a kind of death experience of the old self. What can happen, therefore, is a re-birth experience in which a new self is born or created. However, when one is in the middle of violence and trauma-created and/or betrayal-created despair, it is hard to believe that a re-born self can emerge. In situations of sexual abuse, a deep grief for the now-lost and formerly intact self emerges. A deep rage at the body's violation – and perhaps even an inchoate sense that one's own body has betrayed one - is often present as well.

When a trusting individual is violated by their religious community or their religious leaders, they are thrust, therefore, into such a dark night experience without warning. They find themselves in the toxic tar pits of the body's post-traumatic stress disorder and their spirit's post-betrayal loss of trust in the familiar and the previously trusted. With their usual social and religious resources suddenly unavailable to them, they urgently need to reconstruct a sense of self and other. This takes time and the supportive care of other human beings. If their faith community is truly closed to them, they may need, therefore, to find alternative spiritual communities and spiritual resources.

A Victim's Voice

Rape deeply wounds the respect, freedom, and physical and moral integrity to which every person has a right. It causes grave damages that can mark the victim for life. It is always and intrinsically evil. Graver still is

the rape of children by parents (incest) or those responsible for the education of the children entrusted to them. How can anyone expect the victims of such an evil act come to the point of healing, of forgiveness for these crimes against us when we hear these things said against us? If YOU (emphasis his) want us to forgive you to heal from these evils, then you must stand with us, not against us. All we ask is for justice. Is that wrong? Would YOU (emphasis his) not want the same for someone you loved and was going through this?^{cccviii}

Example: A Priest's Hands

For example, the pair of hands that are used to hold a child or adolescent down during a vaginal, oral or anal rape are the same pair of hands that raise the elements of the Eucharist during their consecration. The child or adolescent, in such a complex situation, is likely to have both religious and spiritual consequences as a result of his victimization. These may be the same hands that make the sign of the cross in blessing. Thus the violated individual may come to the conclusion that all religious and spiritual emblems and icons are contaminated. They may conclude there is no loving god in the universe at all.

Conceptualizing the priest or ordained member of the clergy as special^{cccix}

A unique aspect of Roman Catholic clergy sexual abuse lies, therefore, in the reality that abusive priest behavior represents (1) an affinity violation done by an ordained human being, someone Catholic children have been taught to trust and not to question because, as an *alter Christus*, he acts in God's stead; (2) sexualized behaviors which children have been taught are sinful and may lead them directly to hell; (3) the unsolvable, and in my mind quite obscene, conundrum that the same adult individual who has violated them is responsible to hear their confession in order that absolution for *their* sexual behaviors during an act of abuse can be granted.

In addition, many acts of religious leader sexual abuse have occurred inside religious environments associated with the abusive clergyman such as the rectory, the chancery, the sacristy or the main sanctuary. The child may have been raped on the altar. Sacramental objects such as candles and candle holders may have been used as sexual weapons or as ritual items that have accompanied abuse.^{cccix}

In some situations, priests or ministers or rabbis invoke religious teachings. For example, in grooming adolescent victims by getting them drunk, a Christian priest might explain later to his adolescent victims that his subsequent sexual homosexual acts with them were what Jesus did in the desert with his disciples. Another priest may tell them that they will go to hell if they talk about the priest's act of abuse with anyone. Abusive priests and ordained clergy may tell the child

that he or she is responsible for the act of abuse. They may threaten the child with violence to his parents if he tells. In a truly obscene reality, according to my point of view, the abusive priest may then hear the child's confession and absolve the child of his or her sin in luring the priest into a sexual encounter.

In other situations, a priest or other religious leader may be drunk and make obscene remarks, harassing remarks or outright sexual propositions to adults, adolescents or small children. Later he uses the excuse of his drunkenness to avoid accountability for his actions. His place of employment and its supervising administrators may similarly excuse him from accountability to the community because he did not offend on church or seminary property.

In addition, it is clear that clergy sexual violence towards children, minors and vulnerable adults usually occurs in situations where the individual can not escape. Trauma bonds, similar to those of the Stockholm Syndrome may form.^{cccxi} Thus, repeated violations by the same priest with the same child are common. Taught by parents and teachers that to criticize a priest or to raise questions about his behavior is an act of sin, small children are caught in a situation in which there is both captivity and sexual violence. Seeing no way to extricate themselves from this impossible situation, they remain vulnerable to multiple episodes of violation.

Roman Catholic experts about the clergy sexual abuse phenomenon are, therefore, aware of the religious and spiritual problems experienced by clergy-victimized individuals. But the subtext of religious and spiritual consequences is not the central focus of their attention. Thus, it has not been comprehensively examined and evaluated as an aspect of church polity and praxis when accusations about sexually abusive clergy emerge. As far as I know there is no extensive and well-focused clinical or pastoral discussion of these particular issues in victims' lives. Another way of saying this is to note the absence of a unifying theoretical model or even commonly agreed upon language to describe these religious and spiritual wounds.

The Secular Therapy Situation

Secular therapy, while it is peripherally aware of religious and spiritual damages, is not specifically oriented towards healing the personal and collective wounds of religious and spiritual abuse done in God's name. Secular therapists are not trained in methods of religious, spiritual or theological discourse. They are not trained in the abstractions of denominational differences in church polity. They are not engaged (at least most are not) in issues of denominational identity. While some clinicians have been educated in the relationship of systemic violence to individual pathology, this is not common. It is the rare clinician who believes the clinical role, ipso facto, involves social activism on behalf of their clients.

Those therapists who work with individuals suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders may understand religious and spiritual issues as being similar in nature to other issues faced by survivors. Faced with a need to prioritize areas for their clinical work with clients many secular therapists bracket out religious and spiritual concerns and pathologies. Other therapists – who work with abused children - may identify a male priest's abuse of a child as capable of being subsumed and discussed under the general category of incest.

While there are similarities between molestation by a biological father and sexual abuse by a religious father, they are not, in my opinion, the same reality. God, as a heavenly father; a priest as a spiritual father, an adoptive father, and a genetic or biological father demonstrate or manifest many levels of meaning that the word *father* contains: the genetic, the factual or empirical; the social, the personal, the spiritual; the ontological, the archetypal; and the mythical.

In general and there are exceptions to this rule, secular therapists prefer to leave religious and spiritual issues to the various spiritual leaders and traditions of their clients. The problem with this pattern of clinical decision making in the therapy hour with victims of religious clergy sexual abuse is that it is the victim's spiritual teacher or leader or father who has done the acts of abuse. In many situations, the entire religious community has entered a state of complicit denial. The abusive spiritual father is supported and his victims are denigrated as evil entrappers or blamed as making false accusations.^{cccxi}

For victims of the subsequent systemic abuses of clericalism, the problem is equally complex: the bishop and his immediate group of administrators are powerful men. They are the ones who should properly and promptly supervise or adjudicate the problem of clergy sexual abusers. They have, however, abdicated their responsibilities to be accountable to the laity in order to keep the problem of clergy sexual abuse hidden away in a back closet of the chancery.^{cccxi} Consequently, neither the abusive priest nor the abusive bishops are in any position to address the spiritual and religious problems of the abused victim of such abuses.

One consequence is that the victim's or the whistle-blowers religious problems and spiritual problems often remain clinically unaddressed. This is the lasting and openly festering wound that whispers its presence in each clergy sexual abuse survivor's life experiences.

Cognitive Dissonance and the Process of Dissociation

Worlds and world views change only when their building blocks – the constructs of language and thought – change first.

Patricia Roth Schwartz^{ccciv}

In quiet moments when I try to think through the knotty complex therapeutic issues faced by any individual in a situation of previously-experienced human betrayal, I have come to the conclusion that one underlying issue for the clergy sexual abuse victim's personality to resolve is that of cognitive dissonance.^{cccxv} That which an individual (child, adolescent or adult) believed was trustworthy has been demonstrably proven (in real space and real time) to be unworthy of trust. This is true in any situation where a trusted religious or spiritual leader – such as a priest or a guru – behaves in an abusive and offensive manner towards his victims or towards the community as a whole. The spiritual teacher's or religious leader's behavior functions, therefore, to disprove his (and his church's) spiritual teachings.^{cccxvi}

If an individual has been taught, for example, that the particular religious leaders of his community are always trustworthy and that the leader wears, perhaps, the infallible or perfect face of God, then in the situation of abuse, the victim is faced with that which seems impossible. Two conflicting messages – a double bind - simultaneously occupy the psyche: (1) the spiritual leader by his teachings occupies the community-recognized position of speaking with God's voice and, therefore, cannot be doing evil and (2) the spiritual teacher by his actions in the present moment embodies or occupies the living space of abuse, pain, suffering, and evil. He cannot, therefore, represent the voice of God.^{cccxvii}

What we know of the physical body is that when, under assault, it can neither fight nor flee, it freezes in place.^{cccxviii} The spiritual aspect of being (the spirit or the soul) that lives inside the victimized individual is faced with a similar reality. Unable to escape the situation of abuse, the spirit can neither accept the abusing individual as the embodied voice of God nor can the spirit accept the abusing individual as the embodied voice of evil. It seems to me that the spiritual body freezes in much the same way that the physical body does.

Increasingly I have come to believe, therefore, that the dissociative process can be activated around spiritual or religious problems just as it can be activated around physiological and psychological ones. Frozen inside two contradictory experiences (the priest as God's voice and the priest as the voice of evil), the individual's spiritual personality dissociates, splits, and freezes in place. Individuals in this situation experience this as an absence of spirit or an absence of soul.

In the physical body's encounter with overwhelming violence, it often dissociates aspects of the experience which then makes these aspects of experienced historical and social reality, after the fact inaccessible to cognitive memory and recall. One consequence of dissociation is psychic numbing – the inability to feel much of anything at all. Since one's internal guidance system has been disabled, processes of self-protective intuition may also have been damaged.

In the inner spiritual being's encounter with overwhelming violence, it too can dissociate aspects of the experience – again making them inaccessible to the violated individual. One consequence is that which victims describe as soul murder – some aspect of their inner life is shattered and non-viable in their personal experience of their inner world. Something is missing.

Soul Murder Revisited

Spirituality is the invisible life of the soul.

Thomas P. Doyle^{cccix}

As I have thought about this issue of soul murder, it is quite clear to me that a human soul or a human spirit cannot be murdered unless the human body is murdered. As long as a human being has breath, the human soul is alive. As long as the human heart beats, the human spirit is viable. The spirit or soul may not feel as if it is present or its wisdom and guidance may not be immediately accessible to the conscious personality of victimized individuals but it is still there. It may remain silent but it is still watchful. It is still insightful. However, its voice may be muted or stilled. Its living essence may be damaged or misshapen.

A previously victimized individual may be unable to access the soul's wisdom or the spirit's internal wisdom and guidance systems. Contemporary shamanic wisdom includes the awareness of soul loss in cases of abuse and violence and the need for soul retrieval.^{cccxx} The soul, in this model is not dead, it is absent from consciousness and, therefore, its wisdom is non-accessible.

In my clinical perception, the soul's wisdom is dissociated. Its wisdom, therefore, cannot be accessed by the person who feels their soul has died.

Clinically, it is my opinion that this metaphor is an essential one for clinicians and advocates to heed and attend. When a formerly abused client states that her or his soul has been murdered by sexual abuse done by clergy, I now believe they are talking about the emotional-cognitive-physical-spiritual aftermath of violence in which much of their personal experience has been dissociated. Soul murder as a client's presenting complaint, therefore, represents a post-violation state of being. The presence of dissociation indicates such a severity of human responsiveness to victimization that it must be understood. If a client feels like the walking dead, the therapist and victim advocate must learn how to read the situation and estimate the client's lethality levels.

To me, it seems self-evident: the therapist should not agree with the client that she is physically alive but has a dead soul. Instead, the therapist must recognize the living soul's dissociated anguish and protest at the maltreatment its living body and incarnated personality has experienced. The therapist or healer in such

a situation needs to work with the individual to re-capture the soul and re-integrate it into everyday life.

Vis-à-vis expert's and advocate's use of the term *soul murder* I am at odds with some Roman Catholic author's who write and speak about sexual abuse by clerics. In their writing and in their speeches they use this phrase, unqualified and un-exegeted, for largely lay audiences. I see such casual use of the phrase *soul murder* as participating in the victims' dissociative processes – reinforcing them rather than challenging them. Since such belief structures are subtle, it is impossible to know the specific damages done by such throw-away use of the phrase *soul murder*. Nevertheless, I believe there are damages.

When the phrase is used polemically to persuade lay people of the damages of victimization, it simply muddies the intellectual landscape which has to be cleared in order to understand religious and spiritual problems. When the phrase becomes a commodity of persuasion, it re-contaminates the landscape which has just been cleared.

If, for example, the leading theological and clinical experts on clergy sexual abuse use this clearly metaphorical phrase casually, it is possible for all listeners – including victimized individuals – to take it literally. Believing their soul has been murdered, because some expert says this can happen or actually does happen in a certain number of abuse situations is hardly the way for victimized individuals to exit, or at the very least to manage, the despair of the living soul which is still present with them and is revealed by their despair. A dead soul must be buried but a despairing soul can be asked for guidance about the need to search for healing.

Revisiting the Double-bind

It is quite possible, at least theoretically, for a clinician to explore both poles of the double-bind (priest as evil; priest as God) as a powerful source of cognitive dissonance. In such a process, it is quite likely that when both poles become fully conscious that the abuse-surviving individual can resolve the implicit issues of cognitive dissonance. In such a resolution, the soul's guiding presence can once again be freed. In similar situations what clinicians have learned is that when a double bind shatters, rage is the immediate sequellae. Therapist and clients need to be prepared for this eventuality in order that the client can be given tools for safe management of his or her murderous rage.

It appears as if one pathway out of the dangerously enchanted forest of post-violence cognitive dissonance, double-binds and dissociation includes creating a time-accurate factual narrative of what happened to them thus freeing the rage of victimization which could not safely be expressed during the violent encounters of sexual abuse. Once experiences of rage are manageably released, deep and pervasive feelings of grief at what has been lost are likely. Unlike the metaphor of

a dead soul, victimized individuals have lost aspects of their lives – a sense, for example, of the universe’s trustworthiness. Part of their social identity with all of the rich potential of an unabused self has been stolen from them and aspects of the social self have indeed died. For a virginal child, adolescent or adult to be raped, an aspect of their sexuality has been forever changed. This needs to be recognized, acknowledged, and grieved. Trapped inside events of violence and abuse, individual’s life trajectories are forever changed. They need, however they can do this, to make peace with their lost self and to reclaim the self which has survived.

A Clinical Example

I once worked with a woman who as a child and adolescent had been deeply religious – in fact, she reported many religious behaviors of personal piety. In childhood, she told me, she loved going to church and was devout in her personal spiritual practices of reading the Bible and praying. Raped by a stranger during early adult life, she later asked the rape survivor’s therapy group I was leading, *why did God choose to abandon me? When my assailant grabbed me I prayed for His help but there was no help. I no longer believe God answers prayer. I no longer believe there is a God who will help me. Why did He choose me to abandon?* Her sobs were belly deep as she connected with her grief at losing all belief in a God who cared about her. At this moment in her life, believing and disbelieving co-existed inside her personality. The God who abandoned her was very alive. The God who she had trusted to protect her was very much dead but still lived on in her memory. She was not free, therefore, to consult the God of her childhood for comfort. She was also not free to leave behind her childhood faith and the God she believed in then.

This is a severe form of spiritual cognitive dissonance and the personality must resolve it before the individual can move free of her victimization into her ongoing life with others. Atheism is one route out of this particular Hecate’s crossroad. This choice, however, then confronts the individual with her introjected ideas about the angry God and hell. Another route is to seek an alternative religious community with different ideologies and cultural practices. A third, perhaps the most difficult, is to engage the self in an interrogation about all matters related to a personal religious and spiritual identity – seeking to mature as a spiritual *and* as a religious person.

In their abusive encounters with clergy and religious leaders, the formerly religious individual loses, therefore, a sense of physical safety and a sense of spiritual safety. In many other situations of personally-encountered violence, it is the individual’s inner sense of spiritual wholeness and their sense of communal wholeness which provides the foundation for healing in the aftermath of traumatic events. In cases of sexual abuse inside religious environments, this foundation is forever compromised and shattered. Basic trust, once violated, is very difficult to regain, if indeed it can ever be regained.

Loss of a Community of Like-minded Folks

In addition, when the victimized individual encounters a hostile community – led by hostile and rejecting religious leaders or their attorneys and filled with hostile and rejecting peers, then the personality loses another resource for reclaiming personal wholeness and well-being. Since many communities (1) deny that the sexual abuse happened or (2) blame the victim for its presence inside the community or (3) state that the victimizer has been forgiven and all is now well, victims are faced with continuous re-traumatization at the hands of their faith community. These secondary betrayals complicate the betrayals of the abusive clergy person and the betrayals of a supervising bishop or other church officials and administrators.

When no individual human being can be trusted; when no human community can be trusted; when no god can be trusted: the physically, socially and religiously abused individual is very much alone in the world of others. If, in addition, the individual comes to understand that even the interior self cannot be trusted, the anguish of being is intense.

To summarize: the losses encountered during any act of affinity clergy betrayal and victimization include (1) the loss of physical safety; (2) the loss of spiritual safety; (3) the dissociative splintering or shattering of the known personality; (4) the loss of social or communal safety; (5) the loss of the ability to trust others; (6) a radically altered world view and (7) the loss of a religious community of trusted friends and religious leaders.

When victimization occurs inside the religious or spiritual community, it is also possible to sense the absence God and the active presence of collective evil. Inside corrupted religious or spiritual environments, the levels of betrayal proliferate and victims are re-traumatized with each subsequent betrayal.

World, self, and a sense of God's guiding and protecting presence can all shatter in the ongoing and sequential moments of religious and spiritual abuse. That which was previously seen as unified, constructive, believable, inviolable and trustworthy is now seen as divisive, destructive, untrustworthy, unbelievable, and filled with violation. Those persons who were once seen as supportive friends, colleagues, mentors, and spiritual advisors are now revealed to be actively destructive presences in a life. In the face of such betrayals, the ability to have basic trust in others and in the universe itself is often destroyed.

In all situations of cognitive dissonance, the personality has been given a koan to solve.^{cccxxi} How the individual approaches the solving of this embodied koan will have long-term effects on his psyche, his cognitive mind, his emotional self, his interpersonal self, his religious experience, and his spiritual self.

All Are Welcome at God's Table

Periodically Christians proclaim the evangelistic or missional message that all are invited to and welcome at God's table. Clergy sexual abuse and institutional cover-up actions make this a hollow assertion and a desecrated invitation. Institutional push-backs and attacks on victims and their credibility make this a lie. Institutional attacks and practices of shunning those whistle-blowers who help victims hold the hidden message that only the docile and the obedient are included in the proclamation of welcome. All others are excluded. The phrase becomes, therefore, code language to tell everyone who is included and who is excluded from God's table by human actions of corrupted institutions and their leaders.

A Victim's Voice

So when you hear us survivors of these crimes against us speak out in anger, pain, and in hurt about the evils done to us...do not condemn us ... help us. In the name of God and Jesus Christ help us to heal from all this suffering and pain. In the name of God and Jesus Christ stand up for us. If you wish for us to truly come back to be fellow followers of God and Jesus Christ, then help us to do so by standing for us and not against us. We do not want to destroy your church; we want to clean it from these evils so it can be the church it is supposed to be.

I do not want to hate anymore. I want to heal and to forgive those whom committed these crimes against me and so many others.

In the name of God and Jesus Christ help us heal our pain; help us heal our suffering. Help us.^{cccxxii}

When the institutional church decides to go on the attack by means of character assassination, economic reprisals, outright lying, dehumanizing or personally humiliating attacks on victims and victim advocates, it both distorts and mocks its own missional or evangelistic theology. When the corrupted church moves into an assault mode against its people, the good news of the Gospel becomes very bad news.^{cccxxiii}

Inevitably, the victims of such unwarranted attacks recoil in righteous indignation. This may be equally true for others who simply witness the attacks from the outside. For example, as a total outsider to the Roman Catholic communion, I find myself repulsed by the stories I read about massive clergy abuse cover-up activities by bishops and cardinals in specific church dioceses. For compassionate and morally principled insiders, there must be even deeper and darker personal responses of disagreement, disgust, despair, and anger. Disgusted by the actions of corrupted and hypocritical human leaders of the institutional church, one response is for assaulted, humiliated, and demeaned

individuals to enter the so called dark night of the soul. In this particular form of the sexual abuse enchanted forest, individuals feel themselves to be abandoned not only by the human church but by God or the divine principle, himself.

Individuals who become targets of the institutional church's insecure and hypocritical rage or of its desires to protect its power, status, financial liquidity, and image discover the shadow side of religious faith. Here too they may encounter and experience cognitive dissonance. What the church says about itself is not embodied or incarnated in a human form. Instead, deep forms of religious and spiritual hypocrisy are its most common visible practices.

If they are to survive emotionally as well as spiritually, individuals entrapped in this particular enchanted forest need to make cognitive, emotional, and spiritual sense of the situation. If they have been naïve about the Machiavellian power politics of the church, they will need to become less gullible. If they have conflated the human institutional church with the universal, spiritual and mystical body of Christ, they will need to learn how to separate the two in their mind. If they are to exit the dark night of the soul, they need to learn how to find or to bushwhack open pathways that lead them out of the forest and back into a fully-engaged life that carries meaning and integrity. Taught personally about human betrayal, they will need to learn how to discern that which is trustworthy. Almost always, it will be a secular therapist who serves as their guide and traveling companion. On occasion, it may be the religious or spiritual leader of an entirely different religious community. For example, a Christian victim of clergy sexual abuse or of institutional abuse in the wake of sexual abuse may become a practicing Buddhist or a solitary practitioner of Wicca. They may be drawn to New Age pan-ecumenism, that form of spirituality its detractors call *cafeteria spirituality*. Equally possible is that they will choose to become agnostics or atheists. For members of this latter group, all religious faith and all spiritual practices are suspect as bogus at best and dangerous at worst.

Christian theology through the centuries has sought to reconcile the divine nature of the mystical body of Christ with the church's human failures as a fallible institution. When the human church is honest about these dual realities, the people of God do not expect perfection but do expect accountability. When the human church is dishonest about these dual realities, the people of God become confused and disillusioned. Cynicism, nihilism, unfaith, disgust, and multiple forms of agnosticism become the church's coin of trade. The individual and communal search for transcendence shatters. Rituals and liturgies become dead forms. While its institutional form appears intact, the spiritual form of the church as God's people is dead. In the New Testament, such hypocritical and corrupted religious organisms are called white-washed sepulchers – housing places for the dead.

Many authors through the Christian centuries have noted that the unfaithful, corrupted, hypocritical institutional church is the seedbed of atheism and

disbelief. For example, in the twentieth-century, Christian apologist C. S. Lewis (1898-1963) explored this aspect of religious and spiritual socio-spirituality in his book, *The Screwtape Letters*.^{cccxxiv} Christian biblical scholar Walter Wink (1933-2012) devoted the latter part of his academic career mapping, describing and analyzing the dark shadow side of the religious impulse in terms of the biblical language of principalities and powers.^{cccxxv}

Topography of the Enchanted Forest

There are several major thoroughfares and secondary pathways inside the enchanted forest. One path enables the forest's inhabitants to yield to the hypocritical church and to become complicit with its hypocrisy. In such a route, docile and obedient hypocrisy breeds and infects all of its participants with a disorderly spirituality.

A second route out of the forest is to change religious communities – finding one that is more compatible with one's ideals and needs. Many Roman Catholic Christians, totally disillusioned by their denomination, for example, have found a safe haven inside the American Episcopal Church or the world-wide Anglican Communion. Some have found a haven inside Eastern Orthodox traditions. The sacramental theology and liturgical praxis of the world-wide Anglican Communion and the world wide community of Orthodox traditions is similar enough to that of the Roman Catholic Church that it feels like home.

A third is to remain inside one's denominational homeland but to form coalitions of reform and challenge – seeking to return the church to its calling as the incarnated people of God. This is often a process like doing cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. Heroic efforts to rescue the church from its contemporary internal moral rot and corruption may or may not succeed.

A fourth is to enter the portals of other world religions or spiritual traditions. Eastern spiritual traditions which emphasize meditation are often appealing to Westerners seeking to find a way out of Christendom and what they perceive as its innate failures. Amerindian spirituality also appeals to many individuals because of its unity with the natural world. Emerging new age spirituality traditions also draw some individuals.

A fifth is to leave religious life entirely. Disillusioned individuals become agnostics or atheists. A rational human morality replaces a religiously-inspired one. Believing piety is replaced by doubt and disbelief.

Perhaps the most common one – anecdotally visible although I know of no research to support this – is to become a solitary spiritual seeker. Here individuals sort and sift through the great religious and philosophical traditions of the world and when they find a jewel of self-other-world understanding they polish it and keep it. My intuitive personal sense of this group – again not

supported by research – is that they find spiritual allies and friends in a community of doubt and seeking. By all accounts, this community is growing. It is finding a world-wide voice on the internet.

This latter group is, perhaps, God's growing Diaspora in the second Millennium. The scholarship, writings, and especially the autobiography of the great scholar of world religions, Huston Smith supports this concept.^{cccxxvi}

Each of these options carries risks, costs and each confers benefits. Each individual will need to find her or his own way for there are no accurate roadmaps or instruction manuals for each individual's future.

Religious Homelessness

Too often faith is ruptured and destroyed for us, and the way is lost, in a single episode or moment of terror or despair that lives on in the shadows of our minds --- and out souls.

Will Oursler^{cccxxvii}

I have come to think of these many options as human responses when the human large S Soul or human Spirit becomes (or perceives itself to be) religiously and spiritually homeless. As with literal homelessness, the streets, alleys and gutters of the religious commonwealth become the outsider's human dwelling place. There is no familiar, secure, and accessible common table to return to with personal dignity and integrity. Shunned by those living comfortably inside the boundaries of orthodoxy and comfortable with various institutional forms of spirituality, the homeless one begs, for scraps from the table of the religiously insulated and secure.

Living in Exile: The Modern Diaspora

Another metaphor that has emerged for me in writing these essays is that of an individual living in exile. Some individuals voluntarily leave their religious homelands. Others, for a variety of reasons, are emotionally or spiritually or even physically coerced from their faith-cradle homelands. As expatriates, they once knew and trusted their homelands with a comforting intimacy. Now, living in exile as refugees from their religious or spiritual native land and tongue, they must create a new homeland for themselves. They must also create a new identity. The psychological, emotional, social, religious and spiritual tasks of creating such a new homeland and identity are formidable ones. Times of intense self-doubt and self-questioning will inevitably emerge as individuals ask themselves if and how they are to bear the unbearable realities of their religious and spiritual past. Homesickness and culture shock are common. Seeking wholeness and wellness, they must encounter and re-encounter that which is

broken within them or their life history and they must learn how to deal with that which is not well.

An Example

When one lives as a voluntary expatriate for even a short while, it provides a fascinating opportunity for self-observation. What does one miss with intense longing? For many North American students abroad, it is American hamburgers, American pizza and American chocolate. These familiar North American adolescent and young adult meals and snacks (even if available from the international corporations of McDonalds® or Pizza Hut®) taste different. That nuanced taste difference accentuates homesickness.

In addition, the ease of communicating in one's first language is a major factor in culture shock. Wanting to ask about the location of a restroom becomes a challenge which returns the new expatriate to the status of a toddler who is just beginning to explore the world of potty training. Learning new rules for restroom usage thrust the individual into issues of shame at not knowing how to do things properly. For example, flushing toilet paper in the third world can cause pipes to clog and toilets to overflow. The first time this happens, one has to deal with this reality inside a social environment where one has only rudimentary language skills and a strong desire or need to be accepted and cared for. Having to confess that one has created a plumbing problem for one's host family activates great discomfort and shame.

Religious or Spiritual Homesickness

My hypothesis about Roman Catholic Christians who are in coerced or voluntary exile from their church is that for many of them it is the theology and liturgical richness of the common Eucharistic meal which is missed. One of my close friends who exited her institutional church many years ago for many reasons – as far as I know, none of them related to experiences of clergy sexual abuse – said to me, *how dare they deny me Jesus?* When her son was married, the couple turned to the *rent-a-priest* organization to provide the wedding ceremony with priestly oversight.^{cccxxviii}

For many others it is the disorientation about how to manage life's complex passages such as the birth of a child without the guidance and support of the religious institution. When one lives in exile, one learns not to expect advance information about how to manage life's passages and life's crises. In exile, there is no owner's manual about how to survive. One begins, all over again, to learn the simplest things.

My experience as a Mennonite expatriate is that I most miss the liturgical richness of the a cappella human voice raised in communal worship. At times this need to sing inside a community of common faith is a bone-deep or visceral

longing for home. But if and when there is no home to return to, then it is essential to create new liturgies and new communities.

The experience of culture-shock when once understood and weathered begins to create world citizens. World citizens are individuals who have survived culture shock and are now fluent in more than one culture, fluent in more than one language. They are individuals who can move back and forth with ease among world cultures and languages.

A Personal Example

One absolutely miserable day in Central America when I felt overwhelmed by the demands of my job in a second language, I walked a very lonely and very beautiful stretch of a white sand beach. As I walked, nearly alone on this beach, I eased into my homesickness, my loneliness, my despair at feeling so isolated from everything and everyone I knew, from the ease of speaking English, and just allowed myself to feel a strong inner tug to go home and be done with this. My strongest desire was to run away. As I waded in the warm surf picking up tiny shells, my distressed and inwardly turbulent spirit and mind quieted. Eventually, an inner voice spoke up: *Trust this nation's culture and its people to support you just as you trust this ocean's water to support you when you swim.* From that moment on, a corner had been turned. My new nation became my home for this brief time that I chose to work and live there. I began to be able to walk back and forth between my homeland – the USA – and my adopted homeland – Costa Rica. Returning to the USA I went through a period of reverse culture shock – missing some aspects of Costa Rican life in a very homesick way. Years later, returning to Costa Rica as a visitor, I could remember the joys and personal growth I experienced when I lived there. Eating a cone of palm oil nuts on the street – hot and salty from the vendor's stove, swimming in warm tropical oceans, or visiting with people who had befriended me when I had almost no language skills to communicate what I was thinking and feeling, I was once again in my second homeland.

Abuse Survivors Inhabit a Foreign Land

Survivors of the sexual violence and communal hostility directed at them by clergy sexual abusers and by malfeasant supervisors are caught in a similar situation. They just want, at times, to return to that which is familiar and safe. But, they are trapped, by their life's circumstances, in a time and place when this is not possible. For many, it is simply not possible to go home again. Thus, they must set themselves the task of discovering and then learning to trust that which is still trustworthy and the task of learning to make a place for themselves that feels like home

The New Christian Diaspora – a Remnant People

Perhaps the common table to which everyone is invited is the multi-cultural table of religiously homeless and spiritually exiled expatriates – the growing multi-cultural Christian Diaspora of the twenty-first century's religiously and spiritually dispossessed. These are individuals who, by virtue of the Christian clergy's intolerance, hypocrisy, and violence, have needed to become citizens of more than one institution. Needing to speak the language of their religious homeland, they can do so with familiarity. Needing to feed at the table of their new citizenship, they learn they can do this. Rejecting the hypocritical and corrupted religious homeland of their victimization, they have learned to grow through the disorienting culture shock of their victimization and they now know how to discard culturally narrow definitions of who belongs and who is excluded from God's table.

Implications

Since the American Psychiatric Association has signaled a willingness to include a diagnostic category of religious and spiritual problems, it is essential for the religious community to begin to codify what it knows about these complex and multi-variant issues.

The initial work on this diagnosis began with the concept of spiritual emergencies. It was felt in certain spiritual and therapeutic communities that one needed to differentiate a psychotic emergency from a spiritual emergency. For example, a spiritual emergency might occur while an individual was on an extended spiritual retreat in which she pursued rigorous and unrelenting spiritual work. What might look like psychotic behavior to a secular clinician could be recognized by spiritual teachers as spiritual emergencies. In certain forms of Eastern meditation, for example, Kundlini rising might be experienced as a physical, psychological and spiritual emergency. Within Eastern mysticism this exaggerated state of rising sexual energy does not represent a psychotic state but is part of the spiritual-physical process of opening the self in the spiritual journey to enlightenment. One of the spiritual tasks is to learn how to ground this energy so that one is not destroyed by it. As a subset of American psychiatrists and clinical psychologists explored this set of ideas, the idea emerged among clinicians to include it in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM IV-R).

I believe that it is possible to extend or to expand the clinical use of this diagnosis by utilizing its differentiating categories of religiosity and spirituality. If this work of codifying were done carefully, then it might be possible to engage secular therapists in the work of religious and spiritual rehabilitation for victims of clergy sexual abuse and for victims of institutional clericalism. It would also be possible, at least theoretically, to ask secular trauma research teams – such as those at

Harvard – to include religious and spiritual domains in their ongoing work of mapping the human trauma response.

If current professional individuals (those men and women who are intimately familiar with the Christian Church's endemic realities of clergy sexual abuse and equally endemic corrupted and hypocritical cover-ups of this abuse) can begin to self-consciously and deliberately describe what they see everyday among victims of clergy abuse and among helpers, witnesses, advocates, family members, and prophets, it might be possible to gain a working set of diagnostic and treatment criteria that assists secular clinicians to help victimized individuals to claim wholeness and wellness as their human prerogative, as their human future.

Further discussions, then, of the victim-originated concept of *soul murder* could be addressed in helpful ways. As always, the goal of clinical work is for wounded individuals to regain an integrated ability to work and to love. To achieve such a goal, they need to relearn how to trust themselves and others and they may need to learn how to construct a new homeland that is safe and trustworthy.

Spiritual Maturity

When I dare to be powerful – to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.

Audre Lorde^{cccxxix}

Introductory Comments

I turn to the topic of spiritual maturity – because it seems to be so crucial an issue in attempts to understand today's questions about the religious, moral, and spiritual foundations of faithful and non-abusive ministry. To do this, I need to bracket out questions regarding religious leaders or spiritual teachers who exhibit demonstrable personality and character disorders. This broad categorization of individuals includes individuals with narcissistic personality disorders, borderline personality disorders and antisocial personality disorders which are culturally known as sociopathic disorders.^{cccxxx} My underlying presupposition here is that these are individuals who have little or no potential for developing a healthy, mature adult personality. By definition, therefore, they lack essential personality aspects of the spiritually and morally healthy person: empathy, compassion and moral integrity.

While at least some of these abusive individuals embody a lightning rod kind of charismatic authority, in my opinion, they do not belong in spiritual teaching roles, in positions of ordained ministry or as managing supervisors of religious institutions. Sociologist Anson Shupe's extensive body of work, however, suggests that individuals with these disorders may be drawn to ministry or spiritual teaching roles or religious institution administration because of the authoritarian power-over aspects of those positions.^{cccxxxi} Other authors suggest that easy and trusted access to vulnerable people who can be abused without detection is another drawing card. One consequence is that a higher percentage of these individuals may be found inside religious or spiritual teaching institutions than is present in the general population at large.

When, therefore, we ask questions about religious leader or clergy aptitudes for ministry, we are essentially asking about valid, resourceful and resilient patterns of individual and communal spiritual formation. It is a truism to say that spiritually mature communities are needed for the creation and nurture of spiritually mature individuals. It is equally true that spiritually mature individuals are needed to create, and supervise spiritually mature communities.

It, indeed, is true as Richard Sipe^{cccxxxii} claims that the current sexual abuse and clericalism phenomena inside his church are due in large part to spiritual and moral immaturity in individuals who occupy various positions in the clerical caste,

then understanding exactly what building bricks go into creating moral and spiritual maturity becomes an important question.

Sipe, to my knowledge, does not differentiate between individuals who have the capacity to mature into wise and nurturing clergy or into wise and nurturing church administrators and those who do not. This is, therefore, a distinction I make at the beginning of this essay. When. In what follows, I describe questions of spiritual or religious or moral immaturity, I assume an ongoing process of maturation is possible. I am bracketing out, therefore, Individuals who are singularly resistant to personal change or who are psychologically, emotionally or spiritually incapable of emotional maturation.

Inasmuch as clerical sexual misconduct and organizational cover-ups of various forms of abuse are often criminal acts as well as sinful ones, it is important to ask what spiritual maturity and moral maturity mean in such a situation. What are the implications of such painful realities for religious leader training and indoctrination?

Therefore, while questions arise about appropriate seminary and diocesan or congregational regulation and management of individuals with these kinds of complex pathologies: these questions are not the focus of this essay.

A Proliferation of Questions

Questions proliferate: what can be done to stop abusive forms of clergy and religious leader spiritual betrayal and violence; what, if anything, can be done to heal the wounds of clergy predators and their families; what can be done to heal the individual wounds of victimized men and women or boys and girls; what can be done to heal the wounds of families and friends of those victimized; what can be done to heal the collective wounds of congregations or entire denominations; and, perhaps most importantly, what can we learn about the present era that will help us create more clergy violence-resistant faith communities for the future?

How do we, applying principles of the world public health model, successfully treat, contain, and prevent further contagion?

If we wish to prevent future episodes of religious leader abuse then we must develop different models of providing theological education and spiritual formation activities for tomorrow's religious leaders. This is particularly evident when we consider the ministerial caste. Given the known quantity^{cccxxiii} of religious professional abuse inside organized religious and spiritual teaching organizations, the prudent church, synagogue, temple, mosque, zendo, ashram, or new age spiritual teaching center needs to re-examine its theologies or ideologies, its educational pedagogies and its spiritual formation activities to see if (and how) they factors into the perpetuation of abusive systems and

individuals. We need, as well to examine current patterns of institutional supervision of religious leaders and spiritual teachers.

A Very Brief History

In 1969 Pope Pius the 6th commissioned a study of the priesthood. Dutch psychiatrist Anna Terruwe and her American medical colleague Conrad Baars summarized the results of their research studies vis-à-vis levels of maturity and psychological health (and emotional immaturity and psychiatric pathology) among Catholic priests.^{cccxxxiv} Reporting back in 1970 and 1971, they identified, described, and discussed the “illness” of the priesthood. Utilizing the public health model of treatment, containment and prevention, they wrote:

It will be shown that it is the Church herself, hierarchy and priests alike, who must be the primary physician to heal the sick, prevent the illness and check its contagion, assisted in various ways by medical experts in this particular area of pathology (2).

In their introductory comments regarding the “illness” in the priesthood, they note that many priests experience *a sense of powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness, estrangement and isolation* (ibid). They go on to describe the underdeveloped emotional maturity of many priests. Manifestations of emotional immaturity among ordained clergy include: (1) distant and emotionally unrewarding relationships; (2) uneasiness about intimacy; (3) relatively few close friends; (4) difficulties in personal identity formation; (5) a non-integrated and immature psychosexual identity; and (6) a lack in self-confidence (p. 3).

They reported that there was a high rate of immaturity and that perhaps as many as 25% of all priests demonstrated severe psychiatric pathology. In particular they described the presence of severe neuroses and chronic alcoholism. In addition, they reported that *priests in general – and some to an extreme degree – possessed an insufficiently developed or distorted emotional life* (pp. 3-5). Additional signs of dysfunctionality included (1) an inability to form lasting relationships, (2) deep feelings of loneliness, (3) insecurity and deep doubts about the self, (4) doubts about self-worth and personal identity, (5) fear of the adult world and its requirements, (5) deep depression, (6) a dulled spiritual life, (7) hyper-scrupulosity, (8) sexual repressiveness and sexual dysfunctions, excessive fear of others opinions, (9) an inability to explain and defend the self when needed, (10) an inability to defend truth, and (11) remaining silent when speech is called for (pp. 8-9).

Baars who immigrated to the United States after surviving a Nazi concentration camp became a psychiatric expert about the long-term consequences of emotional deprivation. He concluded that many Roman Catholics in the United States were emotionally deprived because *they believed that feelings were potentially harmful to one's life in and with Christ.*^{cccxxxv} In his opinion young

seminarians and clerics were particularly affected by this – growing up in homes with restricted emotional lives, their seminary experiences reinforced the belief that priests needed to function without an emotional life and without close friendships with others. In short, the priest was expected to live without the experiences of human compassion, personal intimacy and love.

In 2013 Michael D’Antonio summarized the impact of Baar’s research.

Talk of alcoholism or loneliness among priests was common. But here was an expert who said that institutional Catholic culture and the process for selecting and training clergy produced a corps of men who were ill-equipped to care for themselves, let alone serve others.^{cccxv}

American bishops commissioned another study. Kennedy and Heckler^{cccxvii} reported their findings to American Roman Catholic bishops in 1972. In their report they noted that the 20th century’s United States Roman Catholic priesthood was individually and collectively occupied by clergymen who were spiritually, morally, psycho-sexually and psycho-socially immature. In their report to the bishops, they specifically commented that a certain group of priests used the institutional church and their professional status as priests to cover over their psychological inadequacies and interpersonal immaturities. Many of these adult men, therefore, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually functioned at a pre-adolescent or adolescent level of psychosexual and emotional maturity.^{cccxviii}

With this kind of information in front of us, it is important to think about issues of maturity as they relate to clergy and religious leader spiritual formation. It is highly unlikely that other denominational clergy persons are unimpacted by similar cultural and religious realities during their own maturation as adolescents and young adults.

The Devastating Impact of Religious Leader Abuse

The human body-mind and its developmental journey from childhood to full maturity is another example of a deep aquifer (our common humanity) that we all drink from in one way or another. We know that the human betrayal response in situations of abusive clergy is remarkably similar from culture to culture and from world religion to world religion. We know as well that this traumatic response to betrayal and assaults affects the ongoing post-abuse developmental journey of its victims.

We may use different metaphors to describe the damages done by emotionally and spiritually immature leaders who betray the people who trust them for spiritual guidance. But in learning our different language systems and metaphors to describe the tsunami-like effects of spiritual and religious abuse, we can begin to unearth the deep knowing that can facilitate us to change the distorted and distorting abusive trajectories of our various religious histories.^{cccxix}

Transmission of Religious Leader Abuse

Natalie Goldberg^{cccxi} indicates in her discussion of the posthumous revelations regarding episodes of sexual misconduct in the life of Roshi Dainin Katagiri at the Minnesota Zen teaching center that spiritual teachers not only pass on the spiritual teaching of their respective lineages and traditions, they also pass on the traditions and lineage of sexual misconduct. If this is indeed so, then interrogation and reforms of the spiritual heritage or tradition must occur before new generations of individuals are educated by worn out and abuse-perpetuating methods of theological education and ideologies of spiritual formation. A rigorous examination about what we know scientifically and clinically about individuals who are, or will be in the future, initiated into religious institution leadership roles needs to be ongoing.

When we follow clergy sexual abuse expert Richard Sipe's lead in this discussion, the issue of theological education and spiritual formation activities come into a clearer focus as we think about the future church and its leaders. It is common sense that if what we have done in the past has both supported and perpetuated emotional immaturity as well as abusive religious leadership behaviors and complicit community response patterns then we need to make changes in the present in order to protect the future.

If, as Anson Shupe^{cccxi} claims religious institutions are particularly subject to being ruled by or guided by abusive, malfeasant, and even sociopathic leaders, then it is imperative that students of abuse and violation wearing a religious guise attempt to understand these complex developmental and maturation issues.

I am peripherally aware in Mennonite circles of situations in which a sexually abusive teacher's classroom and textbook words were used by his students and readers to justify sexual abuse and sexual misconduct with their choice of victims. This kind of intellectual abusive grooming of future generations of abusers is another form of legacy transmission.

Psychological research literature is fairly unanimous on the idea that given a choice of following words or following behavior, most subordinates follow behavior. So, when a classroom teacher or a seminary president teaches or preaches chastity but models "unchastity" it is likely that a certain segment of his or her students will hear the words but follow the teacher's modeled behavior. When a religious leader teaches non-violence, therefore, but models violence, it is likely that many, and perhaps most, of his students and listeners will do as he does rather than as he says.

A Brief Detour

To my knowledge, there is no ongoing interfaith forum for interdisciplinary professionals (clinicians, theologians, ethicists, legal scholars, spiritual formation specialists, developmental psychologists, and victim activists) to meet annually or biannually to learn from each other and to support each other. In my opinion, we need to initiate multi-disciplinary and ecumenical professional conversations about these matters of clergy emotional and moral maturity. These kinds of conversations need to be held in non-sectarian environments where concerned and knowledgeable individuals can be freed to describe and discuss what they know without fear of denominational reprisals.

In addition, we collectively need to do basic research into the cultural and individual realities behind these claims. This kind of inter-faith and inter-denominational research is essential, in part, because this problem of clerical unsuitability for ministry is not isolated to the Roman Catholic Church. A wide variety of authors have noted that issues of religious leader pathology cross the socio-cultural and theo-psychological boundaries that separate world religious communities from each other.^{cccxl} Wherever possible we should make it possible for deep ecumenism and professional collegiality to prevail.

I am deliberately hi-jacking Matthew Fox's term here.^{cccxl} In Fox's substantial body of scholarly work, he has consistently held that all of us – the entire body of humanity – drink from many different spiritual wells but that there is one deep underground river or aquifer which supplies and nourishes and maintains those wells.

I am in personal agreement here with authors such as Huston Smith^{cccxl} and Fox about the wisdom of deep ecumenism. The world's religious wisdom traditions have many resources for us to use in establishing definitions, developmental markers, and models of spiritual maturity as one essential element in recruiting and educating candidates for ordination. Regarding the question of spiritual leadership and spiritual maturity we can all learn from each other without compromising basic theological beliefs of each religious or spiritual tradition.

In our conversations with one another, we need to be able to mine the world's religious and spiritual wisdom traditions as one location or aspect of what we know and what we don't know about emotional, cognitive, psycho-social *and* spiritual maturity. We need to find and make visible the diamonds in the coal pile. In much the same manner as the Trappists monk Thomas Merton turned his attention to the non-violence and peace-building teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh; in much the same way that the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. turned his attention to Gandhi's teaching about non-violent activism; in much the same way that Yale's Protestant Chaplain William Sloane Coffin and Jewish Rabbi Abraham Herschel formed a close personal friendship around issues of social justice and active peace-making, we can, as theologians, ethicists, spiritual

formation directors, and advocates for the vulnerable and victimized, turn our attention to these troubling questions of spiritual immaturity and faulty leadership patterns. We can collectively begin to generate a body of research and scholarship that can guide tomorrow's religious communities as they prepares spiritual teachers, preachers, priests, evangelists, rabbis, monks, and administrators to serve the people in a trustworthy manner.

The need to be-friend each other's work

We can best begin, I believe, by actively choosing to be-friend each other across denominational or sectarian lines. To do this we need social contexts and professional settings to build collegial relationships and to learn from one another. One place to begin such befriending and collegial work would be through an organization such as the American Academy of Religion where it would be relatively easy to form another section. Another possibility would be the formation of a new organization.

A Human Development Perspective

The development of a competent and functional adult sense of self-worth, emotional integrity and interpersonal morality is simply one component of the very lengthy human maturation process. The development of psycho-sexual maturity is a similar developmental process. Yet another is biological (including brain and neural system) maturity. Inside normal patterns of human development, various aspects of the self mature more or less concurrently as individuals move through the various stages of life from infancy into early adulthood. We now know that human maturation continues throughout successive developmental stages until individuals die. Human maturation, therefore, is not a rigid lock-step, one-size-fits-all progression from infancy to old age.

Stage Theories

Stage theories state that as individuals safely complete the developmental tasks for one phase or era of their life journey they are then ready to move on to the next era and its developmental tasks. Each new stage builds upon previously completed stages. Orthodox stage theories postulate that it is impossible for individuals to move into advanced stages of personal development if they have not successfully completed the developmental tasks of prior stages.

In epigenetic theories of human maturation and development (such as Erik Erikson's) each stage of life contains syntonic and dystonic predispositions.^{cccxliv} In the Eriksonian model, for example, the first stage of life in a newborn contains the syntonic element of basic trust and the dystonic element of mistrust. In such a model human individuals can only master this stage of development by developing trust in others that contains an element of "sensible" mistrust. Both

aspects of this developmental issue are essential to be held in balance if a sense of hope (the successful outcome of this stage of development) is to result.^{cccxlvi} During this stage, which corresponds to Freud's oral (and sensory) stage of development, the child's life energy (libido) is placed in the service of the child's biological and psycho-social development. Erikson, Erikson, and Kivnick^{cccxlvi} comment that the earliest stages of human development in infancy and early childhood *provide the basic [human] dispositions necessary for mutual involvement within a widening social radius.*

Each stage, therefore, builds upon prior stages and anticipates future stages. Each stage must happen in its turn.^{cccxlvi} None can happen out of turn. Later stages will include components of re-experiencing the conflicts and conflict resolutions of earlier stages.

Throughout an entire lifetime, therefore, a delicate balance of trust with sensible mistrust remains operational. In each successive stage of development, the maturing individual will both reconnoiter with previous understandings, abilities, and developmental demands and conflicts and build upon their resolutions in new ways. In each stage of development, additional dystonic and syntonic pairs will emerge, in sequence, and need this kind of resolution and then integration into the personality structures of the individual.

Functionally, this means that the markers of developmental maturity change as the individual moves through predictable eras (stages) of their life journey. What is considered "mature" for a two year old is not considered to be mature for a twenty year old. "Maturity" for seventy-year olds looks very different than maturity for thirty-year olds.

As individuals create and then maintain a religious or spiritual identity, they move through the various developmental stages or eras of their ongoing life passages. Initially, they accept what they are taught. Eventually, however, they need to make a largely incoherent mass of conceptual information which has been taught to them by others real in their own lives. They need to think about and react to these early doctrines and dogmas in terms of their own life complexities and cultural realities. Eventually, as they progress through the life cycle they, as young and mid-life adults, need to learn how to operationalize abstract moral or spiritual ideas in their daily life. Accountability for their lived behavior, eventually, will need to take precedence over the abstractions of dogma and doctrine.

Reaching adult stages of mental, psychological, physical, social and sexual maturity, individuals begin to encounter confusing questions about personal and social behaviors that carry a moral or a spiritual charge. These questions are often complex ones with no easy or ready solutions at hand. As adults struggle with their very personal questions about how to respond to the actual demands of adult life, they begin to move into adult forms of cognitive, moral and spiritual reasoning. This newly organized way to think about morality affects their life

practices. If all goes well, their understanding of these practices changes and matures along with other aspects of their personality.

The Healthy Adult Personality

When asked about how to define or recognize healthy adults, Freud's famous dictum in reply was simple: normal and healthy adults are able *to love and to work*.

Freud's dictum, however, does not answer all of our current questions for we are then left with questions about what it means "to love" and what it means "to work" in maturity. In a similar way, we are not given easy answers about exactly "what is this level of maturity" that spiritual teachers and religious institution leaders need to demonstrate before they can be accepted in the commons as trustworthy guides for the religious and spiritual life of others.

Another dictum, this time from clinical medicine is equally simple: *do no harm*. This one is also vague in its own lack of definitions. What does it mean in spiritual, moral, or psycho-social teaching and worship environments to avoid harming others?

What is missing in many of today's current discussions of priestly or religious leader incompetency, immaturity, lack of personal integrity, and criminal or negligent malfeasance, it seems to me, are operational definitions of religious maturity, spiritual maturity, moral maturity, psycho-sexual maturity, and psycho-social maturity.

When we don't know exactly what goal we aim for or what it is that we seek to understand, it will be hard to know if we have found what we seek.

Stage theories are useful heuristic devices but they are not a perfect match for our thinking about all of the complexities of human development. This is especially true when we look at adult life with all of its variations of innate ability, gender, ethnicity, social status, power, position, rank, culture, and personal identity. This is also true when we look at religious development, spiritual development, and moral development. Too many generalities and the battle for understanding is lost. Too many specifics and the battle is also lost.

It is perhaps easier to identify and define that which is not healthy and that which is abnormal or a deviation from the ordinary than the healthy, the normal, and the useful. When we look at early childhood and physical, social, and emotional development, stage theories are more useful because so much development at that stage of life is physical – even the physical brain is maturing – and the body won't finish that maturation process until the early twenties for women and the mid twenties for men.

Examples of Developmental Tasks

Learning not to lie (i.e., learning to tell the truth); learning not to cheat (i.e., learning integrity); learning not to bully (i.e., learning to be respectful of other's rights to feel safe); and learning not to steal (i. e., learning to respect other's rights to property) all take place during the formative years of childhood and adolescence. While children may be taught formally by their parents and their religious traditions about these matters, it is equally certain that most children will be taught more by example and experimentation than they will be taught by words.

Witnessing and experiencing, for example, the social and personal benefits of empathy and compassion, it is likely that children will learn (1) to internalize and then (2) to demonstrate these capacities with others. Experiencing brutalizing violence, for another example, may close down the individual's capacities to empathize and to have compassion.

All children will test the teachings and interpersonal responses of adults (and older children) in various ways. As they learn the consequences of their personal actions in their various social settings such as the home, school, synagogue or church, playgrounds, etc., they slowly absorb the moral heritage of their culture. Children who are brutalized in any way are, therefore, handicapped in their moral explorations of the cultural world which surrounds them. Their perceptual apparatus is contaminated and the decision-making apparatus is corrupted. Children who grow up in adult environments where criminality is common are equivalently handicapped in their moral development. Children who grow up in chaotic environments are also handicapped. Children and adolescents raised inside authoritarian or totalitarian environments will develop differently that will children raised inside democratic and open environments. If the world is neither safe nor predictable; if the world is neither logical nor moral: then the child is cast upon his or her own resources to survive. Of personal necessity he will make and carry out whatever decisions he perceives to be essential to his survival.

If children and adolescents are presented with the reality of verbal teaching that does not match the examples they encounter in real life, then they enter times and situations of cognitive dissonance. As they encounter, contrast and compare what they are taught and what they experience in their homes with what they are taught and experience in the various other worlds of school, church, mosque, synagogue, and playground, they begin to create an inner moral sensibility that will go with them into their early adult lives.

It is axiomatic, I think, that children and adolescents will encounter and receive (or refuse to receive) the moral teachings of others in various ways. One filter will be formed by their growing cognitive abilities. Another will be formed by their increasing mobility and personal encounters with multiple social experiences and world views. Most assuredly their moral filters will be shaped by their personal

experiences of their immediate world. Didactic religious teaching is only one aspect of the child's consideration of moral and ethical decision-making.

Is this world they experience, for example, trustworthy? Since no one's personal and communal world is completely safe and completely trustworthy, how are children and adolescents taught to manage the at times dangerous and untrustworthy world that they must learn to navigate and manage for their own personal safety and personal survival? Are the adults who are most important to them honorable individuals? If not, what adaptations do children need to make in order to survive? Do their parents, teachers, and spiritual leaders demonstrate integrity? What kinds of moral decisions and behaviors do these adults exhibit in their routine encounters with children? Are the maturing individual's boundaries respected and supported? Do they feel loved and cared for in ways they can respect?

It is common sense wisdom that the child at two is unable to do the moral or spiritual thinking of a ten year old. He will not have the religious identity of a twenty year old. In abusive religious situations the child and maturing adolescent cannot protect herself from violation because there is no well-internalized conceptual map of a world without violation. Because the child's language apparatus is still being formed, there is no useful language to describe abuse, betrayal by others, or even have a well-operationalized sense that something is right or wrong. The child, and even the young adolescent, mostly lives in the present and respond mostly to the moment-by-moment experience and demands of her environment as it unfolds in proximity to her.

As commented on above, every wise parent knows that young children will experiment with lying, stealing, hitting, and other forms of parentally frowned-upon and forbidden behavior. In a similar manner, adolescents will begin to experiment with their growing sexual interests and capacities. The ways in which important-to-them adults instruct them or respond to these forms of socially-disapproved or socially-approved behaviors will begin to shape the child's and adolescent's experience of the world. An individual's personal and unique identity also begins to be shaped in these ways.

In a similar way, more and more complex, interpersonal feedback loops shape individual behavior as much as do internal ideas or thoughts about right and wrong. Enabled and rewarded behaviors tend to recur. That which is frowned upon and punished tends not to do so.

Every clinician knows that children and adolescents who grow up in abusive environments or who grow up in chaotic environments have additional challenges as they face the demands of their maturing body, their family, and their culture. Too much violence, too soon and the brain itself will adapt physically and later brain scans may show demonstrable physiological changes in the brain's neurological and physical structures. Too much arbitrariness or too much chaos

accompanied by too much adult abandonment of their primary responsibility to protect and guide a child's development, the child is thrown to his or her own devices about making judgments about morality that adults should be making for him or her. These judgments will be irrevocably shaped by the child's developmental stages. Too much poverty, too little intellectual stimulation, or too limited an access to needed resources and the child or adolescent will need to make premature judgments about what is needed in order to survive. Too much sexual exposure too soon changes the child's perceptions of healthy sexuality. Too little developmentally appropriate sexual education often leads to misperceptions of adult sexuality. In addition, modeled behavior is probably, in the long run, more important than anything which is said.

Erikson's work (1993, 1986) is, in my opinion, very sound and has stood the test of time. For example, the child, in infancy and early childhood, who does not learn to trust others and who does not learn how to form meaningful and healthy reciprocal attachments to others, is handicapped for a lifetime of human relationships – in intimate personal relationships as well as in economic ones in the adult workplace. An individual's inability to trust others interferes with and interpenetrates all further stages of social and emotional development.

When adults betray the needs of the child for safety, for inclusion, for teaching, for guidance, and for supportive love, they damage the child's potentials in all subsequent phases of development. The child, at this age, has no option but to adapt in whatever ways possible to the demands of the adult-shaped situation in which she finds herself.

When abusive adults who betray a growing child or adolescent are the same adults who verbally teach the child about morality, the child is placed inside an enduring relational and communication double-bind in which neither message makes sense. The younger the child the more devastating can be the consequences of these paradoxical or pathological forms of communication.^{cccxlx}

In addition, there are developmental tasks which must, and usually do, occur in age-related sequences and these are profoundly physiological as well as profoundly social. As the brain matures physiologically, the central nervous system, for example, supports the infant or very young child in gaining successive layers of skills needed for mastering the needs of human life. It is most easy to observe this during infancy: turning over, holding one's head up, figuring out how to stand, and eventually learning to walk all require complex interactions between the human body's physical maturation and its surrounding interpersonal and cultural landscapes. If the optimal developmental moment is missed, for any reason at all, there will be a permanent handicap in the personality or in the body. For example, language acquisition is easiest in the first 5-8 years of life. Second languages acquired after that time will not demonstrate a perfect cultural rendition of these languages.

Psycho-sexual maturation is built upon the human body's sexual maturation – a complex mix of physiology and culture. With the onset of puberty, the child is faced with the need to integrate a rapidly changing body structure and cognitive structure into a more adult-appearing body. Emerging into adolescence from childhood, the individual is also faced with new responses from others which must also be integrated. Generally this time of development is culturally recognized in specific ways – rites of passage. New levels of interpersonal freedom must be managed. New cognitive abilities for abstract thinking emerge and these, too, must be managed by the emergent young adult. By mid-adolescence, for example, issues of sexual orientation and sexual attraction must be sorted out. Each child and his surrounding network of relationships must make adaptations to facilitate personal growth and personal maturity. Each child and her cohort group of peers must sort out issues of leading others and following others. In this stage of the life journey, every individual begins to think about work and vocation. In terms of this manuscript, some individuals begin to feel the tug towards ordained ministry or towards spiritual teaching roles. Others may begin to interrogate the belief structures they have inherited from parents, clan and community. As the individual matures, we see a back and forth movement and interpersonal shifts in the continuum of individuation and group mind immersion. The inner sense of “I” matures along with the inner sense of “we”.

Stage theories hold that similar realities are at work as the child or adolescent develops the ability to think morally and to respond to religious or spiritual teaching. As stage piles upon stage in an age-related development model, the child moves sequentially into an ability to manage complexity. Over time, for example, a child's basic ethic of fairness begins to develop more and more complexity and eventually, with personal maturity, an ethic of care or an ethic of compassion can and often does begin to emerge.

While the child in the earliest stages of development is simultaneously learning to comprehend and then reproduce language, much of the child's inner and outer experience of the world is not yet encoded into words. The child, therefore, lives inside a sensory, kinesthetic, and ambient present-moment consciousness which receives, filter-less, the external world into the internal world. As language abilities mature, eventually the individual can, and indeed, must begin to make sense of his or her cultural environment and the internal environment which arises in response to the actions of others. She or he will begin to develop functional filters by which the maturing personality will gauge the internationalities of others and make estimates about their own personal safety with these others. Language will become one of the major bridges by which an individual will learn how to forge lasting relationships with others.

One developmental task which occurs and reoccurs throughout the lifespan is this: at each level of development individuals need to be able to communicate something of their inner world to the outer world. A distressed infant does this by

crying. A fifty year old hopefully can do this with language as well as by crying. As individuals mature their spirituality changes from an acceptance of the religious teachings of their culture and family. Adolescents and young adults will question the traditional teachings they have received and most will begin to create and internalize the moral or spiritual principles, values, beliefs and practices that will accompany them through their adult lives.

In addition, all individuals need to be able to accurately receive, describe, interpret, make decisions, and then introject the outer world into their inner world. The interplay of the outer world, their interpretive skills, their decisions about acting, and their internalized self-world model all influence an individual's maturation. Faced with dilemmas about acting, each present-moment decision about action shapes the self, the self's environment, and the future in which that self will live.

When the ability to communicate one's inner world is interfered with, individuals feel abandoned, isolated, and alienated from the outer world. They may also feel these same responses in respect to their inner world. Unable to name their experiences and to share them with others means that they experience themselves as alone in the world and as very different from others they observe in their social milieu.

The Age of Accountability

Mennonites and other Anabaptists such as the Amish talk about the maturing individual's age of personal accountability. This is the age at which a child becomes morally and spiritually responsible for the self and his behaviors. In this model of human development the child must have developed a sense of right and wrong behavior and responsibility to others for his personal conduct before he can be held fully accountable for his decisions and behaviors. In Mennonite communal life, once this age is reached, the maturing child is now responsible for guiding and further developing her own spiritual and religious identity and destiny. The accountable child-adult can now determine whether or not to accept the community's offer of baptism as a rite of inclusion. Once baptized, the individual is expected to adhere to the community's sense of morality – its collective wisdom about right behaviors and wrong ones.

In the sacramental traditions of Christian faith, confirmation offers a similar rite of passage to the maturing child. As the child confirms and, then demonstrates, by the rite of the first communion, his or her willing acceptance of a personal place inside this particular Christian tradition, he is seen spiritually and morally as accountable for his own behaviors in ways similar to those of adults. By participating in the sacrament, rite or liturgy of confirmation, the maturing individual is then assumed to be primarily and personally responsible for her decisions regarding right and wrong behaviors. He is, therefore, assumed to be

responsible and morally accountable for each of his decisions of thought and action.

In the Jewish community, a similar rite of passage for children is known as the Bar Mitzvah or the Bat Mitzvah. As the child liturgically is accepted into the community of adult spirituality and morality, he is asked to demonstrate the teachings of the Torah as his community understands them. He is asked to explain himself to the gathered community.

In many American Indian traditions, the arrival of puberty signals the young person's movement from the status of child into the communal status of adult. By means of various rites and community ceremonies, the community both tests and welcomes the young person into his or her tribal status as an adult.

In secular Western communities, no reasonable adult assumes however, that a child of 10 or an adolescent of 15 is a fully mature individual. These societies recognize that while individuals in late childhood and early adolescence are capable of making moral decisions about right and wrong, they are, nevertheless, not mature individuals in many aspects of their development – physical, cognitive, emotional, psychological, social, spiritual or religious, and moral. They will, therefore, Western societies assume, make many misjudgments and errors about necessary and desirable adult behaviors. These mistakes and misjudgments are essential steps on the path to full maturity. It is expected that the individual will learn from her mistakes and thus create a self-motivating platform for additional maturation to occur.

The socio-sexual complexities of puberty and post-puberty physical development affect every other dimension of human development. In late adolescence and early adulthood, sexual identity is consolidated and the individual moves towards those forms and patterns of sexual expression and personal intimacy which she or he will continue to develop across the lifetime.

I am assuming from my reading of Sipe's critique of seminary education that it is emotional and psycho-sexual immaturity which first begins to be evident in pre-seminary and seminary educational institutions. This is, for what ever his reasons, the area of human development and clergy immaturity which he has chosen to focus upon in his discussion of celibacy violations during the pre-seminary and seminary years before ordination or religious vows.^{cccl} These kinds of immaturity are essentially personal identity formation issues.

In Erikson's work, identity formation (with the dystonic element of confusion) and intimacy (with the dystonic element of isolation) are the developmental tasks of late adolescence and early adulthood. When violence interferes with this progression, individual's development may fixate which means future development will be incomplete or they may regress to earlier stages of development.

Not every physically mature adult is morally mature. Not every cognitively mature adult is spiritually mature. Not every sexually mature adult is emotionally and socially mature.

The Impact of Sexual Violence

Sexual violence, just like any other form of violence or betrayal, as another example, the organized violence of war or the somewhat more randomized violence of inner city or rural economically deprived neighborhoods, deeply affects the maturation processes of individuals. Since approximately 20 - 30% of all adults in Western cultures experience at least one episode of sexual violence before they reach their legal majority status as adults, this developmental factor is crucial to understanding adult sexual identity and behavior. It is crucial to our understanding of the development of the capacities for human intimacy and the emotions of mature love.

Recent clinical literature states the obvious: not only do the victimized individual's mind and its memory storage systems register and need to cope with the violation: his physical body does so as well.^{cccli} All aspects of his personality, including the psychological, the social, the emotional, the religious, the spiritual, and the moral, therefore, are affected. Consequently, all future aspects of his developmental maturation processes will be contaminated by this act of violence or that series of violent acts.

If we wish, as a secular culture or as a religious community, to develop emotionally, morally and spiritually mature individuals in all senses of that concept, one of the things we must seek to do is to stop the cycle of sexual violence wherever we can do so. Each act of prevention allows an individual to mature unburdened by the sequellae of sexual betrayal and violence in adult life.

Moral Development

To follow the predictable stages of moral development, we can study the research and popular works of Fowler,^{ccclii} Kohlberg,^{cccliii} and Gilligan^{cccliv}. When we do this, we see that moral development is not a lock-step process for individuals. No one life journey is the exact replica of all other life journeys. In addition, gender socialization appears to affect the processes of moral development. My own personal intuition is that if gender affects the moral and spiritual developmental processes for individuals, so to do other socio-anthropological factors such as sexual orientation, ethnicity and class.

Moral development accompanies physical, sexual, and psychosocial development. Each stage of maturation responds to the individual's external environment. Each interacts with an individual's underlying personality.

In addition, I personally believe that much of a human being's early moral development functions as a hologram regarding the values, beliefs, and most especially the actions of the adult community in which the child is slowly and often imperceptibly bringing to life the adult self which she will become. If that community is abusive in any way, the maturing individual's life will re-image that abuse and project it in some manner or another.

Another reality is also present: authoritarian cultures will tend to reproduce inside the consciousness of individuals.^{ccclv} Authoritarian individuals tend to have pre-conventional or conventional forms of moral development. Some individuals in authoritarian cultures will have the acculturated need to dominate and to control. Others will have a similar need to yield and surrender their moral judgments to the demands of controlling authorities.^{ccclvi}

Spiritual Maturity

If in addition to moral maturity, we cite the necessity of spiritual maturity as one qualification for spiritual or religious leadership, we are, I think, very unclear about the concept. A question arises: how do we define and recognize spiritual maturity? Another question also becomes visible: what is the level of maturity needed when one first enters the professionalized ministry? How does that differ from the level of maturity needed for someone to assume a senior position of leadership inside religious institutions? What do we assume about the necessity for continuing maturation in spiritual and moral discernment? What do we require in religious leaders at age 50 that we might not require at age 30? What are the operational definitions of maturity we are using in these more general questions about adult maturity? Exactly what are we describing in our conversations about spiritual and moral maturity?

Another set of questions has to do with the developmental pitfalls in the arena of moral, religious, and spiritual identity and praxis. Since every personality has fault lines and contradictory motivations, perhaps even deviant ones, how do we realistically assess these human development dimensions of ministry? No human individual reaches perfection during any given lifetime. What aspects of immaturity and imperfection, therefore, are irrelevant to the professional ministry? Exactly what levels of perfection do we seek? And, are these desires for perfection in others fueled by our own personal fault lines and absence of perfection?

Determinism and Freedom

Philosopher and psychoanalyst Rollo May and I once talked about Freudian analysis, depth psychology and the concept of human determinism.^{ccclvii} In a very simple clinical aphorism, this is often expressed this way: *To be able to predict a client's future behavior, we need to know the client's past behavior.* Another way

to say this is to say that *past behavior is the best single predictor for future behavior*.

May told me that in his opinion moments of genuine freedom were very rare but that they did exist. The decisions which we made in these moments of genuine freedom – these were the decisions we were legitimately responsible for. They happened only inside human consciousness and human awareness. For genuine freedom to occur, the individual needed to be attentive and aware of himself and the choices facing him. As an individual exercises these small moments of freedom the possibility for additional moments of freedom becomes enhanced.

In a simple, explanatory model, as we explored and debated this complex issue of human freedom and accountability, he talked about coming to a fork in the road. The choice of a path at that fork (whether made in freedom or in unfreedom) will deeply influence and often pre-determine the outcome of a particular life journey. By turning one's feet ever so slightly in the direction of one path or the other, the future starts to take shape. Unless one retraces one's steps, the outcome is now pre-determined.

Heading east from Washington, DC, one will not arrive by the shortest possible route in San Francisco, CA. Some major re-routing will be essential if one hopes to arrive in a timely manner. Similar realities exist in the life-arena of moral and spiritual development.

Even were it possible in life for one to re-trace one's steps back to their starting point, however, I have since reflected, the surrounding situation and the very crossroad itself would now be a different crossroads. In addition, the traveler would now have the wisdom gained in the journey which was abandoned. Thus, the crossroads, even in situations where we retrace and reverse our behavioral steps, become a different place than it had been previously. This is the concept behind a very different aphorism: *one cannot step into the same river twice*. We cannot magically undo in the present that which we did in the past. We may be able to make amends but we cannot change the historical past into the present. We will, indubitably, need to deal in each present moment with the consequences of our choices and behaviors and even our thoughts from past moments.

Moral development, to my way of thinking, therefore, is a bit like making this hypothetical trip from Washington to San Francisco. We repeatedly enter – or are thrust into – decision-making crossroads. In each crossroads, our inner moral or ethical gyroscope needs to adjust to the new situation. Each decision builds upon prior ones and we slowly accumulate a life history of making or refusing to make moral decisions. In each subsequent crossroads, the decisions which we make often refer back to and reflect earlier similar decisions. Yet, each crossroad provides us with an opportunity to re-set our direction.

Much about the absence or presence of moral integrity is pre-conditioned or pre-determined by early life experiences and by our early experiments in making or successfully avoiding the making of moral choices. Each moral decision made by a human being affects, and, indeed, determines all of his future moral decisions *unless* (and this is a very important *unless*) the individual awakens and begins to pay attention. I agree with May, however, that the moment of freedom and the moment of creating a different life trajectory are always present – however fleetingly. While we cannot undo the past to create a different present and future, we can change our present moment and this will inevitably change the future.

Decision made by decision made: this is how adult individuals construct their identity. This is how they construct a working system of moral thinking to guide their future decisions. This is how they construct a workable religious identity. The more individuals are aware of the meaning of their actions and choices, the more they can be made in an alerted consciousness by an informed conscience.

In moments that Eastern religions and philosophy describe as awakening and that Western religions describe as conversion, a previously immoral or an addicted and compulsive individual can reverse directions and become highly principled and moral. An abusive individual can change. But, as all religious and spiritual traditions are aware: such transformative changes are rare. The longer, for example, that a habitual pattern of behaving continues, the more likely it is that it will continue to occur in the future.

Adult morality, in my opinion, therefore demands paying attention and becoming aware of the potential consequences to our own lives and to the lives of others in the decisions we face as adults. Automatic behaviors – while always present to some degree – do not build a morally mature individual.

The same principle is true it seems to me about spiritual maturity. The life journey to spiritual maturity and the life journey to moral maturity are not life stage givens. Individuals and communities need to be aware of the decisions they make in order for moral and spiritual maturity to emerge and ripen.

Personal maturity develops in a life as individuals confront the complexities of adult life and as they seek to have age-appropriate personal and communal integrity in each relationship they form and in each decision they need to make.

Religious identity, personal spirituality, and a sense of morality are, I believe, profoundly cultural, profoundly universal *and* profoundly individual. Spirituality and principled morality develop, therefore, in the complexities of daily life as small and large decisions are made; as choices about how to behave are made; and as actual behavioral choices accrue weight in the personality. Cultural feedback loops serve an important function because they provide external

information to the developing self – information about how others see them and how others respond to them.

For at least some individuals, a personal religious identity is the container in which spirituality and principled morality are conceived, birthed, and mature. But an ethical life does not need formal religious training and practice in order to mature inside an individual's life. A spiritual individual does not need formal religious connections. This is the conundrum that many religious institutions and spiritual teachers refuse to acknowledge. Nevertheless, an individual without a religious identity may have a well-developed and mature sense of morality. She or he may also have a well-developed and mature spiritual presence in the world.

It is possible, therefore, to be an 80 year old religious person and to respond to situations of moral complexity with the naiveté and moral gullibility of a 16 year old. It is possible to be a 50 year old and to demonstrate the spiritual maturity of a very immature 8 year old child.^{ccclviii} Since these are not desirable outcomes of the human development maturation process, a question becomes visible: what went wrong in the life maturation process that such anomalies of human development occur?

The same question arises when we think about psycho-socially and emotionally immature priests or abusive clergy. Receiving the best education and doctrinal religious training that their denominational traditions offer, what went wrong?

This question also arises when we think about corrupt bishops or religious institution supervisors – those individuals who make administrative decisions from a spiritually immature or morally bankrupted sense of personal integrity. In many cases, these church administrators have received the best formal and experiential education that their religious heritage provides. They have been trained and evaluated at many different points in their professional careers. What went wrong? How did they slip undetected through multiple layers of increasing responsibility and through multiple evaluations by their peers and supervisors?

In a 2013 lecture to Minnesota lawyers, Dominican Father Thomas Doyle talked about the social sciences concept that administrators often conflate their personal identities and their social role identities.^{ccclix} This is a serious problem in moral development and in moral action. When this happens, individuals stop seeing their actions as a personal moral act and diffuse the morality of their personal behavior as reflecting institutional goals and needs. When this happens, issues of routinization, de-individuation, de-personalization and other forms of interpersonal social pathology begin to manifest themselves. In the name of the public institution, they then are freed to do questionable moral behaviors which they would not be free to do in the personal sphere of their lives. When they speak only with the voice of the institution – especially if that institution is already

suffering from moral rot – they demonstrate a lack of personal and collective integrity.

Roots of Failed Moral Development

My own personal sense about the religious establishment's continuing problems with abusive clergy and situationally-corrupted religious leaders is, therefore, somewhat different than the work being done inside the Roman Catholic tradition – which ties moral decision-making and moral maturity to the theological traditions, doctrinal teaching, and liturgical heritage of Roman Catholic faith and praxis. Moral integrity, in this model, gets mixed up with a particular ideology or model of spiritual maturation. It gets bound up in dogma and doctrine. It gets trapped inside ancient and highly authoritarian models of sinfulness, forgiveness and redemption. It gets caught up in theoretical disputes about celibacy or in conflicting dogmatic assertions about an all male priesthood.

This model, deeply and intuitively religious in its origins and its imagery, does not utilize the scientific work being done in human moral development in the secular academy. In fact, it does not appear to be aware of this large body of 20th century investigation into stage theories of human maturation. In emphasizing the doctrinal and dogmatic foundation of proper beliefs (*orthodoxy*) over the lived, daily reality of actions (*orthopraxy*) the abstract tools of language are emphasized and the daily reality or ordinary moral, ethical and spiritual choices of daily living behavior are de-emphasized. Eventually what one says he or she believes takes precedence over the daily manifestations of embodiment. Morality and spirituality become, therefore, a matter of words rather than a matter of actions.

Since it is quite clear that celibate spiritual leaders can, and often do, represent and manifest compassionate moral forms of sexual and psycho-social decision-making and since it is clear that celibate men, as spiritual leaders, can and do manifest personal integrity and spiritual wisdom, the question for me is neither one of celibacy nor is it one of gender. The relationship, therefore, of the Catholic Church's celibacy requirements for its priests is troublesome – not in the arena of actual celibacy but in the arena of an individual's sexual life as it is actually lived. Stating or regularly implying that one is celibate in the public dimensions of one's religious career but privately living either a consenting sexual life or an abusive sexual life breeds hypocrisy. It is, therefore, *hypocrisy* which interferes with moral *and* spiritual maturity – not celibacy per se.

I accept, therefore, the premise that spiritual or even psycho-social immaturity is part of the sexual abuse problem. It is not, however, the only problem. It may not even be the taproot of the problem. The taproot may be one of institutionally promulgated hypocrisy as the only pathway to career advancement inside the religious or spiritual teaching establishment.

Obedience Disorders

I think abusive clergy and religious leaders not only manifest spiritual or psycho-social immaturity or even sexual immaturity, they also manifest a moral lack of integrity and moral maturity. They are strikingly devoid of empathy for the pain of others. This distinction is rooted in what I have begun informally to call *obedience disorders*. Obedience disorders are intimately related to what psychotherapists call character disorders. They are born inside; they blossom inside; and they bear fruit inside violent, abusive, patriarchal, and authoritarian cultures. These cultures may be the parent-child relationship; these cultures may be the public education culture; they may be the religious environment; they may represent the teachings of the nation-state. In Sipe's body of work, they appear to represent the candidate's experience of and immersion inside the seminary environment itself.^{ccclx} One symptom of an authoritarian environment is the leader's controlling emphasis on unquestioning obedience. Combined with this, for some individuals, is their personal ambition to reach powerful positions in the hierarchy. A kind of toadying or obsequious or deferential obedience develops in the service of personal ambition. In such cultures, individuals do not learn to think for themselves. They yield their share of personal morality to the control of others.^{ccclxi} These individuals are characterized by the defensive moral posture or moral defense when others question their behavior: *I was just following orders.*^{ccclxii}

In recent speeches and articles, Benkert,^{ccclxiii} Doyle^{ccclxiv} and Sipe^{ccclxv} have zeroed in on narcissistic personality disorders in the ranks of the Roman Catholic religious hierarchy, clergy and laity. These kinds of human personality disorders flourish inside authoritarian cultures where individuals, as children and adolescents, are forbidden the necessity to make personal decisions and to learn from them. They are planted in early childhood and early adolescence when the child or the adolescent is refused the opportunity to question and to doubt and to experiment with behavior that represents those questions or those doubts. Too much emphasis in adult teachings, therefore about the angry God and his capacity to place the child or adolescent in an eternal hell, for example, can intimidate children from the conversations and inner reflections that are essential to emotional, spiritual and social maturation. Too much fear dwarfs the human spirit's capacity for mature compassion.

In authoritarian situations, lower status individuals are coerced by or deeply influenced by higher status individuals and their systems of dogma and doctrine. They are encouraged (or demanded) to yield their own powers of analysis and choice to the authorities who control their lives. Children and adolescents develop an inner gyroscope that teaches them, often without words, the true values of the adults who are their role models. When adults are hypocrites, the child first senses this and then comes to know and understand this. The question remains: when does the child or adolescent move from observation, intuition,

understanding and critique of his or her adult role models into adopting hypocrisy as her or his own life model and pattern.

Encapsulated by the authoritarian environment in which they live, ambitious individuals learn to pretend to believe that which they really don't believe and to pretend to do that which they really have no intention of doing. They explain their behaviors and motivations to themselves by ever-more sophisticated rationalizations. Self-deceit begins to accompany deceit directed at others.

Upper status individuals (institutional elites) in positions of authority promote and promulgate the doctrines, dogmas and required behaviors of subordinates as essential in some way or another even as they may, themselves, not believe or enact them. In a certain sense, for these individuals, being obeyed is more important than doctrinal correctness or dogmatic beliefs. It doesn't matter what their subordinates think, as long as they are visibly obedient to the structures of authority that rule over them in matters of doctrine and dogma. What matters is the outward appearance rather than the inward reality.^{ccclxvi}

Proclaiming, for example, in his sermons or in his teaching and orthodoxies, a gospel of Christ's love and compassion as the model for all Christians, an abusive religious leader may lead an arrogant, oppressive and non-compassionate life in the commons. Proclaiming the need for all Christians to be accountable in the Christian commons for their beliefs and behaviors, the hypocritical leader may live an arrogant lifestyle which demonstrates no personal accountability to others. When we read closely, for example, the four Christian gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) we find them nuanced in various ways. But there is a common thread that weaves through each of them and that thread is Jesus' critique of the hypocrisy of the religious leaders and the religious establishment of his day. Whether he scolds the temple's religious establishment for corrupt business practices in the dove and lamb-selling business or for spiritual vacuity in their religious teachings, it is clear that his underlying critique is that genuine spirituality, compassionate piety, and an authentic religiosity are not to be found among the temple's priests and leaders.

A Closer Look at Hypocrisy

Thus a major issue in corrupted spiritual leaders and their followers is hypocrisy. When the stakes include not only personal feelings of self-worth but also economic security and job promotions, one temptation is to (1) do what one personally wants to do while (2) lying to others – most particularly those in positions of authority over one - that one has, in fact, not done what one has already done. Another way to say this is to say that individuals claim to be living inside the sexual prohibitions of their particular denominations when, in reality, they are doing the exact opposite. For religious leaders, there is also the temptation to lie to their followers and to insist that their followers live a more rigorous religious life than they themselves do. In a Dublin address in early

2013, Father Thomas Doyle notes that a corrupted hierarchy require their followers to be docile and obedient and to continue funding the religious establishment with generous financial support even as elite members of that religious hierarchy are deeply embedded within an authoritarian culture which behaviorally supports the sexual abuse of pre-pubertal children, adolescent minors, and vulnerable adults.^{ccclxvii}

Another temptation is to unthinkingly yield moral authority for one's own personal values and subsequent actions to another. When this occurs, the actions of supervisors and administrators are accepted without criticism or without thinking. The corrupted social environment becomes the unquestioned norm. Doing what one is told to do without self-conscious moral decision-making means there is no internal self-correcting mechanism in place.

Hypocrisy, at its core, is a spiritually harmful form of adults playing *let's pretend* and *let's make believe* – in order to deceive others in high stake situations. At some level of the personality, hypocrisy is a subtle form of magical thinking in which what one says becomes more important than what one does. Hypocritical individuals pretend to be something other than that which they really are. In hypocritical administrative and organizational milieus, sexual predators very easily find a protective environment – a home.

Hypocrisy allows individuals to say or to strongly imply, *I will obey the formal rules* while maintaining an inner defiance that allows me to disobey. To maintain the charade of my vowed obedience to commands they disagree with, they must be prepared to use a wide variety of dissembling methods including hiding in plain sight, lying, cheating, stealing, character assassination, economic counter-attacks, or even murder. To avoid being punished for disobedience, disobedient individuals must either stay under the radar of detection or, preferably, catch a supervisor in the act of disobeying his own proclamations of needed beliefs and behaviors. If subordinates can catch supervisors or religious superiors in the act of disobedience to their superiors, that is even better. When this happens, individuals become comrades in disobedience. Subtle or not so subtle forms of extortion become visible. Neither individual in such an extortion dance can move towards the freedom of truth and honorable behavior. Disobedience to the vows – of celibacy, for example – transmutes itself into obedience to a social web of extortion and hypocrisy, feigned obedience, fawning subservience, internal disdain for each other, deceit and defiance.

Hypocrisy allows individuals to pretend to be trustworthy individuals in public while secretively and in private enacting very abusive and untrustworthy behaviors. It allows individuals to exude public good will while in private they are mean-spirited, back-stabbing, and generally abusive to others, most specifically to subordinates who need their support to survive. Hypocrisy allows individuals to pretend in public that I support the public good of the commons even as they are pursuing narcissistic goals of self-promotion.

It is very rare that an individual has an obedience disorder and it remains totally hidden from all business associates and friends. Usually there is a very supportive – but somewhat unreliable - network of individuals with obedience disorders and rule defiance behaviors that serves to keep authoritarian systems in motion. These networks affect individuals and the whole. Entire human systems can be corrupted by agency-wide disobedience disorders. When detection is threatened, blaming and outing of others is a common defense system. When this happens, the system usually closes ranks in order to protect its internal occupants and maintain their power, status, and positions of authority. In this situation, it becomes more important to protect the system and its administrators than to do the right thing.

Regression or Fixation

A logical question emerges, given the wisdom of stage theory authors: in adult disobedience disorders, are we seeing fixated psycho-social, spiritual and moral development or are we seeing regressed psycho-social, spiritual and moral development. To ask this another way: did this individual or that individual move through the stages of maturation and then regress to previous stages under stress (regression) or did something happen in the maturational processes that stalled this ordinary progression (fixation)

In addition, we need to ask questions of character pathologies. Are we seeing character disorders? Or, are we seeing something else entirely?

In other words, were abusive clergy (priests and bishops) once upon a time morally and spiritually mature and did they, under the demands of a corrupted seminary and hierarchical management style, regress to an earlier, less mature level of development? Or, did they, under the influence of a seminary and hierarchical management styles, never progress beyond a late childhood or early adolescent level of psycho-social, sexual, moral and spiritual development?

These are essential questions for religious communities to resolve as they seek candidates for spiritual leadership positions. How one diagnoses a problem in a large part determines the solutions sought and applied.

How we answer these complex analytical questions inevitably influences the changes we need to make in seminary and continuing education programs for religious leaders. How we answer this complex network of questions has many implications for the recruitment, training, ordination, and supervision of clergy and religious institution administrators.

Back to Developmental Theory

Small children just out of the womb have no choice but to adapt themselves to the demands of their adult caretakers. They must “please” their caretakers – persuading them attitudinally and behaviorally that good and nurturing adult care of the young human being is both essential and rewarding to the caregivers. Without that adaptation, they will not survive.

Adolescents, not yet able to independently support themselves in complex, developed societies have to adapt to the circumstances in which they find themselves. Much of their moral development at this time of life will be highly conventional – even if they are highly disobedient to the rules of family and clan. One of my clinical teachers once said to me, *the most loyal child in any family system may well be its most disobedient child. He or she needs to know every rule with a precision that obedient children do not need to know. He must know the precise limit at which his personal freedom will be limited.*

Another way to say this is that the disobedient shadow is always tied to the obedient sun. We can also hypothesize that the disobedient child embodies and re-enacts the hidden and secret disobedience of his family and clan. In light of this clinical wisdom, I wonder if the priest or ordained minister who rapes a child or sexually harasses a colleague might not be the most loyal son of his authoritarian church.

Adults who are financially dependent (or even spiritually dependent) upon the ruling caste are faced with decisions that can contain life-changing consequences if they choose to defy the corrupt demands of the employment situation in which they have located themselves. The choice between the self-promoting socio-economic rewards of complicity and the socio-economic punishments of whistle-blowing is a daunting choice to many individuals. The more one is entrapped within personal obedience disorders, the harder it will be to break rank and behave with integrity. The more one is entrapped within authoritarian systems the more difficult it will be to act compassionately and morally.

North Americans – most especially those of us who are United States citizens tend to think of ourselves as strong individualists. Therefore, we often overlook the strong influences the surrounding culture has upon our personal identity, behaviors and even our personal morality. It is, in my experience of the world, the rare individual who becomes a whistle-blower inside corrupt institutions. In general, individuals wish to avoid the punishments of principled disobedience and to reap the rewards of obedience. It is very rare to find a whistle-blower who has not thought about the potential consequences of his or her actions. It is the rare whistle-blower who knows the exact types and intensity of actual consequences. There may be a period of intense self-scrutiny and counting of the costs before the whistle-blower takes action. Once the decision is made,

however, there is a period of relative inner calm. One simply knows that to live with the self, one must act. To avoid complicity in evil, one must separate one's own behavior from that of the crowd for whom complicity in evil is economically, emotionally, socially, and even cognitively easier than speaking out in favor of right-action. Only in retrospect, therefore, can the full costs of whistle-blowing be realized.

In their long childhood and adolescence human beings will either willingly or by adult coercion (by carrots and rewards or sticks and punishments) obey the will of their adult caretakers. Thus, the healthy default position for the maturing human psyche and personality is to obey those perceived to be authorities. As maturing human beings we often, perhaps usually, make obedience decisions by encountering human power, most especially the phenomena of power-over. Strong transference influences are present each time we encounter a cultural or religious demand for unquestioning obedience.

By our long dependent childhoods, we are conditioned to be obedient to those who have authority over us: parents, teachers, physicians, traffic police officers, school crossing guards, college presidents, military commanders, babysitters, older relatives, etc. We have, therefore, a strong and embedded impulse to surrender our own wills to another; to obey others even when obedience either is not required or makes no sense. The human default position, therefore, in the absence of awareness is nearly always obedience.

The Mature Adult

Thus, a major underlying issue in growing towards spiritual and moral maturity is to learn to differentiate between legitimate authority and non-legitimate authoritarianism. Included is the need to differentiate between legitimate commands and non-legitimate ones. Obedience disorders are essentially addictive and un-free. They are disorderly and irregular organized forms of response to authoritarian human beings and institutions. They are, therefore, survival behaviors.

Obedience disorders manifest themselves in at least two ways. *First*, there are individuals who disobey when it would be prudent and morally principled to obey. *Secondly*, there are also individuals who obey when it would be prudent or morally principled to disobey.^{ccclxviii}

Most of these imprudent adult decisions are pre-determined by the life experiences of small children, adolescents, and young adults (before the moral brain has matured). Individuals, in authoritarian circumstances, function as if their spirituality and morality is on an automatic pilot status. Another way to say this is that they yield their personal responsibility to make informed choices to the authority of another. Never needing to make a moral decision for themselves or

to live accountably with the direct consequences of their actions, their adult integrity muscles do not develop.

Other aspects become visible when one looks at authoritarian cultures, societies, or families. *First*, there are individuals who need and, therefore, demand to be obeyed. The need to be obeyed at all times without question demonstrates an immature or a narcissistic personality.

Secondly, there are also individuals who seek out others to obey and who are most comfortable inside authoritarian relationships because they know what they must do: obey at all times. We can see that by their personality structures they need someone to obey. This need to obey at all times without questioning those in authority is also a behavioral demonstration of an immature personality.

Kelman and Hamilton (1989) in their important book about institutionalized criminal behavior (due to obedience disorders) and its relationship to authoritarianism comment that in morally compromising situations, people obey others for a wide variety of reasons.^{ccclxix} Some authoritarian obedience is tied to the specific roles (and the requirements and perquisites of these roles) that individuals encounter or enact. Other forms of obedience occur because of the implicit or explicit rules present in the individual's environment (and the rewards or punishments for disobedience to those rules). But perhaps the most powerful ordering of obedience disorders in criminal situations occurs when the individual shares values with the authorities he or she obeys. Whether criminality is unofficially encouraged by a lack of negative sanctions for offending or abusive behavior or where it is actively encouraged by supervisory wink-wink behaviors or demands for unquestioning loyalty, criminality will thrive and proliferate.

Inside the human personality neither position: (1) the authoritarian demand for unquestioning obedience and (2) the behaviors of unquestioning obedience indicates the presence of spiritual and moral maturity. An unexamined life and unexamined life choices made on automatic pilot inevitably mean we make decisions without really thinking them and their consequences through. The controls for our adult behaviors have been turned back to that earlier self who needed to obey to survive.

Human Individuation

One issue that surfaces for me in this kind of discussion is the issue of human individuation. Not only are we human beings social animals, we are, in many ways, profoundly alone as we live inside our individual skins. None of us exactly and precisely replicates another. In our differences we will rub against each other's boundaries and we will have our own boundaries rubbed against. While many aspects of our human nature are profoundly social, others are profoundly individual. In balancing these very human demands for social acceptability and social accountability with the demands of the authentic Self for individuality and

individuation, each individual must make choices. These choices will inevitably shape the ongoing processes of individuation and maturation. They, and their consequences, will shape our personal systems of spirituality and morality. How we blend the individuated self with the collective whole is one of the great dilemmas every human being faces on their, and our, particular life journey from infancy to death.

If, for example, I always respond to the commands of authority with a defiant and non-compliant attitude, this is no sign of a properly individuated personality. It is no sign of moral maturity. It may very well indicate a reactive attitude that signals my own personal obedience disorder. Likewise, if I never question the commands of persons in positions of authority and if I always do what I am told to do without expressing my inner doubts or questions about the morality of the demand or request, I may also signal my inability to make choices that seem obviously needed to serve the common good. Here too I may be trapped in a personal obedience disorder.

Perpetual bitching about the bosses or authority figures who “control” my life with their “idiotic” requests and “illogical” commands is yet another indicator that I may be living inside an obedience disorder. This is especially true if I make no effort to change the situation or structures in which I work or live. Railing against authority, therefore, is not a good indicator of an individuated self. In fact, it most likely signals incomplete personal development in the ongoing life journey.

In a similar way, a too-unexamined cooperation with structures of authority, particularly when these structures and institutions are engaged in criminality or manifest social injustice towards other vulnerable individuals in a particular culture can also signal an individual’s incomplete journey towards social, spiritual and moral development. This kind of behavior can also signal a lack of an appropriate journey towards individuation.

Spiritual and Moral Maturity

Spiritual maturation and moral maturation are not just matters of finding and following that which one’s culture presents as the best way to find social acceptance. They are not matters of feeling good. They are not matters of following the herd.

There are times in each generation – indeed in each lifetime – when the individuated, healthy, mature, and authentic Self must make decisions which set one apart from others. This represents healthy individuation.

Biography and Moral Heroes as Teachers

The moral need is to *stand in opposition to the wrong*.

Johnetta Cole^{ccclxx}

As I have looked at the lives of men and women I admire for their spiritual maturity *and* for their moral maturity, what I find is *first* an unflinching ability to question injustice and *secondly* a strong desire to seek to relieve human or environmental suffering. In addition, I find awareness – however subtle – that who one is as an individuated person affects what one does in the social or collective world just as it affects the methodologies one chooses to utilize. Finally, I find commitment to moral and principled action for the righteous or for the common good.

In a recent (2013) PBS-sponsored discussion about the passing of Nelson Mandela, a reporter who knew him personally – having covered him for decades - remarked that Mandela's life and character was marked by compassion for others, a deep analytical ability to understand complexity, the willingness to make touch decisions and a touch of loneliness. These are all signs of a spiritually mature and morally mature individual.^{ccclxxi}

The foundational cognitive experience seems to be an ability to see, to intuit, and to analytically *and* empathically examine that which is not always self-evident. The foundational socio-emotional experience seems to be an abiding sense of empathy, compassion and that which we might call agape love when confronted by other's suffering. The foundational spiritual experience seems to be a sense of transcendence or unity with the whole that supersedes tradition, doctrine and dogma. The foundational moral experience seems to consist of an ability to stand by one's ethical and moral principles even when those principles cause one to be attacked, ridiculed, persecuted or even killed. Underlying each of these, perhaps, is the willingness to be responsible or accountable to the self and to others for the decisions one makes.

Nelson Mandela's commentary on being sentenced to life in prison was that he was (and I paraphrase) willing to spend his life working for reform in South Africa from the social evils and economic injustices of apartheid and, if need be he was *willing to die for his ideals and principles*.

As I look at the individual biographies of principled, moral, and genuinely spiritual leaders in a wide variety of traditions, what I see are individuals who are not afraid to be individuated and to act from that still point in their personalities. In addition, they are not alienated from the whole. That which is genuinely individual and that which is genuinely communal are held in balance. At the same time they are deeply concerned with the welfare of the whole they also recognize the need for compassionate patience with individuals harmed by the whole. They are both

able to make and willing to risk making penetrating critiques about the corrupted nature of the unjust or unfair situations in which individuals and the community as a whole are encapsulated. Offended by the presence of deliberate and malicious evil, they refuse to be personally intimidated by it as they seek to rescue that which can be rescued; to redeem that which can be redeemed; to heal that which can be healed. They are willing to leave the obedience of the community for the principled disobedience of the individual.

The Professionalized Ministry

The question for a professionalized ministry is how to make an opening for and facilitate the emergence of these kinds of principled and compassionate men and women as spiritual and religious leaders. Many, perhaps most, are highly impatient with inherited forms of dogma which supports injustice. One of the ordinary criteria for ministry in many denominations – the socialized ability to adapt to and live comfortably within a spiritualized world of dogma and orthodoxy is perhaps counter-productive to the spiritual growth of individuated, compassionate, and highly principled leaders. Pragmatic desires to join the elites in leadership roles may, indeed, be counter-productive to genuine leadership which facilitates spiritual and moral growth in the commons. In short, too strong a desire to be a bishop (or a college president or the executive officer of a missionary agency) may produce a bishop who is morally and spiritually immature. An absence of genuine humility about one's sense of vocation is often a sign of a narcissistic personality disorder. I also personally distrust individuals with a strong missionary conviction that they know what is right for other individuals to do and be and that they are the arbiter of a common morality for everyone else in their vicinity.

As I think about the professionalized ministry, I often consider the question about when seminary education should begin. I have been opposed, for many years, to the automatic pathway from denominational undergraduate degrees in religion (at age 21 or 22) to graduate seminary degrees in ministry (by the age of 24 or 25). Too much emphasis on the academic method of inquiry and the dogmatic memorization of religious ideologies and doctrinal dogmas do not provide the young adult – whose physiological brain is not yet fully mature – with the life experiences which can open the self's pathway to empathy, compassion and agape love. Academic success alone does not help him or her to integrate the intellectual with the personal. Such a career path does not equip the individual with humility and with an informed intuition about the needs of others. It does not provide time for the individual to mature and develop complex moral and spiritual identities.

When there is no solid foundation of sound and healthy spiritual practices and when there is no necessity for confronting the complexities of moral decision making in ordinary life, spiritual and moral immaturity is almost certainly to be guaranteed. It is life itself as it is lived and reflected upon which helps us to

mature. It is not what we think life should be. Memorizing a rule book about expected behaviors provides no guarantees that, when faced with a life-decision demand, we will know morally or spiritually how to proceed.

As a mid-life seminary student, I witnessed first hand various forms of immaturity and acting out among some of my classmates – men and women who would soon be ordained and in charge of the spiritual and moral welfare of others. They would become the transmitters of orthodoxy to their congregations. It was not that they were bad persons. They were not. It was that their ideas about effective forms of ministry were guided solely by abstract ideas about faith, morality, and integrity rather than by life's rough shaping. The real life struggles of religious people inside religious communities were a theological or ideological abstraction to them.

Sometimes I thought members of the teaching faculty were equally unequipped for the work of teaching future ministers.

One of my classmates lost his newborn child within weeks of its birth. I was totally appalled at the absence of compassion on the part of some members of the teaching faculty and among some student members of our small academic community. Some months later, as I listened to my friend's resentments about the way he was institutionally treated in the immediate days after the infant's death and funeral services, I wondered about how any of us could be untouched by what had happened to him and his wife. I wondered if any of us were authentic ministers to his pain. In a school where a theology of grace was academically pounded into our heads, I wondered where the praxis of grace had resided when he and his family needed it most.

Within some of my classmates, there were already warning signs of obedience disorders. What their denominations required behaviorally for ministry was defied by hidden personal and interpersonal behaviors that rejected those requirements. Sexual abstinence for twenty and thirty year old singles, for example, may have been doctrinally and denominationally required. It was, in my observations, rarely practiced. Hypocrisy, therefore, about all matters sexual was rooted in the very foundations of professional ministry for individuals who were embarking on careers in professional ministry. Since some, but certainly not all, professors and administrators were engaged in similar forms of behavioral hypocrisy; it seemed to me that the future church would continue to experience leaders who lived hypocritical lives while teaching people the orthodox dogma that was denominationally required. It would continue to create denominational administrators who were unable or unwilling to successfully manage sexual abuse when it emerged.

Richard Sipe and other Catholic authors describe a sexualized culture in seminaries and diocesan parishes.^{ccclxxii} This, in terms of their church's theology, dogma, doctrine, and liturgical practice, produces a situation which inevitably

breeds hypocrisy. While the church's official teaching is priestly celibacy, a wide variety of Roman Catholic authors report that there are many situations in which known violations are tolerated or perhaps even promoted. Behavior, as is true in many situations, therefore, trumps theology, doctrine, dogma and ideology. Behavior reveals the actual belief structures of individuals much better than sermons, testimonies, or other forms of theological pronouncement.

This kind of situation is also found in Protestant and Anabaptist seminaries. An underground current of information about embodied disobedience is available. Officially, however, there is "no" awareness that obedience disorders are present. In one course which I taught, a variety of seminary students told me that they routinely lied in their spiritual formation classes because it was their impression that if they told the truth about themselves and their faith questions, they would not be ordained.

Hypocrisy is, therefore, one symptom of systemic obedience disorders. It is also a common symptom of authoritarian human systems seeking to speak for God by requiring intellectual adherence to dogma while tolerating – perhaps even promoting - deviant personal behaviors that violate that very dogma.

Obedience disorders are essentially addictive and un-free disorderly and yet well-organized forms of human behaviors. So, the question becomes this for me: What is there about organized religion and what is there about the various priesthoods of organized religion that draws people with obedience disorders into positions of power? Why, for example, are so many sociopaths drawn to ministry as an occupation? Sociopaths are known in medicine – but they don't seem to thrive there or even to survive very long in one location. Why do sociopaths find religion to be such a comfortable home and why do they thrive there?

The Need to Surrender the Self

Kramer and Alstad talk about the desire to *surrender the self* as the religious or spiritual impulse of seekers and followers who get entrapped inside authoritarian cults. The desire to yield responsibility for the self to some other person or organization: what is that about in the human psyche?

Certainly, from my perspective, being a grown-up is very hard work. It means taking responsibility for one's actions, one's thoughts, and for one's culture in proactive ways. It means knowing that no god will rescue one from the consequences of one's actions, the actions of others, or from the actions of the natural world – commonly seen in antiquity as the fates. It means learning to be empathic with others who suffer the consequences of their own actions as well as the actions of others or even of the fates. It means learning to manage an ever-shifting and, therefore, delicate balance of dependency, interdependency and independency.

Blaming and abandoning those who suffer is a blind alley if we seek healing of the collective whole.

Encounters with Transcendence on the Way to Maturity

I have no disbelief in or personal quarrel with the idea of transcendence. I also understand the urgency at times to surrender and to yield. A very human longing is to transcend the boundaries of the self and to merge with the other, to merge with the whole. Sometimes when I am totally alone in the pool – swimming a mile of laps – I find my way into a deep quietness. To reach this inner stillness, I must simply yield to the water and to the simple repetitiveness of my body's breath and motion. But, I can't demand or seek that still point. And when I become aware of it, it is gone.

The mystics of all traditions are quite clear: if we grow silent enough we can find or uncover or, perhaps, even stumble onto the pathway into a greater silence – a place where we merge with the whole. But none of us – including the most elevated guru or spiritual leader - live there twenty four hours a day. The moment of unselfconscious merger with a silent inner place of great beauty or with a sunset that captures something unspoken within us or a piece of music that liberates the soul: these and many more tell us there is a human capacity for ineffability, awe, transcendence, and mystery. The mystics of all spiritual traditions tell us: the transcendent lives both within us and outside us. When overtaken by the Great Mystery, there is no inside and no outside.

The academic sabbatical year (1995-1996) during which I studied Christian liturgy and medical rituals helped me to understand that when religious liturgical rites work, they draw the entire people into a unified whole. They create, even if only momentarily, a state of unified consciousness. When medical rituals work, they foster healing.

The professions of medicine and ministry are both rooted in ancient and aboriginal shamanic practices; each, therefore, is profoundly ritualistic and liturgical – even if individual professionals or entire communities disavow this reality. These shamanic elements of ministry and medicine are all about transcendence. Healers, for example, know that the best techniques they know to help sick people are not the curative factors in restoring wholeness.^{ccclxxiii} There is something about healing that has to acknowledge mystery. What we can do is to get all of the obstacles out of the way and then healing flows. I am deeply indebted to Emmett Miller – body/mind healing theorist and physician for this awareness. He talked with me about the game of curling in which players with brooms brush the ice in front of the polished granite stone in order to move it towards the goal.^{ccclxxiv} I intuitively understand the principle. The shamans, the healers, the great spiritual teachers each help individuals remove impediments to spiritual growth and impediments to individual and cultural healing. It is the living spirit of the sick and the wounded which heals individuals – not the outside

healer. The Shaman, the Healer, the Therapist, and the Priest: these are the intermediaries of physical, emotional, and spiritual healing but they do not bring the healing. If they are genuinely involved in their professions, they help individuals clear out the detritus of life which interferes with the flow of healing.

There was one Christmas Eve Mass at St. Mary's College in South Bend (IN) where this became evident to me – albeit in retrospect. The auditory sensual beauty of the strings and organ, the strong smell of incense, the visual beauty of the sanctuary and the improvised grace of the liturgical dancers simply drew me in. I was no longer the Protestant observer – playing anthropologist. Excluded from the Eucharistic table, nevertheless, I was a part of that evening and that gathered community of Christian worship in a way that often eludes me.

This was also true at the University of Dayton on the 10th anniversary of *Pacem en Terris* where the Roman Catholic Bishop of Detroit, Thomas Gumbleton guided a Sunday morning mass. In a very humble, small campus chapel, I was instantly surrounded by magnificent music and the censuring of the audience done by skilled liturgical dancers. Within moments I was in awe. There was a sense of joy at being together with this particular group of people – a gathered group of ecumenical Christians – committed to bringing peace to our beleaguered blue marble. I breathed in the pre-homily silence of that moment and was ready to hear whatever it was Bishop Gumbleton wanted to teach us. For someone who hates and despises most sermons and homilies with a passionate intensity beyond words, this was a moment of deep listening.

No one external to my body/mind/spirit in these situations was responsible for the sense of being included in the transcendent whole. But lots of impediments had to be removed in order for these moments to occur. I had to be fully present and I had to open the self's boundaries. Essentially I needed to feel safe. I needed to feel included. I needed to feel I belonged. I needed to know that no one resented my presence or called my integrity into question. No one, therefore, insisted I be someone other than the person I was in that particular moment. I did not need to defend myself from other's accusations that I was not good enough – as the person I actually was – to be present and accepted as belonging.

When Mennonites communally sing the great hymn *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow* – the beauty of the contrapuntal human voice raised in four part and totally unaccompanied harmony makes me cry. *As I sing, I feel a part of my people again.* The music molds the many into one voice. We are a people. We have a communal history. We belong to this hymn's history as well as to each other. We are one voice.

Walking the labyrinth – individually or collectively – it is possible to quiet the noisy mind and find one's way into the silence. This is, as well, the principle behind Buddhist walking meditation – finding one's way to overcome the self's preoccupation with itself. In the middle of a busy teaching week, I often used one

of my lunch hours to walk an indoor labyrinth about thirty minutes away from campus. During one of those mid-day walks, I was alone on the canvas labyrinth and inside a voice whispered, *we/you walk into the center in order that we/you may walk outward into the world. Quiet the noisy mind here so that you may continue to serve the world out there.*

As I drove home I reflected on this new formulation of an old principle. A spiritual practice engaged in simply for the purpose of engaging in a spiritual practice is an early stage of spiritual maturation. It is true that we need to learn the disciplines of whatever spiritual practice we choose to learn. But the purpose of the spiritual practice is not the spiritual practice.

This is similar to learning the rules of doing therapy. One needs, as a beginner, to memorize the rules and to govern one's practice by this set of rules. But with experience and expertise comes a different understanding of the rules. The rules, per se, as rules, are only a structure which exists to protect the client and the practitioner. The rules are not the reason for the rules. The most seasoned practitioner knows that there may one day be a need to shatter the container of rules in order to allow healing to flow into and to break open an intractable pathology. The rules qua rules and the techniques qua techniques are not the source of healing.

The shamans who chant, drum or rattle take people outside of ordinary consciousness and, now unified by the rhythms of the moment, the people move towards individual and collective wholeness. The people as a whole bring the healing energies into focus so the shaman can ride on their voices. They move towards transcendence so that their isolation and their wounds may be healed. As consciousness shifts, so too does the encapsulating reality of our pathologies and our inadequacies.

The curling brooms which sweep the ice change the texture and configuration of the icy surface so that the polished granite stone can do its work. Spiritual practices brush away the confining structures of our daily lives and allow us to merge with the commons and with the divine consciousness that resides there.

Among some of the American Indian tribes who still practice sand-painting as a form of healing, the shaman gathers together the entire community which surrounds this particular sick or possessed person. As the healer begins to drum or chant and starts to create the healing sand painting he or she seeks to encapsulate the spiritual forces that are destroying harmony and beauty and are, therefore, creating illness. The individual seeking to be healed is surrounded by his community – all united by the Shaman's ongoing work. When the ceremony is over, so I am told, the shaman and his apprentices sweep up all of the sand and remove it to a far corner of the reservation where the forces of nature over time will detoxify it and return it to its ordinary status of sand. By means of an ancient ritual with origins in pre-history, the sand and finely ground rocks absorb the

social-personal pathology that binds the patient to his illness. Once the sand-painting has captured the pathology or the harmful dividing spirit and has once again unified the community, then sun, wind, moon, trees, rivers, etc. can consolidate the patient's transformation from illness or possession into wholeness and well-being.

What is there about this capacity to guide our human encounters with transcendence that makes spiritual leaders so susceptible to becoming abusers? The priest, the shaman, the singer, the healer, the sand painter: these individuals can mediate wholeness and therefore God to us. What happens if and when they become corrupt and abusive? What happens if they begin to mediate and deliver human suffering and pain?

What is so seductive about transcendence that we will trade our human freedom from abuse for it? What is so seductive about healing and salvation that we will tolerate morally corrupted leaders?

Today's Questions

Today's questions, therefore, have to do with this: how can the people of God who seek transcendence – wherever they find themselves - learn to create a reasonable form of discernment – in which they can be free to seek the healing and wholeness or communality of transcendence while simultaneously protecting the borders of the self and others so that all are safe from abuse? How can a healing or a worshipping community provide and guarantee safety to everyone? What is the freedom of the one that brings the freedom of the whole? What is the freedom of the whole which protects the freedom of the one? Can there ever be freedom of the one without the freedom of the whole? Can there be freedom for the whole without the freedom of the one? What is the safety of the one that guarantees the safety of the whole? What is the safety of the whole that guarantees the safety of the one? Can healing flow if the needs of the most vulnerable for safety and protection are ignored and denied?

When the deep inner intuitive voice says "It is not safe for me to be here," how can this voice of the authentic self and soul be recognized, acknowledged, and honored? What are the ways in which the community can nurture and educate the voices of the one so that the inner messages of each person's inner prophet are heeded?

What is the path to freedom for the one when so many obedience disorders littler the realm of the whole? How can one find her or his way out of the enchanted forest of victimization when so many of us want the security of the pack?

That Work Which We Do

In the spring of 2013, I read Matthew Fox's book on deep ecumenism.^{ccclxxv} In a late chapter, he talks about the spirit of activism and its motivations. If we begin our work in a spirit of confronting rage and if we believe our task is to reform or to transform the other – our enemy – into a mirror image of ourselves, then we will most likely fail. Fox describes the insights of Julia Butterfly in her biographical account of activism on behalf of the ancient coastal redwood she came to call Luna. I return once again to this story for it illustrates much that is important in the spiritual journey of activists, prophets, healers, and those who bear witness in order to transform evil.

Fox describes the situation in this way. When Julia first climbed into the tree Luna, she was joined by a young man who lasted only three weeks before abandoning the site where Julia Butterfly had taken up her treetop residency. Fox writes about her reflections after the tree-sit concluded.

"He was so radically angry at the loggers, his 'enemies' that he just seemed to sink deeper and deeper into despair and anger. Day by day he seemed to grow more drawn. His already striking cheekbones and his thick eyebrows were a part of him when I met him, but as the onslaught wore on, his cheeks and eyes sunk in more and more. He started looking like a skeleton, his skin stretched tight over the bones underneath. His life seemed to be draining away in front of my eyes. After twenty-five days, the young man left the tree-sit (pp. 419-420)."

She later reflected on the emotional fate of the young man who needed to leave the tree-sit.

You see a lot of that in activists. The intense negative forces that are oppressing and destroying the earth wind up overcoming many of them. They get so absorbed by the hate and the anger that they become hollow. I knew I didn't want to go there. Instead, my hate needed to turn to love – unconditional agape love. One day through my prayers, an overwhelming amount of love started flowing through me, filling up the dark hole that threatened to consume me. I suddenly realized that what I was feeling was the love of the earth, the love of Creation (ibid.)."

In the summer of 2013, in an address to SNAP, Father Thomas Doyle provided a similar reflective remark. In a section of his speech entitled "what I've learned" he commented: *I have learned that constant, obsessive and unchecked anger towards the institutional church, the bishops, and the papacy is not only debilitating but also self-destructive. I have learned that as long as I allowed my anger to dominate my emotions, the toxic and dark side of the church still controlled me.*^{ccclxxvi}

Those of us who have worked with sexual violence victims or their families or with the denominations which sheltered sexual or religious abusers are faced with a similar dilemma. How can we do this work without being spiritually and emotionally destroyed? Over the years, as I have struggled personally with this question, I slowly came to recognize that the inner spiritual journey needed to support the outer work if I wished to be a participant in collective efforts to change a culture of violence. To help me, I picked up the spiritual practice of gratitude. In addition, I picked up the spiritual practice of walking the labyrinth in a spirit of focused and deliberate meditation. I picked up the spiritual practice of silent contemplation. The work of anti-violence activism, in a certain sense, ceased to be ego-driven. Rather, it became a work of opportunity and service that was guided by a deep sense of compassion for everyone caught in the dance of victimization: perpetrators, victims, friends and family members, congregations, communities, and even entire denominations.

Nothing has so driven my inner spiritual journey than my personal encounters with the evils of sexism, heterosexism, sexual violence and systemic or structural economic violence – each usually dressed in pious religious language. Somewhere in mid-life I knew, perhaps intuitively, perhaps by urgings and inner promptings from the Universal Spirit that Butterfly describes, that unless my inner spirit grew free of hatred and enmity for others, my life's witness for healing, for nonviolence and for active peace-making would become personally and communally meaningless. Living in anger and rage as the motivation to do one's peace and justice work or one's work as a healer in the world is a snare.^{ccclxxvii} When one's own personal and inner life begins in one's activism to duplicate, replicate, mirror or serve as a hologram for the evils present in the commons, spiritual work as well as cognitive and emotional work is essential. The violent and angry protest becomes the archetypal shadow of genuine empowerment and genuine healing. Yet, as Dr. Johnetta Cole so clearly explicated in her discussion of Nelson Mandela's life and the world-wide era of political activism against South African apartheid that he inspired - it is essential to *stand in opposition to the wrong*.

In the spiritually healthy community, therefore, individuals are helped to find a way into their individual future and into their collective future that combines a mature and compassionate spirituality with a mature and compassionate morality. Both are essential if one is to survive one's personal and one's communal encounters with evil.

Concluding Remarks

Until we begin to talk with each other about the wounds that victimization has created – the symptoms of our common dys-ease – we have no way of untying the systemic and deeply destructive social cords that bind us in the dance of abuse. The presence of abusive religious leaders is known in many, communities and in many religious and spiritual traditions. As a consequence many vulnerable

individuals have been seduced or trapped inside the narrative and the dance of victimization. There are so many victims of religious leader sexual abuse that they have never been enumerated properly. The victims of clergy sexual abuse and the victims of corrupted religious institutions and leaders have been thrust into the enchanted forest – not yet knowing the paradoxical reality of their situation: only they, themselves, can free themselves. To move the granite stone of their wounds, they will most likely need empathic and compassionate others to help them to brush away the obstacles so that healing can flow.

Lost inside *and* damaged by the enchantment of abuse, they may also encounter other individuals – maybe equally lost - inside the forest. As they carefully and compassionately work together, they can begin to transform their lives. They can begin to learn how to walk free.

Yet, the religious community as a whole refuses to believe that such a forest even exists – much less acknowledge that there are people who are trapped inside its boundaries. In this numbed state of cultural and personal denial, the so-called people of God refuse to help those who seek healing, who seek validation, and who need to experience compassion and loving help rather than indignant judgment and blame.

My personal sense of these issues has matured over the past twenty or twenty-five years.

- The spiritually mature person and the spiritually mature community have much in common. They face what is as that which it is and do not seek to deny that evil is present whenever there is sexual or physical abuse. They do not deny factual truth in order to maintain personal or communal comfort and control. They do not seek to permanently escape into the transcendent when there is justice, healing and reclamation work to be done on earth. They do not turn their work and calling of spiritual ministry over to the risk-management and institutional liability lawyers.^{ccclxxviii}
- The spiritual disciplines practiced by individuals and by the community as a whole are not ends in themselves. Getting too attached to the means (any particular spiritual practice or dogmatic orthodoxy) may mean losing many opportunities to mature as a soul-being. Going deep into the spiritual journey means one inevitably will return to the world in efforts to heal and to reclaim the world as safe for even the most vulnerable member of a particular community. Excessive piety, scrupulosity, and the enforcement of rigid orthodoxies are not the markers of spiritual maturity. Mature, serving love and empathic compassion for the suffering of the vulnerable are the reliable markers we seek to understand and to emulate..

- Theological orthodoxy, doctrinal political correctness, and spiritual scrupulosity are no substitutes for a life lived with genuine responsiveness to the world's suffering. The life as actually lived tells us more about a person's spiritual and moral maturity than do the finest and most eloquent words that she or he preaches, teaches, or writes.
- Perhaps the determined and even dogged search for transcendence is a trap; perhaps genuine transcendence is always a gift. Perhaps the human prayer should always be for love to manifest rather than for transcendence to overtake.

During the summer of 2010 I re-read Starhawk's^{ccclxxix} insightful book *Truth or Dare: Encounters with power, authority and mystery*. At the conclusion of that reading, I wrote a journal in which I concluded that:

To take the responsibility to speak is to reclaim one's own sense of power. This is true empowerment.

Today, I would add:

To speak up for justice and healing in meaningful and helpful ways when one encounters evil, injustice and the abuse of power means that one inevitably will be forced to mature. Perhaps the definition of spiritual and moral maturity is simply this: we use our own share of personal power, our own very unique human voice, our personal gifts to swing the world pendulum's weight towards justice and towards the wholeness of individuals and of entire communities.

A Riff on the Present Moment

Occasional abuses of power, if properly dealt with do not necessarily reduce the perceived legitimacy of the state [or, I add, a religious denomination] itself. But repeated failures of the authorities to adhere to the criteria and procedures for the legitimate exercise of power, particularly if these failures remain uncorrected, will gradually erode the legitimacy of the state [or, I add, the religious or spiritual teaching institution].

Herbert C. Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton^{ccclxxx}

Introductory Comments

During the months these essays emerged first as imaginary conversations in my just-waking consciousness and secondarily as more formally created essays on my computer, I clung to the concept of the present moment as the only moment I had in which to understand religious abuse and corruption. While I could learn from the past by revisiting it through the internal archival storage processes of human memory and the external archival storage processes of the written word, I could not literally visit the past in order to undo its wrong-doing. What had happened in the past was forever sealed within that past. This past could not be magically made to disappear or to be undone. Whatever I or anyone else had done in the past was now a memory – a memory bound to and within the historical moment where the actions under study occurred. Whatever personal arguments I had with past moments, I could not alter those moments. Whatever second thoughts I had about past moments were, in a very real sense, useless thoughts. I could not change the past by my arguments and second thoughts. I could, however, I thought, learn from the past in order to help correct the present.

Encountering our Individual and Collective History

The factual events of our personal and collective histories are stored, therefore, only in our individual or collective memories. It is a well-accepted truism, however, that these historical memories continue to affect our present personal and social identities. However much we as individuals or as the collective whole might want to revise the factual events of our individual and collective past in light of what we have learned since they took place: as actual events they are immutable. We cannot undo them. At best, we must deal with their consequences as these move through history with us. These events have, therefore, shaped us as individuals and they have shaped our collective

identities. These culture-bound historical moments and their sequellae continue to shape the present moment within which each of us live.

To use a physical example: if someone loses a leg in a climbing expedition accident, she may well remember the times of her life before the amputation. She may have vivid night dreams and daytime fantasies about walking and hiking. However, she cannot live her current life as if there had been no accident and no subsequent amputation. The loss of a human leg – at this time in medical science – permanently alters the body's living, on-going history. The now physically handicapped individual will not grow another human leg to replace the one she has lost. In order to continue to live with integrity in the present moment, the expedition hiker must now adjust to the reality that she is missing a leg. Every aspect of her life must, therefore, adjust to this irreversible life-change.

A similar reality exists with sexual abuse and betrayal trauma. Adult individuals can usually remember life before the betrayal occurred. This is perhaps less true when abuse occurred in early childhood – a time in human life where events, no matter how important, are often forgotten. In part, this is because the small child lives in the present moment and in part, this is because she or he has limited language skills to encode a historical narrative. However, most late adolescents and adults remember events of human abuse and human betrayal as these shaped their encounters with others.

Inasmuch as it is impossible to erase historical moments and their abusive events, it is unlikely that most individuals will erase the deeply internalized concomitant sense of betrayal and mistrust. It is unlikely, therefore, that individuals in late childhood, adolescence and adulthood will permanently forget any significant, life-changing act of human violence and betrayal. Even in situations where significant memories have been distorted or dissociated, it is likely that many individuals will eventually recall – even if incompletely and fleetingly – the factual reality that they were violated and that their basic sense of interpersonal trust was betrayed.

Sexual violence forever alters an individual's life trajectory. The abusive events of betrayal must, therefore, in some way or another be integrated into the ongoing life narrative. The violated and betrayed individual, who seeks to heal his or her post-violation wounds, must adjust to the changed circumstances of his or her life. Every aspect of a post-violation life will need to be re-examined in light of the betrayal. Present life moments are, therefore, continuously affected, perhaps even contaminated by the violence *and* the experiences of being betrayed. Sexual abuse histories in an individual's life have real, present moment consequences. Each violated individual must learn to manage these consequences if she or he is to live a confident life in each of its present moments.

These past events will, of course, be re-examined and re-interpreted in the present moment. But their factual and historical presence is sealed within their historical moments of occurrence, enactment and embodiment.

Distortions of Communal Memory

The communal effects and influences, of the dual betrayals of sexual abuse by religious leaders and institutional enablement by other religious leaders, also live in the ongoing cultural history of living faith communities. This is particularly true when individually and collectively these communities choose to live in collective denial of the factual history of sexual violation and betrayal that changed individual and collective lives – choosing instead to de-stabilize and de-construct factual memory until it becomes a fantasy-tale of magical thinking – a fantasy-tale built on a foundation of secrecy, lies, disinformation, and truth-denied. Wishful thinking or magical thinking about the past, therefore, denies, distorts disinform, and eventually re-betrays our individual and collective history, our individual and collective memory.

To heal abusive individual and collective histories, factual truth-telling is essential. It is essential to create a factually truthful narrative. Personal, interpersonal and collective accountability to the truth of what has happened in the historical past is essential for individuals and communities who want to heal themselves of these socially corrosive wounds of leader sexual abuse and institutional betrayal. Chronic pain clinician Jon Kabat-Zinn expresses it this way:

The only time you ever have in which to learn anything or see anything or feel anything, or express any feeling or emotion, or respond to an event. To grow or to heal, is this moment because this is the only moment any of us ever get. You're only here now: you're only alive in this moment. ^{ccclxxxi}

What about the Future

Looking forward into the future during these morning's self-other interrogations, I also came to understand that it was impossible in this present moment to directly affect and, therefore, accurately predict the future. There is wisdom to be found in our individual or collective awareness that our projections into the future are really a sophisticated form of human fantasy. We can make projections and we can act as if these projections will come to pass. But the fates may change our predictions. We may know failure or success in our pursuit of these projections and goals. We do not control the forces of history. We do not control the actions of others who may have a different sense of a desired future than we have.

All that was possible, it seemed to me in my morning ruminations, was to look at the dysfunctional present – seeking to change it or to heal it or to re-direct it in this present moment. Any change in the direction of individual and collective well-being and wholeness needed to begin in this present moment. If we did not

change in each now moment our individual and collective cultures – these cultures which support individual and collective violation and betrayal, the future would not be – indeed could not be – different from the past. Individually and collectively, without making changes in the present moment, we will continue on the dysfunctional trajectory already in motion towards an equally malignant and toxic future. If we have only the present moment in which to attempt self-culture corrections, then we individually and collectively need to be at our work of victim advocacy and social change efforts in this present moment.

As a clinician, I know, however, that the human body and the human mind need rest periods from active work. A balance, therefore, of work, play, and rest is needed. Time spent in play and recreation and rest is not wasted time. Nor is it frivolous time. In these moments of self-rejuvenation, the human Self's inner witness completes and organizes its work – providing us with emotional and cognitive spaces where new insights about ways to pursue needed change might spontaneously emerge.

As a recreational reader of anthropology and ethnology literatures I also know that human beings are social animals. Therefore, we need to share our lives with others. We need accurate, active and continuous feedback loops that inform us about ourselves and about others. We need competent inner gyroscopes that allow us to self-correct our connections with our own personal self and the personal selves of others. We need inner rudders and compasses that provide us with a sense of direction and meaning. We need times and places where we can drop anchor and just enjoy life's beauty – a mooring place for the soul.

The Wounded Healer

In the background of all of these morning reveries about consciousness and work; about social change and personal behaviors; about the interaction of those who have been wounded by betrayal with those others who, witnessing their pain, stop to see if there is any way to help: in this background was my professional curiosity about healing and the way healing flows – or doesn't flow - in the present moment. All genuine healers – no matter what their cultural heritage and training - eventually learn that they are not the source of healing. They are more like the ice sweepers in the game of curling who seek to remove obstacles to healing in their own lives or in the lives of others.^{ccclxxxii} When obstacles are removed, the life force and instincts of the human body, the human psyche, and the spirit of life are towards healing.

One obstacle in the work of healing was, I was certain, therefore, was the woundedness of the healer. Paradoxically, I was also certain that the wounds of the healer were essential to their gaining mastery of their craft. The conundrum of the wounded healer, therefore, pervaded these morning conversations. At times during my studies I observed or intuited the wounds of others who worked

in the enchanted forest of sexual abuse to help others. At times, I stumbled across and then interrogated my own life's historical wounds.

Ancient mythology is often quite clear – the too-golden and too-untroubled life or too-perfect a life is a life which challenges the gods, in their envy, to destroy it. Extended times of unearned and, therefore, unwarranted good fortune in these ancient myths is to be distrusted and feared by mortals because of the god's intrusive maliciousness and envy. In general, therefore, it is not these “too-perfect” and “too successful” individuals who mature into compassionate healers or peacemakers. It is not these golden-birth individuals who risk much – perhaps everything- in their search for ways to help others.

Rather, when we look closely at our personal heroes and their lives, what we witness is often a personality that has matured precisely because of the hardships and personal struggles or personal wounds that individual has encountered in her or his life. In the process of surmounting that which is troublesome, pain-filled and difficult, they have learned to use life's difficulties and hardships as times of maturing, as times of learning self-other compassion; of choosing to become flexible and resilient in times of hardship; of learning to live in the present moment – using it to the best of their ability. These individuals are not the golden boys and men or girls and women of their era in history – living above the fray of social and personal trauma. Times of failure are as historically present in their lives, perhaps, as times of success.

These human heroes are individuals who have entered the dirty game of personal or political or social change in order to create a better or more humane or transformed world for themselves, others in their own era, and their descendents. They learn, over time, how to navigate a principled human life without embodying (1) the personal hazard of excessive and fanatical scrupulosity or (2) being seduced by libertine freedoms. They avoid being seduced by an inner sense of their personal superiority to others. Thus, they do not disdain allies but rather seek for them any where they can be found. Along the way they most likely made many mistakes, miscalculations, and misjudgments but they learned that these mistakes, miscalculations, and misjudgments served them as teachers about another way, another path, and another process of living a compassionate, moral and principled life with themselves and with others.

As I am writing these words in December, 2013, the world is mourning the death of Nelson Mandela – a man whose life history included encounters with injustice and with others' physical and social violence against him because of his skin color. Television journalists note that Mandela was not a saint – that he had human flaws. They note that he was a pragmatist. Yet, as he made the persecuted, sometimes tormented, and often lonely journey of his life, he kept and nurtured a vision of a better and more just society. Somehow or other he kept his basic humanity alive. He remained compassionate towards others.

Some journalists believe that it was the hardships of a hard labor prison which made Mandela's life as a cultural healer come alive. In prison, they comment, was born the largess of spirit, unfailing compassion and inner spiritual strength that were to mark Mandela's presidency of South Africa.

The Hardships, Troubles and Betrayals of Life Shape us

That which is troublesome in our lives shapes us. The only question is how we are shaped. Do we move into the rigidities of bitterness and anger - denying, therefore, our own implicit greatness or do we seek to bend with these often hostile winds – becoming strong, flexible, resilient, and compassionate? Do we choose to live in anger or do we choose to live in gratitude for our lives? Do we choose the path of revenge or do we choose the path of compassionate altruism?

These are present moment reflections. They result in present moment actions.

The Principle of Prevention

When a critical number of people change how they think and behave, the culture does also and a new era begins.

Jean Shinoda Bolen^{ccclxxxiii}

I think most physicians and other health care professionals agree: the illness which can be prevented is the least expensive personal and social illness. There are costs to prevention – one must, for example, be able to choose healthy life practices. But the costs of prevention are minimal when compared with the costs of treatment after an illness develops.

The mountain hiker whose legs remain intact is a hiker who will not need to re-learn how to walk with expensive prostheses and the help of physical and medical therapists.

This principle holds with sexual abuse. The rape prevented is a rape which does not cause physical and psychological trauma. The long-term sequelae of rape's presence in a life are totally circumvented when the rape does not happen.

This principal also holds true for institutional enablement practices or corrupted management practices. When institutions practice transparent and honorable accountability towards their employees inside the institutional culture and towards others in the surrounding environment or the outer world, they do not need to lie, dissemble, disinform, or create walls of secrecy that fail to protect vulnerable individuals from harm.

The principle of prevention also holds when we look at advocacy. Compassion fatigue or vicarious trauma which is avoided does not need to be treated. Prevention is less costly than treatment.

Concluding Remarks

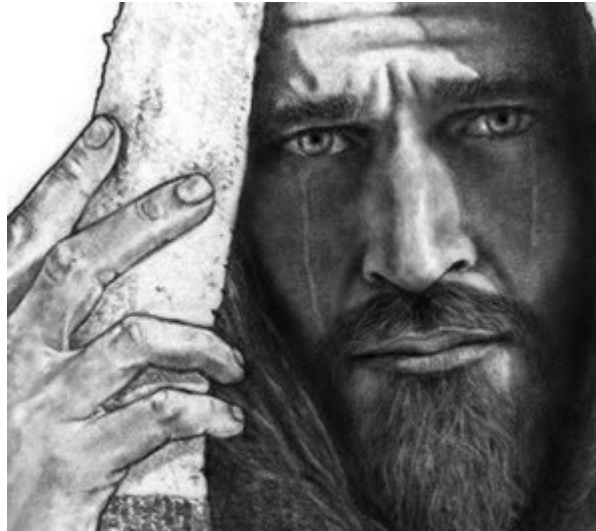
These essays, therefore, are a passionate plea for all activists and victim advocates to begin to think not only about helping the victims of violence. They are a plea for individual and collective efforts to move towards prevention of these terrible forms of abuse: sexual violence and institutional systemic violence. Containing or quarantining and treating are essential. But if we are to change our individual and collective histories, we must move towards prevention. To do this we must deconstruct the cultural forms which buttress individual acts of violence and collective acts of systemic violence.

We need, therefore, to initiate different kinds of conversations with each other than we have had to date. These conversations will necessitate self-other revelations. In them we will need to talk about our failures as well as our successes. We will need to talk about our vulnerabilities as well as our strengths. We will need to learn how to be trustworthy and how trust each other. We will need to learn how to read the holograms of violence which we ourselves carry and perpetuate. We will need to unearth and then interrogate the cultural forms which buttress religious leader sexual abuse of the laity. We will need to do a similar process with corrupted social institutions – particularly those which enable systemic abuse to continue unchecked.

What will sustain us in this rigorous work is a practice of befriending each other and a practice of befriending each other's work – knowing that no one individual can see the matrices of violence whole. That which is fragmented in any one individual's ability to know and bear can, I believe, be enhanced by the collective.

As we map the paths, the saddles, the passes, the inhospitable canyons, and the impassable rivers of the enchanted forest, we will gradually be able – collectively – to see the whole. Once that wholeness is grasped, we can begin another kind of activism and advocacy – one which leads to permanent social change. In his 2013 lecture in Dublin, Father Thomas Doyle notes that when this as yet uncertain and very distant future arrives, a different form of Christian praxis will result – a praxis in which children, adolescents and vulnerable adults are not sexually violated; a praxis in which institutions serve the vulnerable, the weak, and the unattractive with full accountability to the collective whole for their actions.^{ccclxxxiv}

Deep Grief



ccclxxxv

Jesus weeping for his people

Behold your house is left unto you forsaken, desolate

Luke 13: 35

Introductory Comments

Violence is too pernicious to leave it to theology.

Orlando Redekopp^{ccclxxxvi}

Recently I asked a variation of the following questions on a Mennonite blog having to do with the dual legacies of theologian-ethicist John Howard Yoder: *Do we weep for Yoder and the mess he made of his life? Do we as a community weep for his victims? Do we weep for our church?*^{ccclxxxvii}

The context for asking these questions is the dual legacy of Yoder's life. One legacy is his evangelically-acclaimed body of theological, missional, ecclesiological, and political-ethical work. This legacy is often denied its importance or its relevance by individuals Yoder victimized during his lifetime. The second legacy is his personal life history of sexual harassment and sexual abuse of adult women. This legacy has often been nuanced, denied or minimized by the evangelicals who revere Yoder's work as seminal in their own theological and spiritual formation. Yet, historical memories of this legacy of abuse has been kept alive in the painful Mennonite shade-filled underground of victimized women and the men and women who supported them in their efforts to (1) seek

acknowledgment, accountability, and justice; (2) prevent additional victimizations, and finally to (3) heal their own or others' wounds.

Both legacies must, it seems to me, be held inside the vessel of transparent communal awareness. The tension of these two aspects of Yoder's life needs to be explored as a manifestation of the man he was, of the theologian he was, of the missiologist he was, of the ecclesiologist he was, and of the ethicist he was.

The surrounding cultural forms also need to be explored. Why was his personally-offensive behavior ignored by denominational administrators for so many years? Why has denominational information about his behavior been actively suppressed from the common view? Why was it enabled? Why does the contemporary church keep its records of those years so secret and so hidden?

In a recent lecture to SNAP's^{ccclxxxviii} annual conference (July 27, 2013) therapist-scholar A. W. Richard Sipe addressed the issue of clerical abuse of children and adolescents in his denomination – the Roman Catholic Church of America.

Sexual abuse of minors does not stand alone within clerical culture. It is a symptom – and always has been – of a corrupt system of double lives and duplicity that reaches from local parishes to the Vatican. It destroys the myth of clerical purity. The whole idea that clergy practice celibacy has imploded (1).^{ccclxxxix}

I understand Sipe's words to describe the presence of cultural forms. In this particular situation, the form is religious institution clericalism which multiple Roman Catholic authors describe as a socio-cultural-spiritual virus that spreads both vertically and horizontally inside their denomination. In the course of the past six years I have come to the opinion that Mennonites can learn about the structural and cultural forms of enablement by studying and learning from their Roman Catholic brothers and sisters. The virulent virus of clericalism is also present inside Anabaptist-Mennonite, Pietist, and other evangelical and believer's church communities.

The cultural manifestations of religious institution clericalism in situations of organizational enablement and concealment of religious leader sexual abusers consist of (1) secrecy, (2) denial, (3) minimization, (4) blaming the victims, and (4) attacking the whistle-blowers.^{cccxc} These types of behaviors represent improper and morally corrupt uses of institutional power and authority. That which is healthy organizational behavior has gone awry. Such behaviors demonstrate the presence of authoritarianism and moral decay at the heart of the institution.

Do we, therefore, weep for our denominational church and for its failures to manifest the gospels' oft-repeated and commanding message: *care for the most*

*vulnerable (the least of these of any age) as **the** measure of human faithfulness to the divine will?* Do we weep for the victims of religious and spiritual abuse? Do we weep for the perpetrators of abuse? Do we weep for their families? Do we weep for ourselves? If not, why not?

1970 – 1980: More or Less

I no longer remember exactly how old I was. The year may have been 1969 or it may have been 1970. I was professionally mature and was an inpatient program director in a community mental health center and hospital in central California's San Joaquin Valley. As part of the requirements for my licensure every year I needed to log in a certain number of continuing education hours or credits. I enrolled in a course which covered introductory materials to Gestalt Therapy principles and methodologies. The teacher was Robert Resnick and the course was a weekend intensive – which meant we all lived together in his house from Friday night until late Sunday afternoon. We met morning, afternoon, and evening. The only breaks were for meals and eventually for sleep – but there was not much time allotted to sleeping. This was my third exposure to intense encounter style group work as a method of learning about clinical work with clients and about the role of my own personal issues in doing such work. Learning the methodology in a group of clinicians meant that we would be working on our own real-life issues in demonstrations. In order to learn, we had to be willing to be vulnerable. As strangers to each other, we had to trust each other. In particular, we individually and collectively had to trust Bob.

On the second day, we were discussing the methodology issues presented during a demonstration which Bob had just concluded with one of our classmates – a young clinical psychology graduate student. In the demonstration's debriefing time, she began to sob. Seeing some of the group members seated near her begin to make small comforting movements towards her, Bob said, *she needs time to feel these emotions. Don't interrupt her process by touching her or talking to her just now. Allow her all the time she needs. She will let us know when she is ready to talk about what has just happened. There will be plenty of time for us to learn with her about these clinical issues in her life.* Everyone in the group settled into his or her own thoughts and a time of attentive and very alive silence followed – broken only by the young woman's sobs. Eventually, ten or fifteen minutes later, she re-gained her composure and Bob began to work with her – modeling for all of us a way to proceed. No one touched her until she signaled that she would appreciate a group hug.

This lesson was immediately absorbed into my clinical skill backpack. There is a time for physically and verbally comforting others. But there is also a time for simply being attentively but non-intrusively present with individuals as they emotionally confront their own inner realities. Over the course of the next twelve or fifteen years, I logged in multiple continuing education workshop hours with Bob. I counted hours last night. I have taken the equivalent of several graduate

level courses with him. As a result of his encounter style training method, I began to pay attention to my own emotional surges in a new way. I began to set learning goals for my self vis-à-vis my participation in these intense mini-courses.

Following several of these weekends, I decided at the end of one demonstration that I would volunteer to be the “client” in the next demonstration. The extroverts and the men in the group always got their hand in the air first. So, in advance, I decided that as soon as Bob began to ask for a volunteer, I would put my hand up into the air and wave it assertively. By this time Bob knew me as a colleague and peer for I had brought him to my home city to lead a two day intensive workshop for clinicians. He looked only at me and said, *Ruth*. And it was in this way that I joined him in the middle of a large circle of clinician-peers. I was terrified but determined to see this experiment through. Only because I trusted Bob would I do this crazy and totally unlike me thing.

The primary learning for me was not whatever “client” presenting issue we worked on. The primary issues were learning how to (1) take risks in the service of my own learning; (2) allow myself to become visible to others; (3) to stop deferring my own learning needs to the needs of others, and (4) a deepening of self-trust in my clinical intuitions about the role I played in any clinical encounter of any kind.

In the debriefing situation, one of my fellow learners attacked Bob for not following and interrogating a particular piece of insecure behavior I’d demonstrated. He said something like this: *you didn’t do what you are teaching us to do – follow the behavior. Why not? Did you even see the behavior? Were you paying attention at all?*

Bob heard the man out and then quietly said, as if to comfort me, *I saw that piece of hesitant and insecure behavior as Ruth talked with me but I know Ruth has integrity and I trust her to have congruent words, feelings and behavior. She is hesitant and personally fearful about being here as the demonstration’s client and has chosen to work with me today as a way of learning about that.*

I felt as if some ancient healing balm had been poured on my soul. He’d intuited how hard it was for me to be so personally vulnerable and visible in a group of strangers and he didn’t intrude on that discomfort. He allowed it to be what it was and didn’t insist it be something else. He didn’t insist that I encode something into words that was self-evident in all of my behavior.

I also put this information into my clinical backpack. And it also informs my personal clinical practice. Some things are what they are. They can be allowed grace and space. Too much interrogation too soon and the body’s wisdom will be lost. Frightened by too much attention, too soon, and too intrusively, the wisdom-self will go back into hiding. The moment will be lost for deep learning and permanent integration of this new understanding.

1983

In mid-life I was talking with my friend Nelle Morton about post-retirement work she had done in Christian women's groups across the United States. We were talking about the differences between group therapy – which she distrusted – and group consciousness-raising work. She told me about one gathering of women in a church basement. A woman began to tell a painful and troubling story from her life. As she talked, the woman began to cry. Not one woman interrupted her story; not one woman sought to defang its disturbing power by changing the topic. Not one woman touched her comfortingly. After a period of thoughtful silence, the woman looked up and said to the entire group something like the following and this is most certainly a paraphrase: *you listened until I was finished. You listened to my story all the way down. You heard me into speech.* Nelle said to me, *that is our task as feminist women – to hear each other all the way down. We need to learn, as women, to stop interrupting each other because we are uncomfortable with what is being said. We need to hear each other into speech.*

This metaphorical image: that of women hearing each other into speech also entered my clinical backpack. Later in her book, *The Journey is Home*, Nelle wrote about God as the ear of the universe which hears us all into speech.^{cccxc} Considering Nelle's profound deafness at the end of her life, I often thought that it must have been God who heard her into prophetic speech during her entire lifetime. She never lost her passionate concern for justice for the abused and the vulnerable. As a victim-survivor of child sexual abuse, she had become a survivor-healer of other women. She was not afraid to listen *all the way down*. Consequently, during her most remarkable life-time, she had heard generations of women into their own speech.

1995-1996

Twelve years later, during an academic sabbatical, I heard a wide variety of Buddhist teachers talk about human suffering and about the wisdom of simply being quiet and attentive with what ever presents itself in the emerging thoughts and feelings of consciousness. Learning to observe one's own emotions and thoughts with dispassionate and detached awareness creates a pathway into freedom. It allows us to learn from our emotional surges and teaches us not to repress or stifle them or to act them out in self-other harmful behaviors. I am not a Buddhist and so my awareness of these principles is filtered through my experiences of trying to follow the Buddhist-inspired-clinical practice of becoming present to my own or other's surges of random thoughts, complex narratives, and visceral emotions without defending or distracting or diffusing the precipitating story of (1) its meaning and (2) its disruptive power.

Simply being fully present to the truths of our inner experiences means coming to terms with our emotional selves as a source of tremendous wisdom. Our most painful individual and collective memories may, in fact, need the light of

compassionate, non-judgmental attentiveness before their wisdom can be harvested. This is wisdom that can be shared but first the story must be heard all the way down. For truth, accountability, justice and healing to find a home among us, the stories which contain truth about violation must be uncovered and attended to with great care. They must be allowed to be what they are – in their factual truthfulness *and* in their disruptive emotive power.

Victims' Stories

In light of this series of essays, for collective healing of the whole, the stories of victims and survivors must be heard into speech by a compassionate community. They and their stories must be welcomed and they must be believed.

If the stories and their narrator are belittled, disbelieved, denied, minimized, blamed, interrupted, inappropriately comforted, improperly interrogated, patronized, and prematurely interrupted or interpreted in order to defend the listener's own sense of discomfort with the disruptive power of these violence narratives, then the healing power of the community is abrogated. If a victim's story is judged harshly, ignored, or attacked in any way – the story's wisdom is lost to her and to everyone around her. The story's potential to guide the woman's healing is diverted and denied. In addition, the individual has once again been betrayed, re-victimized and her emotional and spiritual wounds excoriated and eviscerated one more time.

Equally important, perhaps, when this secondary abuse occurs, the community loses its ability to stretch, to grow, and to spiritually mature. In attacking the truthfulness of victims of abuse, rather than holding their abusers accountable for their own misconduct, the community moves into the abstractions of theology and denies its mandate of a spiritual praxis of healing work with the most vulnerable individuals who belong to this particular community of faith and works. When this denial and attack behavior occurs not only are victims re-wounded and re-victimized, the entire community is denied the opportunity to mature emotionally and spiritually.

The Community's Stories

These kinds of clinical commentary mean that there is another kind of healing which is needed. The communities in which individuals are harassed, verbally or physically assaulted, and abused in any way by religious leaders – these communities too need healing. How, I wonder, how does a community tell its story all the way down? Who or what hears a community into truthful and honorable speech and deeds? How does a community begin to hear itself into honest and transparent speech? How does a wounded, divided, and emotionally devastated community begin to (1) encounter and (2) enter the kind of emotional vulnerability and transparency that is essential for healing? Where is the visceral power of communal emotion stored away and how can it be communally

accessed? How can the community honor the victim's story as belonging to her and yet also confront the implicit communal betrayal that his or her story of victimization carried? What is the collective spiritual task of entire communities when their religious leaders betray their calling as ministers, priests, or religious leaders? How does the need for community accountability manifest itself? What are the institutional processes and behavioral markers of accountability?

My intuition is that honest and transparent situation-specific liturgies of truthful confession, genuine repentance, and receptive communal laments in response to these confessions are needed. The role of the community in refusing to recognize - thereby enabling - religious leader abuse cannot be overlooked. When evil is transcendent among us, spiritual, as well as emotional and psychological, healing work is needed. ^{cccxcii}

The Witnesses' Stories

These essays, as a collective whole, argue that everyone who bears witness to sexual violence stories and who, as a consequence of their work with victims and their consequent experiences of abusive corporate environments, share in the wounds of the victims who are the direct and primary victims of such abuse. Whistle-blowers, healers, and victim advocates are subject to compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, traumatic counter-transference, and to a wide variety of forms or manifestations of secondary victimization.

In general, however, the healer's wounds, the advocate's wounds, and the witnesses' wounds are invisible wounds to their colleagues, their friends, their loved ones, their clients, and their casual acquaintances. They may even be, and probably are, invisible to themselves. Their only clue may be deep emotional surges – arising, as it were, from the viscera itself. These visceral surges, I am now convinced carry deep wisdom. They often represent the wisdom of the deep bodySelf that has no words – only images, metaphors, and intuitions. We need to learn how to hear these messages from the bodySelf's underground network of neurons, neuropeptides, and visceral storage bins in ways that mean we can (1) harvest that wisdom, (2) apply it to our work with others and (3) heal our own wounds so that we do not, overwhelmed by what we know, become part of the problem at hand.

The Perpetrator's Wounds

In all of my reading – most especially in Simon Wiesenthal's ^{cccxciii} collection of essays about forgiveness - the only reasonable way for perpetrators of individual and systemic violence to find personal and communal healing is to internally and externally acknowledge what they have done, recognize the damage they have done to others and make a full public disclosure. Jews and Christians call this conversion. ^{cccxciv} As part of this conversion, perpetrators will seek to make whatever amends or reparations they can make. In addition, they will recognize

that they have no right to demand forgiveness.^{CCCXCV} They can apologize and request forgiveness but recognize that it is the victim's prerogative to choose to forgive or not to forgive. In short, forgiveness for the evil done to a perpetrator's victims cannot be demanded by the perpetrator. The perpetrator's responsibility for the evil he has done cannot be resolved or communally absolved by his enabling community. Only the individuals victimized by perpetrators have the right and the choice to forgive – for is they who carry the permanent wounds of their victimization.

I wonder what would happen if....

I wonder what would happen when any one of us or perhaps all of us, round any one of the numerous corners inside the enchanted and toxic landscape of religious leader abuses – those spiritual moments of intuition where we see and deliberately enter a grove of particularly noxious trees - I wonder what would happen if we would silently and attentively honor our visceral desire to weep, wail, and lament over the toxic wasteland we have chosen to work inside.

Seeing only in the *very-far-away* the golden city and, like Jesus, intuiting the impending destruction of its temple – I wonder what would happen if we collectively were able to give ourselves permission to weep, lament, and then to share our deep grief with one another. What would happen if we openly discussed and sought to understand the liminal vision we see in front of us – the desolated forest, the enchanted castle, and its foul-smelling tar pit moats. What would happen if we patiently and attentively listened to each other's stories and distress *all the way down*?

Most of us who repeatedly work inside the enchanted forest of sexual abuse and inside the enchanted wasteland of institutionalized clericalism have lost, in one way or another, our spiritual homeland and our childhood spirituality's mother tongue. We have lost all trust in the religious institutions that once were our social, religious, and spiritual lodging places. Like the direct victims of clergy abuse, we have seen trust betrayed and lives destroyed. We know the temple and its golden far-off-city have been idolatrously corrupted in the name of human power, status, image, greed, desires for revenge, lust, killing-rage, the will-to-dominate and other forms of individual and collective evil. In our viscera and in our bones, even at great distances away from the city, we sense its impending destruction or collapse as a holy city.

In our innermost spiritual reality, for many of us (victim-survivors and their advocates or helpers) this distant city and its temple have already been defiled and desecrated. The spiritual healing power of the city's hymns, prayers, liturgies, and preached dogma have been erased because of the presence of sexual abuse or physical abuse or emotional abuse or religious-spiritual abuse in the heart of the city and clericalism and financial abuse in the central sacred areas of the temple. Protestant theologian Tom Driver writes, for example, about

religious ritual's power to harm others because *those who long for (religious) ritual can find this longing used by people in power to keep them down...*^{cccxcvi} I would make a similar claim about the intense desire to feel whole and well again. This deep, intensely personal and very vulnerable longing to heal the wounds of victimization can make previously victimized and wounded individuals very vulnerable to future abuse.

For sexual abuse and violence workers (activists, advocates, witnesses and prophets) inside the enchanted forest there is, therefore, no holy eternal city and there is no transcendent temple to welcome us. The gates of this particular far-off-city are closed to us. We are forsaken. We are homeless. We are desolate. We have no uncontaminated words left to us. There is no adequate language on earth that we can access to describe what we have witnessed and what we, therefore, know about the extreme and noxious toxicity of this enchanted forest. All we have left is (1) the visceral need to weep; (2) the determination of our heart and our will to provide care to the wounded *and* to care for our innermost Self/Soul; and (3) a strong inner intuition that prevention of future abuse is essential.

Yes: in addition, however, we have truthful and factual knowledge about the contours of the toxic forest's landscape. While we do not know every pathway, every rock and every tree, we know there are many paths and many contexts. Our traveling companions are other religiously and spiritually homeless individuals who also know the truth and have a working knowledge of the enchanted forest, its poisonous groves, its hidden tar pits, and its toxic wastelands. Whether we have chanced upon – or we have deliberately searched for – the vast entrapping tar pits of violation, we have come to know this story all the way down. We have individually and collectively sought to rescue the living soul-beings still trapped there.

Many of us have sought, unsuccessfully, to date, to seal the gates of this particular enchanted and very toxic wasteland against additional abuse. To date, our activism on behalf of this enchanted grove's victims has been unsuccessful in sealing off and ending permanently the dual evils of religious leader sexual abuse and institutional enablement of that abuse.^{cccxcvii}

Because of our failures, we often get discouraged and we feel isolated from all that is healthy and whole and well and good. Because of our dedication, however, we learn to accept our failures and we re-enter the wasteland to see if and how we can help those individuals who have not yet made their way out of the forest's enchantment. Doing this repeatedly, we learn more and more about the enchanted forest. We learn more and more about the victims of violence and their entrapment. We learn more and more about ourselves.

Together all of us - Christian, Jew, Buddhist, Hindu, Zoroastrian, Moslem. Agnostic and Atheist - when we enter the enchanted forest of religious and

spiritual leader sexual abuse to help its trapped victims, we represent God's Diaspora – the people of God exiled – sometimes force marched - from our ethnic religious homeland. That which church leaders resent is our awareness of violations and victimizations. When we honestly seek to help others, who we are ceases to be important. We may be secular counselors. We may be ordained ministers. We may be religious sisters and brothers. We may be hospital chaplains. We may be concerned lay individuals. We may be devoted and loving friends. Who we are does not matter to the victims of the clergy sexual abuse tar pit if we can extend a helping hand and help them to free themselves of the enchantment they live within as victims of religious and spiritual abuse. What matters is that we are there and that we believe their stories. Hearing the compassionate words, *what ails thee*, victimized individuals can begin to have hope that one day they can again be whole and unfragmented. Finding someone or a community that believes them, they can begin the narration of their story and trust that it will be heard with care and compassion *all the way down*.

It is my belief and my hope that together – all of us - as we seek to end this plague of abuse done in God's many names and done by the hands and mouths of human religious authorities, are constantly being taught a new spiritual song about a verdant forest filled with love, an ethic of care, internal experiences of visceral compassion and a deep manifested desire to serve others.

Just perhaps, after our long season of lament and weeping, we can begin to sing and dance once again. In finding, or creating, a new homeland, a new commons, we can honestly ask (ourselves and others) *what ails thee*. In such a simple – yet ethically demanding way – we begin to see the toxic enchantment of the forest change.



cccxcviii

Waterfalls of healing begin to flow everywhere and the communal landscape becomes livable once more. We are, therefore, no longer homeless. Together we are learning how to create a global village where all are equal, all are welcome and no one is denied access to the healing table set in the center of the

commons. The supporting divine aquifer of spirituality and healing creates flowing artesian springs and sweet water wells of personal spirituality, a healing spirituality that is responsive to the needs of the self *and* to the needs of others. In this inner sweet water forest, we find the courage to continue bushwhacking more pathways out of the toxic wastelands of sexual and physical and religious abuse perpetrated by father against child, by brother against sister, by friend against friend, by pastor, priest and bishop against the people of God they were ordained to serve.

*Weeping may endure for the night
But joy comes in the morning*

Psalm 30:5

Almost as if by a fortuitous accident, in our efforts to serve others, we individually and collectively discover that the holy city lives within each one of us. It is no longer in the far-far-far-away.

It Only Takes One

There's great power in the ability of one person to make a difference in an institution.

The Hon. Helen Meyer^{cccxcix}

Many years ago, I attended a clinical conference where physician-oncologist Rachel Naomi Remen was the keynote speaker. I have no notes from that speech. But I have never forgotten its wisdom. She included a case study from her practice – a man who was dying. She knew from his medical history that he had been physically and emotionally abused during childhood and adolescence. His family off origin had been dysfunctional in very harmful ways to this growing young boy. While he had been fed and clothed, his emotional and psychological needs to be loved and supported were unmet. Acts of physical violence were common. Yet, in her clinical practice, she experienced him as a wise, loving man. She asked him one day, *given your history of childhood abuse as a young boy, how did you become the man you are today – loving, wise, and compassionate?*

The old man took some time to think about her question and then answered with a story from his childhood: *well, Rachel, there was the family dog and she loved me....*

Rachel began the formal aspects of her clinical teaching by reminding each one of us that *it only takes one of us to work as loving and compassionate healers in the lives of others.*

In my continuing life-long practice of seeking to bind and unbind my own wounds and manage my own troublesome emotional fault lines one at a time so I can be available to others who need help with their own issues and wounds, I began a practice which continues. When I get to feeling out-of-sorts about my personal life or disgusted and disgruntled by life in the commons, I think about the many individuals who have loved me and who have helped me to encode into language my own life's wisdom....who have, so to speak, heard me into speech.

I begin with the family dog who loved me and who didn't care if I was dirty, noisy and rambunctious; who didn't care if I had just torn a three-corner tear in my new Sunday coat; who didn't care if I had the politically-correct denominational language to name God. As we ran and played in the closest farm field, she trusted me and I trusted her. When I cried she stayed close to me. When I dressed her in my doll's clothing, she did not struggle and passively took rides in my dolls' baby carriage. When she saw me coming out to play, her tail wagged her whole body. When I laughed she ran and jumped with me. When she had a

litter of puppies, she allowed me from the very first day to touch her babies. I began to learn about non-judgmental watchful protective maternal love as I watched her with her puppies. I learned about love towards totally helpless, vulnerable creatures as I softly touched, named, and then watched her babies grow.

It was my father who talked with me about the reality that we could not keep six growing dogs and their mother. In this conversation he promised me he would personally help find each of the puppies a loving home. It was he who helped me to let go as we sold them. Love, I learned, was not an absolute. It had limits. But, in a loving relationship those limits were reasonable and compassionate ones.

There have been many teachers in my life – teachers about wise love and healing love: family members, friends, special friends, ordained clergy in a variety of denominations, school teachers and college professors, therapists, former students, work supervisors, and even casual acquaintances. There have been several times in my life when total strangers have helped me or watched over me in situations of potential harm, violence and even imminent danger - times when I most desperately needed some kind of sheltering human protection and help.

Remen's words were and are instructive. It only takes one of us to begin the process of healing in the life of another. We are not the healer. Life is the healer. But as we carefully and receptively honor the life force and the complex integrity of another's life story, she or he can begin to learn the process of binding and unbinding his or her wounds – one at a time – so they are manageable wounds and strong protective scars in their ongoing life in the commons.

Helping the individual sweep away the impediments to healing, the compassionate witness pays attention. This attentive non-judgmental and listening presence allows and enables the deeply wounded individual to detoxify her or his story; as she or he learns how to manage the wounds of violation; so that these tragic wounds of sexual abuse and their institutional enablement do not keep her or him trapped inside the enchanted wastelands of trauma and betrayal.

The victims of abuse must learn how to manage emotional and physical sequellae of abuse in order that they can claim this present moment as a time of healing and abundant life. They need to learn how to claim their personal rights to an open future. This will be a life-long process of managing that which cannot be changed: experienced abuse and betrayal; the tragic loss of faith, innocence and trust. Learning to bear the unbearable is, I believe now, a life-long process. There is no magic moment when all is transformed. As individuals move through the life span they will re-visit these tragic life stories in light of their unique developmental progress through the life-span. Each story will teach then and re-teach them as they seek to learn its tragic wisdom in their life histories.

It is only in each present moment that any one of us can do this. No one else can do this for any one of us. In the aftermath of abuse, we must do this hard work for ourselves. But, we can be supported in this work.

As witnesses, advocates and healers we can stay attentive and compassionate as we listen and as we seek to be helpful. Learning how to listen all the way down into the depths of the experienced agony and self-doubts of the other, we can stay non-intrusively by his or her side until he or she learns how to manage the wounds and care for the scars.

Learning how to *bear the unbearable* becomes a lesson in human courage and in the power of compassionate self-other love. As we learn to be compassionate towards our own selves, we can learn how to manage wounds that will, in truth, never completely heal. In each developmental stage of our life, we will revisit them and we will need to teach ourselves over and over that we do not need to be bound inside their toxic power. We do not need to hide our lives away from the commons. We do not need to become invulnerable automatons or soulless robots. We do not need to become recluses from a good life in the commons. As Remen's dying patient reminded her, *it only takes one of us* to listen, to believe, to care, and to respond.

Appendix A

A Sexual Abuse Glossary

Adultery: Voluntary, consenting sexual relationships between an individual who is married with another individual who may be single or married but who is not his or her spouse. It provides the offended partner with legal grounds for divorce. In a few states, it is considered a crime against marriage. In the Roman Catholic tradition even a transient sexual relationship (for example, with a prostitute) is considered adultery.

Allegation: An assertion without proof, only a claim that must be proved, a statement asserting something without proof.

Assault: Unlawful physical attacks or the immediate threat of such attacks.

Betrayal: The violation of implicit or explicit trust.

Betrayal Trauma: Under certain conditions betrayals facilitates a “betrayal blindness” in which the betrayed person does not have conscious awareness, or memory of the betrayal.^{cd}

Clergy Malfeasance: The exploitation and abuse of a religious group’s followers by trusted elites and leaders of their religion.^{cdi}

Clergy Sexual Abuse: Unwanted sexual attention from an ordained individual, such as a pastor or priest; sexual relationships by a minister or priest with members of his congregation. Sexual contact by a pastoral counselor or chaplain with church members; sexual contact between a confessor and the individual he is spiritually counseling. Includes the following kinds of behaviors:

- Flirtations, advances or propositions
- Sexual talk and innuendo
- Graphic and/or degrading comments about another’s appearance, dress, or anatomy
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons
- Sexual jokes and offensive behaviors
- Sexually intrusive questions about another’s personal life
- Explicit descriptions of the minister’s own sexual life
- Abuse of familiarities or derivatives such as “honey, sweetie, sugar, dear, or baby.”
- Unnecessary, unwanted, or prolonged physical touching such as kissing, hugging, petting, patting or pinching

- Whistles and catcalls
- Exposing genitals
- Physical or sexual assault, including rape
- Sexual intercourse with members of the parish or congregation
- Anal, oral or vaginal rape

Clericalism: An institutional clergy structure and practice that protects the clergy and church institutions at the expense of the laity.

Deviance, Primary: Situational deviant behavior which occurs once or several times – perhaps by accident – and does not become part of the actor's self-identity; behavior which is not amenable to sociological measurement or analysis.^{cdii}

Deviance, Secondary: Involves a sequence of actions that go beyond any particular number of incidents. These actions influence and alter the actor's role network of interaction with other people as well as his or her lifestyle and his or her self-concept and it requires an audience.^{cdiii}

Elephant in the Living Room: (1) an idiom that applies to an obvious problem that is going unaddressed; (2) an obvious truth that is being ignored or goes unaddressed; (3) the terms refers to a question, problem, solution or controversial issue that is obvious but is ignored by a group of people out of embarrassment or taboo; (4) can imply a value judgment that the issue ought to be discussed openly; (5) can simply be an acknowledgment that the issue is there and is not going to go away by itself; (6) often refers to an emotionally charged issue where people who might have spoken up decide such a conversation is probably best avoided; (7) often used to describe an issue that involves a social taboo or culturally denied reality.^{cdiv}

Epheophilia: A lay term that describes sexual preoccupation or activity with an adolescent (usually 13-17 years old) by a person at least five years older than the victim.^{cdv}

Ideology: The deformation of truth for the sake of social interest^{cdvi}

Pedophile: A psychiatric diagnostic term that is limited to sexual preoccupation or involvement with a pre-pubertal child (usually under 13 years old) by a person who is five years older than the victim.^{cdvii}

Perpetrator: An individual who victimizes another. A serial perpetrator victimizes a number of individuals in sequence.

Predator: An Individual who preys on the vulnerabilities of others; an individual who victimizes others.

Professional Abuse: Unethical behaviors between a professional person (lawyer, teacher, physician, nurse, clergy, work supervisor, agency administrators, therapist, etc.) and the individual s/he supervises or serves. See clergy abuse for examples of unethical and inappropriate behaviors between a professional person and his or her clients.

Rape: A form of assault in which one individual coerces or forces sexual intercourse against that person's will. Oral, anal, and vaginal rape are included in the legal codes of most states. A few states, however, include all kinds of forced sexual activities in their legal definitions of rape. Also included in many states is the forced introduction of an object other than the penis – such as a finger, a tongue, a bottle, etc.^{cdviii}

Recidivism: Repeated offenses by the same perpetrator towards one victim or towards a series of victims.

Religious Abuse: What people suffer when the leaders of their faith communities – or others – punish, humiliate, or otherwise exploit them in the name of God.^{cdix}

Religious Duress: Religious duress is a unique kind of threat and constraint 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 acculturation of *religious duress*. This phenomenon can seriously impede a person's capacity to accurately perceive and evaluate abusive actions perpetrated on them by clergy. This constraint poses an impediment to emotional and spiritual development. Internalized religious duress confuses and psychologically overwhelms such individuals and renders them incapable of absorbing their sexual trauma. The consequent feelings of numbness and immobility distort an individual victim's perception of reality. It then becomes impossible for the individual to act in a manner that would protect and promote their emotional growth and well-being.^{cdx}

Sexual Abuse: An action where an individual causes another person to engage in sexual activity by threatening actions or behaviors that place the second individual in fear. Sexual abuse may be defined by various states in slightly differing forms. Basically, however, it includes non-consenting sexual contact of any kind. The behaviors seen include:

- Physical, verbal or visual behaviors that are meant to intimidate and coerce sexual activity
- Non-consenting and unwelcome physical touch of the breast, buttocks, and genitals.
- Unwanted and unwelcome kissing, fondling, petting, genital contact or masturbation
- Exposing genitals to the other

- Use of force and coercion
- Conversation that implies the use of force or coercion to gain sexual contact.

Sexual Assault: Defined by law codes of various states. In general it involves any form of sexual contact in which force, coercion, or the threat of force and coercion is used to gain sexual access. Includes but it not limited to oral, anal or vaginal rape. Included are any forms of unwanted sexual contact or attempted contact between the victim and offender. Grabbing, fondling, kissing, hugging, are included. Also included in some states are verbal threats of sexual coercion.

Sexual Exploitation: This is a term more often used by religious organizations than secular ones when dealing with adult victims. However, this term is also used to describe adult-child sexual behaviors. In describing adult-adult behavior, it involves sexual contact between church personnel and those who are the recipients of such services, as for example, a priest or minister and a congregant. It involves any form of sexual contact or any invitation to sexual contact initiated by a professional person in a position of power, authority, or trust towards a recipient of services. Sexual exploitation refers to a sexual act which takes advantage of another individual for personal gain. Behaviors can include:

- Unwanted, sexualized physical contact
- Vaginal, oral or anal intercourse
- Intrusive touching, tickling, wrestling, or other physical contact that causes discomfort in the recipient of the touch
- Inappropriate gifts
- Prolonged hugs in situations where short hugs may be appropriate
- Kissing on the mouth when cheek or air kisses may be appropriate
- Showing sexually provocative printed materials or objects such as pornography
- Sexual talk and innuendo
- Sexual propositions
- Inappropriate commentary on body parts such as breasts, genitals, buttocks
- Unwelcome and inappropriate touching of body parts:

Sexual Harassment: Offensive behaviors based on age, gender or sexual orientation. It involves engaging in behaviors which are known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. It has the effect of coercing, undermining, intimidating or demeaning an individual. The term has legal implications because civil and criminal codes describe it. Quid pro quo sexual harassment may include implicit or explicit propositions that include a condition of continued employment, promotion, or better grades (as in the case of teacher-student relationships). In addition, it involves the creation of hostile environments based on gender or sexuality. Sexual harassment behaviors can include, therefore, one or more of the following:

- Verbal abuse or threats
- Unwelcome remarks about one's body or sexual organs
- Circulating unwanted and offensive sexual material in print, photocopies, or cartoon forms
- Discussion by mail, fax, phone or other electronic media of material of an offensive sexual nature
- Displaying sexually offensive materials in public spaces
- Making unwelcome sexual invitations
- Making sexually suggestive remarks
- Leering or making offensive sexual gestures
- Unwanted and unnecessary physical contact such as hugging, kissing, fondling, petting, patting, or pinching
- Making unwelcome sexual propositions
- Retaliation against individuals who refuse to engage in sexual activities with the harasser

Sexual Misconduct: Adult sexual contact that is immoral, unprofessional or unethical behavior. In general, this phrase is used more often in the religious press and where it can include sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, or sexual assault. Used euphemistically to cover-up a situation of sodomy-rape, for example, the term serves as a code word to hide the specific nature of the misdeeds from the public.

Sexual Predator: Describes an individual with repeated sexual violations or offenses with one individual over time or with multiple individuals; see predator above.

Stalking: A pattern of repeated and unwanted attention and contact. It usually involves following and watching the victim in an unwanted manner. As a pattern of behavior it can include:

- Willful, malicious, and repeated following and harassment. The pursuit of the victim by the perpetrator is experienced as frightening and threatening.
- Repeated, unwanted, intrusive and frightening communication from the perpetrator by mail, phone, email, or in person
- Repeatedly showing up in the victims personal space when she is unprotected and alone
- Repeatedly sending unwanted gifts
- The consequences of stalking include fear, anxiety, terror, nervousness, a sense of overt vulnerability, hyper-vigilance, sleep problems, feelings of isolation, and acute stress symptoms

Statutory Rape: This is legally defined rape. In some states it may include consenting sexual relationships between minors. However, in most situations, it is defined as sexual relationships between an adult and a person who has not

reached the statutory age of consent. It also includes sexual relationships with adults who are deemed incapable of giving consent. Force and coercion are not needed for conviction in statutory rape cases.

Victim: The recipient of a criminal act or unwanted sexual contact. Victims may be individuals or a category of individuals such as such as a group.

Endnotes

Essay # One: A Personal Introduction

ⁱ World Health Organization (2002). *Summary: World Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva, Switzerland, p. 1.

ⁱⁱ *Ella's Song*, Bernice Johnson Reagon, See <http://www.bernicejohnsonreagon.com/ella.shtml>

ⁱⁱⁱ See also Father Doyle's comments in Dublin in 2013 – where he also states a similar personal observation or conclusion from his thirty years of activism on behalf of sexual abuse victims in his church. <http://vimeo.com/67774835>

^{iv} See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YgkGyWXdcLg>

^v See: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCVvoL_F5gA

^{vi} See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESSbVYHHS0o>

^{vii} Will Oursler (1960). *The Road to Faith*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

^{viii} Will Oursler, *ibid.*, p. 14.

^{ix} Judith Lewis Herman (September 21, 2000). *Conversations with History: Seeing Face to Face: The Case of Trauma and Recovery*. Berkeley, CA: University of California at Berkeley Institute of International Studies. Retrieve from www.globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people/Herman/herman-com2.html

^x This is a photograph of the interior of the Germantown Mennonite Church – the oldest Mennonite congregation in North America. Most Mennonite meetinghouses during my childhood were very simple structures. In general the main floor included two anterooms where coats were hung – a men's side and a women's side. Babies could be nursed in the women's side. Counsel meetings were held twice a year and were gender-separated – except for the ministers who were all men. Every member needed to account for him or herself before participating in each communion service. The main sanctuary held the pulpit, the pews, an information board that identified the hymns to be sung, and plain glass windows. Men sat on one side of the meeting house and women sat on the other. Small children usually sat with their mother. I routinely violated this rule when my dad came to services with my mother. All the way through adolescence, I defied the tradition of gendered seating and sat with him.

^{xi} See: http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://trinitymtjoy.org/welcome/wp-content/themes/arthemisia-premium/images/Street-View.gif&imgrefurl=http://trinitymtjoy.org/welcome/visitors/&h=210&w=448&sz=66&tbnid=tMgJpzVhPfu09M:&tbnh=57&tbnw=121&zoom=1&usq=_lJAoz5e3vyVc6OWVT4OIPo3d5kU=&docid=2K9dEStJ_6tQXM&sa=X&ei=sxbkUae6N8GriQK-0oHQBA&ved=0CC8Q9QEwAA&dur=367

xii See

[http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://s3.amazonaws.com/dfc_attachments/image/s/2150385/St. Luke s Church web.bmp&imgrefurl=http://st-lukes-mt-joy.diocpa.org/&h=237&w=400&sz=278&tbnid=aqLaFFkEcr-aDM:&tbnh=90&tbnw=152&zoom=1&usq=_dmB9bZAr-n-afvoqUZtllDZB2Zs=&docid=Ox4OsQ38giO7cM&sa=X&ei=GRjkUd_hG4WEiwK6hIDwAw&ved=0CDIQ9QEwAA&dur=761](http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://s3.amazonaws.com/dfc_attachments/image/s/2150385/St._Luke_s_Church_web.bmp&imgrefurl=http://st-lukes-mt-joy.diocpa.org/&h=237&w=400&sz=278&tbnid=aqLaFFkEcr-aDM:&tbnh=90&tbnw=152&zoom=1&usq=_dmB9bZAr-n-afvoqUZtllDZB2Zs=&docid=Ox4OsQ38giO7cM&sa=X&ei=GRjkUd_hG4WEiwK6hIDwAw&ved=0CDIQ9QEwAA&dur=761)

xiii It is the nature of childhood that parents cannot foresee every form of mischief or danger that their kids will get into. For example, when my dad became aware that my childhood friends and I were walking and running on the tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad, he put an immediate stop to the practice. I was told in no uncertain terms that he expected me never to do this very dangerous behavior again. Since he rarely lectured me in such a stern and demanding voice, I paid attention and I obeyed. I have no idea who reported us but someone, seeing us running and playing on the tracks, did. Some adult recognized we were putting ourselves in great danger and acted by telling our parents.

xiv For an up-to-date review and discussion of this scandal see Michael D'Antonio, (2013). *Mortal Sins: Sex, Crime and the Era of Catholic Scandal*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press. (2) See also Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea (2007). *Perversion of Power*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press. (3) In addition, see Thomas P. Doyle's June 27, 2013 address to SNAP. Retrieve from www.richardsipe.com or from <http://reform-network.net/?p=22122>.

xv I no longer remember the location/organizational reference to Dr. Remen's speech but I vividly recall her descriptions of this man's contributions to her own thinking. At that precise moment in my professional life when my enemies seemed to be present at every committee meeting I heard her tell his story and I immediately claimed the wisdom of the story for my own life. I did not need to be destroyed by my enemies. I could re-frame their presence in my life as helpers – albeit hostile ones. And, in retrospect, my work grew stronger and I grew more resilient because of their negative criticism of my life and work. My spiritual task (taught to me by Remen's patient, a world class architect and a man I never met, was to refuse to become an enemy of my enemies.

Essay # Two: Sexual Violence is the Kudzu of Christianity

xvi © Jack Anthony. Used by permission. See:
http://www.jjanthony.com/kudzu/houseimages/toccoa_4943.jpg

xvii *Clericalism*: An institutional clergy structure and practice that protects the clergy and church institutions at the expense of the laity.

xviii © Jack Anthony. Used by permission. See
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/ac/Flowering_kudzu.jpg/220px-Flowering_kudzu.jpg

^{xix} Matthew Fox (2011). *The Pope's War: Why Ratzinger's secret crusade has imperiled the church and how it can be saved*. New York, NY: SterlingEthos

^{xx} Matthew Fox (1996). *Confessions: The making of a post-denominational priest*. San Francisco, CA: Harper-San Francisco.

^{xxi} Ruth E. Krall (2013). *The Elephants in God's Living Room: Volume Four, A Collection of Essays; Dreams as Portals of Knowing*, Enduring Space Publications.

^{xxii} Anson Shupe (2008). *Rogue Clerics: The social problem of clergy deviance*. Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

^{xxiii} I am indebted to Father Thomas Doyle for this gloss or phrase, *little ones of all ages*. See: <http://vimeo.com/60664365>

^{xxiv} Matthew 25: 31-46

^{xxv} For a discussion of the influence of liability insurance lawyers see: [https://www.ministrysafe.com/resources-helpful-articles/VPC-CostofBeingaShepherd6-1-11\(3\).pdf](https://www.ministrysafe.com/resources-helpful-articles/VPC-CostofBeingaShepherd6-1-11(3).pdf)

^{xxvi} Benjamin W. Redekop and Calvin Redekop, (Eds.). (2001). *Power, Authority and the Anabaptist Tradition*. Baltimore, MD: The University of John Hopkins Press.

^{xxvii} See Matthew 18:6 and Luke 17:2

^{xxviii} See Matthew 7:3-5: Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, *let me take the speck out of your eye* when all the time there is a plank in your own eye. You hypocrite! First take the plank out of your own eye. Then you can see clearly to take the speck from your brother's eye.

Essay # Three: Anywhere But Here

^{xxix} Photographer, Stefanie. See http://all-free-download.com/free-photos/tiger_zoo_predator_213781.html

^{xxx} John Vaillant (2010). The Exchange: John Vaillant on the Siberian Tiger. *New Yorker Magazine Online*. See <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/books/2010/09/the-exchange-john-vaillant-on-the-siberian-tiger.html>

^{xxxi} John Vaillant (2010). *The Tiger: The true story of vengeance and survival*. New York, NY: Vintage Books/Random House.

^{xxxii} Australian Roman Catholic Bishop Geoffrey Robinson (retired) addresses the theological and political issue of the angry God. See <http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com/2013/06/bishop-geoffrey-robinson-to-pope.html>

^{xxxiii} Marianne Benkert and Thomas P. Doyle (2009). Clericalism, Religious Duress and its Psychological Impact on Victims of Clergy Sexual Abuse (pp. 221-238). *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* (58); Thomas P. Doyle (January, 2006). Clericalism: Enabler of Clergy Sexual Abuse (pp. 189-213). *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* 54(3).

^{xxxiv} Alice Miller (1983). *For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-rearing and the Roots of Violence* [Translated by Hildegarde and Hunter Hamnum] New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, pp. 64 and 66.

^{xxxv} Matthew Fox (2011). *The Pope's War: Why Ratzinger's secret crusade has imperiled the church and how it can be saved*. New York, NY: SterlingEthos.

^{xxxvi} Alice Miller (1991). *Breaking Down the Wall of Silence: The liberating experience of facing painful truth*. New York, NY: Penguin/Dutton, P. 143.

^{xxxvii} There are many different wordings of Daly's critical insight about the structural nature of the patriarchy. Feminist women remember the insight and they may accept the concept while choosing to modify Daly's exact wording. I am recalling this quotation from memory rather than from a Daly-authored book.

^{xxxviii} Joel Kramer and Diana Alstad (1993). *The Guru Papers: Masks of authoritarian power*. Berkeley, CA: Frog Ltd.

^{xxxix} Sam Keen (1994). The Path through the Mindscape (pp. 93-117) in *Hymns to an Unknown God: Awakening the Spirit in everyday life*. New York: NY: Bantam

^{xl} Rabbi Rami Shapiro (2014). Roadside Assistance for the Spiritual Traveler (p.18). *Journal of Spirituality and Health*, January-February, 2014.

^{xli} CHURCH NEWS: (June 23, 1992). AMBS program denies admission to homosexual (p. 9). *The Gospel Herald* 82 (23).

^{xlii} Late in his reign, Pope Benedict XIV announced, that in Catholic theology, a homosexual orientation is objectively disordered and that homosexual acts are sins which are gravely contrary to human chastity. See section on Pope Benedict's reign at www.wikipedia.com for more information about the Catholic hierarchy's view about abnormality and mortal sin.

^{xliii} See Barbara G. Walker (1983), *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*. San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row. According to Walker, Hecate was the ancient world's deity of prophecy and she was invoked by those setting out on a journey. Today, I imagine her guarding the crossroads entered by a witness or prophet as s/he begins the personal spiritual and physical journey into sexual violence studies and activism, a journey whose outcome is not predictable. The site of homage to and for requesting help from Hecate was a place where three roads met – a place, therefore, containing the pathways to a minimum of six different destinations. Today's interstate cloverleaf intersections provide a complex visual metaphor to guide our thinking about what and how we respond to truthful information about clergy sexual abuse in our religious communities.

^{xliv} Adolph Guggenbuhl-Craig (1991). (J. R. Haule, Trans.). *Power in the Helping Professions*. Woodstock, CT: Spring Publications.

^{xlv} Jack Kornfield, op. cit.

^{xlvi} Lynn V. Andrews (2007) *Spirit Woman: Teaching of the shields*, New York, NY: Tarcher.

^{xlvii} See the following authors for additional information about the deliberate use of imagery to manage stress: (1) Jeanne Achterberg (2002) *Imagery and Healing*, Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications; (1994). (2) Using Imagery for Health and Wellness, New York, NY: Bantam; (3) Emmett E. Miller (1997). *Deep Healing: The Essentials of Mind/Body Healing*, Carlsbad, CA: Hay House; (4) Martin Rossman (1989). *Healing Yourself: A Step-By-Step Program for Better Health through Imagery*, New York, NY: Pocket Books; (5) Robert M. Sapolsky (1994). *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: A guide to stress-related diseases and coping*, New York, NY: W. H. Freeman and Company.

^{xlviii} Candace B. Pert (1997). *Molecules of Emotion: Why you feel the way you feel*. New York, NY: Scribners.

^{xlix} Lynn V. Andrews (1981). *Medicine Woman*. San Francisco, CA: Harper/San Francisco.

ⁱ Anson Shupe, William A. Stacey and Susan E. Darnell (Eds.). (2000). *Bad Pastors: Clergy misconduct in America*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

ⁱⁱ Anson Shupe (2008). *Rogue Clerics: The social problem of clergy Deviance*, Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

ⁱⁱⁱ Robert Grant, (1994-1995). *Healing the Soul of the Church: Ministers facing their own childhood abuse and trauma*, Oakland, CA: Self-published.

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Amy Berg (2006). *Deliver Us From Evil: Innocence and Faith Betrayed*. Disarming Films/Lionsgate (see www.deliverusfromevil.com)

^{liv} Hannah Arendt (1963). *On Violence*, New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., p. 63.

Essay # Four: Bearing the Unbearable

^{lv} See:

<http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-4opsxxR15qU/UhdsQ7bA1HI/AAAAAAAAAQf0/WE8YOxc9abQ/s1600/Tragedy.jpg>; This image has been posted on multiple sites with out an attribution of its creator. If you have further information about this image, I would welcome receiving it.

^{lvi} For additional information and a beginning discussion of these statistics, see www.cdc.gov/volenceprevention/rpe/

^{lvii} For additional information and a beginning discussion of this research statistic, see www.1in6.org/the-1-in-6-statistic

^{lviii} Dr. Margaret Chan, speaking for the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. Reported by Maria Cheng of Associated Press. Retrieve from *Arizona Daily Star* (June 21, 2013, p. A-24). The research protocol definitions are as follows:

- **Domestic physical violence:** being slapped, punched, pushed, choked or threatened with a weapon.
- **Domestic sexual violence:** physically forced to have sex, having sex for fear of what one's partner might do, being compelled to do something sexual that was humiliating or degrading.

^{lix} Joseph W. Shannon (Tucson, AZ, November 1, 2013). Continuing Education Clinical Lecture: *Noxious People: Living and Working with High-Conflict Individuals*. Sponsored by the Institute for Brain Potential, Haddonfield, NJ.

^{lx} See: <http://dovesnest.net/CAN>

^{lxi} It is important to note, however, that, in situations of marital adultery, the aggrieved spouse may feel betrayed and traumatized upon discovery of his or her partner's infidelity.

^{lxii} For operational definitions of adultery, and various forms of sexual misconduct and abuse, see Appendix A.

^{lxiii} James Hillman (1964/1975), p. 79. Betrayal (pp. 63-81) in *Loose Ends: Primary Papers in Archetypal Psychology*. Dallas, TX: Spring Publications

^{lxiv} M. J. Lerner and C. H. Simons (1958). Observers Reactions to the Innocent Victim: Compassion or rejection? (pp. 203-210). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 4(2).

^{lxv} If physical disorders such as melanoma can be accurately diagnosed by dogs through their sense of smell and if epileptic seizures can be recognized as imminent by therapy dogs in advance of the seizure, then these physical disorders signal subtle body chemistry changes that human beings and their sensory apparatus do not consciously recognize. When I was still working inside psychiatric hospitals, I would occasionally say to my physician colleagues, *this person smells like a schizophrenic to me*. I really didn't hear myself say this until one of my psychiatric colleagues asked me what exactly it was I smelled. The reason he asked, he told me, was that I was so often correct with new admissions before they had been worked up. I didn't know how to answer him. I thought it was metaphorical speech about an intuition rather than an evidence-based diagnosis. But after that conversation, I wondered often about my intuitive knowing. What did inform it? Is it possible, therefore, that the changes in body anatomy, physiology and body chemistry which occur as part of the stress response to sexual violence form as future announcements to some predators that this individual or that individual is vulnerable to future abuse. Or is the cue a subtle visual one that non-predators miss? I have no way of knowing the answer to this question but it has fascinated me for many years. In some manner, however, I am convinced that vulnerability communicates itself in such a way

that experienced predators know how to read, to interpret, to manipulate and then exploit that vulnerability.

lxvi Michael V. Jordan: See <http://vimeo.com/60677991>

lxvii John Vallaint (2010). *The Tiger: The true story of vengeance and survival*. New York, NY: Vintage Books/Random House.

lxviii Peter A. Levine and Ann Frederick, (1997). *Waking the Tiger, Healing Trauma: The innate capacity to transform overwhelming experiences*, New York, NY: North Atlantic.

lxix Hans Selye (1974). *Stress without Distress*, New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1974.

lxx Marianne Benkert (2013). Manuscript: *Spirituality and the Culture of Narcissism: Clinical Observations*. See: <http://www.awrsipe.com/reports/2013/Spirituality%20and%20the%20Culture%20of%20Narcissism%20-%20Complete%20article%20-%20208-30-2013.pdf>;

See also: Ruth Elizabeth Krall (1990). *Rape's Power to Dismember Women's Lives: Personal realities and cultural forms*. Claremont, CA: Southern California School of Theology at Claremont;

lxxi See my doctoral dissertation (ibid.) for a discussion of victim-experienced first responses and their subsequent journey to recovery.

Essay # Five: Empathic Disorders

lxxii See: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/thumb/f/f4/The_Scream.jpg/220px-The_Scream.jpg; in the public domain, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Scream.jpg

lxxiii See: Unveiling Empathic Distress (pp. 42-43). *Journal of Spirituality and Health*, March-April, 2013.

lxxiv See Luke 10:25-37; See the parable exegeted at <http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/archaeology-today/archaeologists-biblical-scholars-works/understanding-the-good-samaritan-parable/>; See also <http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-sites-places/biblical-archaeology-sites/inn-from-the-good-samaritan-parable-becomes-a-museum/>

lxxv Judith Lewis Herman (1992/1997). *Trauma and Recovery: The aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror - with a new afterword by the author*. New York, NY: Basic Books//Harper Collins Publisher, p. 7.\

lxxvi Judith Lewis Herman, *ibid.*, p. 42

lxxvii Judith Lewis Herman (1992). (1) Complex PTSD: A syndrome in survivors of prolonged and repeated trauma (pp. 377-391), *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 3; (1987). (2) *Sexual Violence* [Conference Seminar Paper]: Learning from Women. Boston, MA:

Harvard Medical School Department of Continuing Education; (1984); (3) *Sexual Violence: Work in Progress* [No.83-05]. Stone Center for Developmental Services and Studies. Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College; (1997); (4) *Trauma and Recovery: the aftermath of violence-from domestic abuse to political terror*. New York, NY: Basic Books. (5). See also a series of interviews with Dr. Herman (2000). Retrieve all four interviews from www.globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people/Herman/herman-com1.html

lxxviii Pharoah Hound, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sweet_violet.jpg
Common Use License:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Text_of_the_GNU_Free_Documentation_License

lxxix <http://pure-green-living.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/LionLanguishing-300x225.jpg>

lxxx See: http://www.in.gov/idoc/files/WCC_Facts_and_Figures_Brochure_2012.pdf

lxxxi See Philip G. Zimbardo (2008). *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding how good people turn evil*. New York, NY: Random House Trade Paperbacks.

lxxxii The movie, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, was released in 1975.

lxxxiii From the first time I heard Dr. Remen interviewed on PBS by Bill Moyers, I knew she was a genuine healer, a wise teacher, and a trust-worthy guide. Consequently, over the years after watching that interview I attended many workshops and conferences where she was the speaker and teacher. I read many of her books and on-line articles. I am not certain where I first heard her speak about the human drive to find permanent meaning in important life stories. She talked about how older people often tell and re-tell the same stories. I began, in my own language, to think of this as a time of re-visiting and then re-embroidering a life. Each time we did this re-visiting, it seemed to me, we added a few new stitches to the pattern that was so well-established it did not need to be outlined but just needed to be filled in. Some of this conversation's stories have guided my clinical teaching encounters with students. Some have taught me about my own life. The stories in this conversation represent such an embroidering and re-embroidering.

lxxxiv Judith Lewis Herman, op. cit., p. 7.

lxxxv In layman's language, the clinical process of transference occurs when the client transfers his or her previous experiences and expectations and fantasies to his or her therapist as if the therapist is the original source of his behavioral and emotional response patterns. A client, for example, may "see" his therapist as his mother and respond to his therapist as he responded to his mother. Another client may "see" her therapist as the man who raped her and respond to her therapist as if he were a rapist. Since the process of transference works in both directions, clinicians use the phrase counter-transference to describe this process of transferred perceptions, emotions, and thoughts to describe the therapist's experience of transferred experience to his client's situation. Transference and counter-transference responses represent therefore non-rational forms of intuition, cognition and behavioral responses that arise inside clinical encounters. They are profoundly colored by past experience. Many clinicians believe that these are essential experiences in a client's journey back into a full life because they

give the client an opportunity to re-visit and re-work past traumatic events and relationships. They are also the seedbed for therapist abuse of clients – when the therapist does not professionally manage the transference-counter-transference relationship and begins to enter the dance of victimizer-victim as an abuser.

^{lxxxvi} Judith Lewis Herman, op.cit., p. 140.

^{lxxxvii} Judith Lewis Herman, ibid., p. 51.

^{lxxxviii} Sandra L. Bloom and Michael Reichert (1998). *Bearing Witness: Violence and collective responsibility*. New York, NY: The Haworth Maltreatment and Trauma Press

^{lxxxix} See: <https://encrypted-tbn1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSGww8HacSXZVDiblbTS3AQvX9VqxeSja-0Z7uTGt7nDmmVh4PdRQ>

^{xc} Judith Lewis Herman, op.cit, p.141.

^{xc} See: http://t0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSkyWRcJaYmOOfbicVt43LNKeX9HK7HzyDQ_hrJDd7bbsR2tudU

^{xcii} [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Goya-Guerra_\(09\).jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Goya-Guerra_(09).jpg), In the public domain

^{xciii} Judith Lewis Herman, op. cit., p. 8.

Essay # Six: The Witness's Dilemma

^{xciv} I use the term *witness* in this conversation to represent anyone who works with the victims of clergy sexual abuse or the victims of structural victimization by religious institutions.

^{xcv} http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c1/MUTCD_W2-4.svg/120px-MUTCD_W2-4.svg.png

^{xcvi} Thomas P. Doyle (2006). Public Lecture, Tucson, AZ: St. Michael's Episcopal Church.

^{xcvii} <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/AbuseTracker/> Check the Tucson, AZ diocese listing to see individuals by name and location.

^{xcviii} Thomas P. Doyle, (June 27, 2013). *Thirty Years: What we've learned and what I've learned*. Washington, DC: Address to SNAP.

^{xcix} The Johari window is an intellectual construct used by organizational development consultants to help work teams develop interpersonal communication abilities. When the window is used with skill, individuals can learn to appreciate each other even across great divides of personal opinion, cultural diversity and political commitments. As individuals learn to identify their own strengths and gifts (as well as weaknesses and limitations) they grow in their abilities to make themselves visible to others. In a similar manner as they encourage others to identify their own strengths and gifts (as well as

weaknesses and limitations), they learn how to appreciate and work collaboratively with them.

^c I am indebted to the poet and New Age spiritual teacher Mark Nepo for this insight. During a workshop for cancer survivors he taught us rudimentary skills of making ourselves and our personal struggles visible to strangers we'd never met as a way of learning how to do this with our friends, families and care-givers. Because of his prior legacy of work during his personal life journey of surviving life-threatening cancer, we had a collective intuition that we could trust him, and by extension, this group of other cancer survivors. Since, I am by nature extremely introverted this is a skill I have struggled to learn. Often my internal experience is so encrusted or shielded that I don't have words to tell even myself, much less others what I am experiencing. In time – and with lots of therapy – I have gradually learned that my writing self knows and will reveal what my speaking self conceals and hides. My personal friends have all learned they need to honor my writing self if they wish to know who I am in any given moment. I have gradually learned in my adult life that if I can describe in verbal, interpersonal language some deep inner trouble, I am through the crisis and am on my way out of its toxic hold on my life. Years ago one of my trusted and beloved professors, an extrovert I am sure, said to me that he talked to know what he thought. At the time I was puzzled. Now, long after his death, I understand. I write to understand what I think. These deep personality differences will affect any coalition of helpers, advocates, and witnesses. Each, I now believe, adds credibility to our work because the victims of violence each have a unique personality which they will need to understand as they seek to heal themselves of the toxic empathically introjected violence which has inhabited their personal consciousness and which disturbs their body-Selves.

^{ci} For a good description and discussion of this disruptive power, see Larry Augsburger (June 9, 1992). Breaking silence, bringing hope, *The Gospel Herald* 85 (2), 1-2, 8.

Essay # Seven: What Ails Thee?

^{cii} Charles R. Knight, Rancho La Brea Tar Pit Mural; American Museum of Natural History, New York. Public Domain. See: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/c1/La_Brea_Tar_Pits.jpg/800px-La_Brea_Tar_Pits.jpg

^{ciii} Jean Shinoda Bolen (1997). *IONS Conference Address: Grail Quest: Healing our Wounds and Restoring our Wastelands*. Berkeley, CA: Conference Recording Service

^{civ} Many years ago I visited the La Brea Tar Pits and learned about the prehistoric animals which had been trapped there to die. For information about the tar pits and to see interesting fossil pictures, go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Brea_Tar_Pits

^{cv} Jack Kornfield (2002). *The Art of Forgiveness, Lovingkindness, and Peace*. New York, NY: Bantam, p. 141.

^{cvi} Jack Kornfield, *ibid*.

^{cvii} Will Oursler (1960). *The Road to Faith*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, p. 14.

^{cviii} Will Oursler, *ibid*, pp. 13 - 14.

^{cix} Jean Shinoda Bolen, *op. cit.* references Campbell's often-quoted aphorism.

^{cx} James Hillman (1996). *The Soul's Code: In search of character and calling*. New York, NY: Random House, p. 215.

^{cx} Paata Vardanashvili, 2007, Used by permission, Wikimedia Commons. See: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c9/Dead_forest_near_Lagodekhi_2.jpg
For creative commons licensure, see : <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en>

^{cxii} Jean Shinoda Bolen, *op.cit.*: an abbreviated paraphrase of Bolen's lecture comments about the experiences we each have that are destructive and disastrous to our life's journey as we both envision and experience it. In Jungian thought, these destructive encounters call us to return to the search for our *Soul* or *Spirit* or large *S Self*. They propel us on our journey to individuation. They propel our search for healing.

^{cxiii} See: (1) Michael D'Antonio (2013). *Mortal Sins: Sex, Crime, and the Era of Catholic Scandal*. New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press; (2) Andrew M. Greeley (2004). *Priests: A calling in crisis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago; (3) Eugene C. Kennedy (2001). *The Unhealed Wound: The church, the priesthood, and the question of sexuality*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

^{cxiv} Thomas P. Doyle (July 13, 2008). *The Survival of the Spirit While Mired in the Toxic Wastes of the Ecclesiastical Swamp*.
Retrieve from <http://richardsipe.com/Dialogue/Dialogue-17-2008--08-11.html>;

See also: FaithTrust Institute webpage: <http://www.faitrustinstitute.org>; See also: Our Stories Untold webpage; www.ourstoriesuntold.com; See also: Richard Sipe webpage: www.richardsipe.com; See also: SNAP webpage: <http://www.snapnetwork.org>;

^{cxv} Joanna Rogers Macy (p. 8) quoted by Karen Bouris, Editor, *Spirituality and Health*, January-February, 2014.

Essay # Eight: The Wounded Healer

^{cxvi} Institute of International Studies, University of California at Berkeley (September 21, 2000). Conversations with History: Interview with Judith Lewis Herman (Part three of four, pp. 4-5). Retrieve from www.globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people/herman/

^{cxvii} Gregory Baum (2007). *Religion and Alienation*. Maryknoll, NY, Orbis, p. 81.

^{cxviii} Alice Miller (1983). *For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-rearing and the Roots of Violence* [TRANSLATED BY Hildegard and Hunter Hamnum] New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, p. XIV.

^{cxix} Ray Mouton, (2012). *In God's House: A novel about one of the great scandals of our time*. London, England: Head of Zeus, Ltd.

^{cxx} Hymn fragment, *Guide me oh Thou Great Jehovah*

^{cxxi} See (1) Michael D'Antonio (2013). *Mortal Sins: Sex, crime, and the era of Catholic scandal*. New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press. (2) See C –Span Video Library panel discussion of D'Antonio's book: www.C-Spanvideo.org/program/mortals&showfullabstract+1

^{cxxii} See: <http://www.keyway.ca/jpg/sackclth.jpg>

^{cxxiii} *Clericalism*: An institutional clergy structure and practice that protects the clergy and church institutions at the expense of the laity. For a description of the damaging consequences of clericalism, see Thomas P. Doyle (January, 2006). Clericalism: Enabler of Clergy Sexual Abuse (pp.189-213), *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* 54(3).

^{cxxiv} See (1) Anonymous, by a friend of Bill W. (ud). *I Don't Go To Church Anymore* which can be retrieved from <http://www.companionsinhope.com/Sunlight/commentary/IDontGoToChurchAnymore.htm>; (2) See also Father Thomas Doyle's commentary about his personal responses to his work as an informed canon lawyer and victim advocate in a July 13, 2008 address to SNAP: *The Survival of the Spirit while Mired in the Toxic Wastes of the Ecclesiastical Swamp*. This essay can be retrieved from <http://richardsipe.com>; (3) See also clinical psychologist Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea's commentary about leaving the Roman Catholic Church in her 2007 book *Perversion of Power: Sexual abuse in the Catholic Church*. Nashville, TN: University of Vanderbilt Press; (4) See also defense attorney Ray Mouton's commentary in Frank Brunt and Elinor Burkett (1993). *Gospel of Shame: Children, sexual abuse and the Catholic Church*. New York, NY: Penguin; (5) See prosecuting attorney John Manley's comments in Amy Berg (2006). *Deliver Us From Evil: Innocence and Faith Betrayed*. Disarming Films/Lionsgate www.deliverusfromevil.com; (6) See Los Angeles Times religion page journalist William Lobdell's 2009 book, *Losing My Religion: How I lost my faith reporting on religion in America - and found unexpected peace*. New York, NY: Harper/Collins. These authors and many others address in abbreviated but still poignant detail the journey of the professional witness to clergy sexual violence and corrupted institutional violence into and through the religious, spiritual, emotional, moral, and social wasteland of the enchanted clergy sexual abuse and institutional cover-up forest.

^{cxxv} See: <http://vimeo.com/67774835>

^{cxxvi} Anne Cameron, (1981), *Daughter of Copper Woman*. Vancouver, Canada: Press Gang Publishers.

^{cxxvii} Henri J. M. Nouwen (1972). *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company.

^{cxxviii} In the years since his death, Thomas Merton's literary executors have published Merton's private journals. This series of books is now complete. They are very useful in helping us understand the motivating forces of Merton's life, career, and peace activism.

As a student of spiritual solitude and contemplative prayer, Merton was not spared the emotional aspects of a deep and pervasive loneliness. He was not immunized by the nature of his spiritual or religious calling from the need for human love.

^{cxix} Judith Lewis Herman (1997). *Trauma and Recovery: the aftermath of violence-from domestic abuse to political terror*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

^{cxx} On May 20, 2013, a group of Roman Catholic activists announced the formation of a whistle-blowers support network. For more information see <http://ascendingstarseed.wordpress.com/tag/whistleblower-support-network/> and <http://www.catholicwhistleblowers.org/Profiles.htm>

^{cxixi} Emmett Coyne (2012). *The Theology of Fear*. Charlestown, SC: Self- published.

^{cxixii} Thomas P. Doyle (December 31, 2008 [2009]. The Spiritual Trauma Experienced by Victims of Catholic Clergy Abuse (pp. 239-250), *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* (58).

^{cxixiii} Ray Mouton (2012). *In God's House: A novel about one of the great scandals of our time*. London, England: Head of Zeus, Ltd.

^{cxixiv} Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea (Manuscript, June 14, 2002). *The Experience of the Victim: A Reflection*. Dallas, TX: An Address to the [Roman Catholic] Hierarchy. Retrieve from: http://www.snapnorthwest.org/experience_of_the_victim_survivor.htm

^{cxixv} Eugene C. Kennedy (2001). *The Unhealed Wound: The church, the priesthood, and the question of sexuality*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

^{cxixvi} A. W. Richard Sipe (ud). *Bishop Geoffrey Robinson in America, 14 May, 2010-14 June, 2010*. Retrieve from <http://www.catholica.com.au/gc2/013 occ 210608.php>

^{cxixvii} Geoffrey Robinson (2007). *Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church*. Mulgrave, Victoria, Australia: John Garrett

^{cxixviii} Matthew Fox, op. cit.

^{cxixix} The Ely Lilly Foundation, Inc., of Indianapolis, Indiana provided me with a Lilly Open Faculty Fellowship during my 1995 -1996 sabbatical as a scholar-in-residence at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. My topic of research was *Liturgy as Destroyer – Liturgy as Healer*. Some of the reflections in this conversation are a direct result of that year's study and work.

^{cxli} J. Harold Ellens (2004). Religious Metaphors Can Kill (pp. 254-271). *The Destructive Power of Religion: Violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Vol. 1). Westport, CT: Praeger, p. 254.

^{cxlii} Tom Driver (1991). *The Magic of Ritual: Our need for liberating rites that transform our lives and our communities*. San Francisco, CA: Harper/San Francisco, p. 44.

cxlii Thomas P. Doyle. (November 20, 2007). Correspondence with Bishop Anthony Dooher of Weymouth, MA. Retrieve from www.thefuneralofapriestpredator.blog.spot.com/2007/12/letter-from-tom-doyle-to-bishop-dooher.html

cxliii Starhawk. (1981). *Truth or Dare: Encounters with power, authority and mystery*. San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row.

cxliv My personal memory or awareness of Daly's hesitations about the harmfulness of liturgy for feminist women has been shaped more by attending her mid-life lectures than by reading her books.

cxlv *From the fears that long have bound us, Free our hearts to faith and praise, Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage for the living of these days, For the living of these days*. For the complete hymn, retrieve from www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/g/o/gofgrace.htm

cxlvi Michaela Mendelsohn, Judith L. Herman, Emily Schatzoa, Melissa Coco, Diya Kallivayalil, and Jocelyn Levitan (2011). *The Trauma Recovery Group: A Guide for Practitioners*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

cxlvii Adolf Guggenbuhl-Craig, op cit.

cxlviii Matthew Fox (1999). The Story of Julia Butterfly Hill in Chapter 18: Warriorhood (pp. 419-421). *One River, Many Wells: Wisdom springing from global faiths*. New York, NY: The Jeremy Tarcher Group.

cxlix Thich Nhat Hanh (2001). *Anger: Wisdom for cooling the flames*. New York, NY: Riverhead Books

cl Ruth Elizabeth Krall (1996), op.cit.

cli Henri J. M. Nouwen (1972). *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in contemporary society*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company

clii Virginia Satir (1972). *Peoplemaking*, Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books. In this small but very important book, Satir describes the harmful and numbing effects of blaming and judging upon the individual who organizes his life around judging and blaming others for her or his personal suffering. The underlying dynamic principle as I have learned over time to think about this is simple. If I blame you for my suffering, then I give up my personal abilities to end my own suffering. I yield to the inevitability of my suffering because its source lies outside my personal ability to influence and change it.

cliii Virginia Satir, *ibid*.

cliv Emmett E. Miller (1997). *Deep Healing: The Essentials of Mind/Body Healing*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House.

Essay # Nine: A Riff on Structural Violence

clv See: http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-oVMI3kiQT4/UEPS1_ikC8I/AAAAAAAAAW0/kOOyeiN7Xbc/s640/Dom+H%C3%A9lder+Sem+justi%C3%A7a+e+amor.jpg

clvi Joel Kramer and Diana Alstad (1993). *The Guru Papers: Masks of authoritarian power*. Berkeley, CA: Frog Ltd., p. 7.

clvii Helder Camara (1971) *The Spiral of Violence*. London, UK: Sheed and Ward. Now out of print in the USA, this short text can be retrieved at <http://www.alastairmcintosh.com/general/spiral-of-violence.htm>

clviii See also J. Harold Ellens (2004). Volume Four [Contemporary Views on Spirituality and Violence]: Introduction, Spirals of Violence (pp. 1-17) in J. Harold Ellens, (Ed.). *The Destructive Powers of Religion: Violence in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

clix See, for example, (1) Peter Steinfels (2003). *A People Adrift: The Crisis in the Roman Catholic Church of America*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster; (2) Anson Shupe (2008). *Rogue Clerics: The social problem of clergy deviance*. Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

clx See: (1) Amy Berg (2006). *Deliver Us From Evil: Innocence Faith Betrayed*. Disarming Films/Lionsgate; (2) Kirby Dick (2006). *Twist of Faith: A story of sin, betrayal, and the power of truth*. HBO Documentaries; (3) Thomas P. Doyle (July 13, 2008). *The Survival of the Spirit While Mired in the Toxic Wastes of the Ecclesiastical Swamp*. Retrieve from www.richardsipe.com; (4) Randy Ellison (2011). *Boys Don't Tell: Ending the silence of abuse*. New York, NY: Morgan James; (5) Andrew M. Greeley (2004b). *Priests: A calling in crisis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.

clxi See: (1) Jason Berry (1992). *Lead Us Not into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children*. New York, NY: Doubleday; (2) Michael D'Antonio (2013). *Mortal Sins: Sex, Crime, and the Era of Catholic Scandal*. New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press; (3) David Yallop (2010). *Beyond Belief: The Catholic Church and the Child abuse scandal*. London, UK: Constable Books.

clxii Herbert C. Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton (1989). *Crimes of Obedience*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

clxiii See: (1) Paul Collins (2004). *The Modern Inquisition*, New York, NY: Overlook Press; (2) Michael D'Antonio (2013). *Mortal Sins: Sex, Crime, and the Era of Catholic Scandal*. New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press

clxiv See: (1) Michael D'Antonio (2013). *Mortal Sins: Sex, Crime, and the Era of Catholic Scandal*. New York, NY: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press; (2) MSNBC/Associated Press. *Catholic Priest Who Aids Church Sexual Abuse Victims Loses Job*. Retrieve from: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4865148/ns/usnews/>; (3) D. J.

Wakins (2004). Catholic Priest Who Aids Church Sexual Abuse Victims Loses Job. *New York Times Online* (April 29). Retrieve from http://www.snapnetwork.org/news/otherstates/doyle_loses_job.htm.

clxv See: (1) Anson Shupe (2008). *Rogue Clerics: The social problem of clergy deviance*. Brunswick, NJ: Transaction; (2) Walter Wink (1992). *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and resistance in a world of domination*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.

clxvi See: (1) Hannah Arendt (1986). *Beyond Past and Present: Six exercises in political thought*. New York, NY: World Publishing Company; (2) (1969a) *Crises of the Republic*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich; (3) (1969b) *On Violence*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and World.

clxvii (1) Thomas P. Doyle (June 27, 2013). *Thirty Years: What we've learned and what I've learned*. Washington, DC: SNAP Annual Conference address. Retrieve from www.richardsipe.com; (2) Bishop Geoffrey Robinson Address (Australia). Retrieve from <http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com/2013/06/bishop-geoffrey-robinson-to-pope.html>.

clxviii See: (1) Geoffrey Robinson (2013). *For Christ's Sake: End child abuse in the Catholic Church ... for good*. Mulgrave, Vic: Australia. John Garrett Publishing; (2) A. W. Richard Sipe (1996). *Sex, Priests and Power: Anatomy of a Crisis*. New York, NY: Bruner/Mazel.

clxix Robert M. Brown (1987). *Religion and Violence*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster.

clxx Gustavo Gutierrez (1973). *The Liberation of Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press.

clxxi Elizabeth Janeway (1981). *Powers of the Weak*. New York, NY: Morrow Quill Paperbacks.

clxxii Geoffrey Robinson (2007). *Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church*. Mulgrave, Victoria, Australia: John Garrett.

clxxiii See: (1) Juan Luis Segundo (1976a). *The Hidden Motives of Pastoral Action: Latin American reflections*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis; (2) (1976b). *The Liberation of Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

clxxiv See: (1) Walter Wink (1992). *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and resistance in a world of domination*, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress; (2) The Myth of Redemptive Violence (pp. 265-286), in J. Harold Ellens, (Ed.), *The Destructive Powers of Religion: Violence in Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Volume Three: Models and Cases of Violence in Religion)*. Westport, CT: Praeger; (3) *Naming the Powers: The language of power in the New Testament*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress; (1988). (4) *The Powers that Be: Theology for a new millennium*. New York, NY: Doubleday; (1985). (5) *Unmasking the Powers: The invisible forces that determine human existence*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress.

clxxv <http://www.snapnetwork.org>

clxxvi See also <http://richardsipe.com/Dialogue/Dialogue-17-2008-11.html>

clxxvii Robert M. Brown, op.cit.

clxxviii John L. Allen (Ed.). (2004). *Bishop Desmond Tutu: The Rainbow People of God: The making of a peaceful revolution*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

clxxix Hannah Arendt, 1969a, op.cit, p. 152.

clxxx Grand Jury Report (January 21, 2011), Court of Common Pleas, First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia County. http://www.bishop-accountability.org/pa_philadelphia/Philly_GJ_report.htm

clxxxi Pattern abstracted from the January 21, 2011 Grand Jury Report of the Court of Common Pleas, First Judicial District, Philadelphia County, PA regarding Roman Catholic diocesan hierarchy and their secretive, abusive behavior towards victims of clergy sexual abuse in the Philadelphia Diocese. Non-cooperative and obstructive behaviors towards the civil justice system are also noted. Retrieve from http://www.bishop-accountability.org/pa_philadelphia/Philly_GJ_report.htm

clxxxii Thomas P. Doyle (September 8, 2009, p. 3) *Tom Doyle Writes to California Supreme Court re Quarry v the Roman Catholic Bishop of Oakland*. Retrieve from <http://reform-network.net/p=2357>

clxxxiii Thomas P. Doyle, Ibid.

clxxxiv Hannah Arendt, op. cit, 1969b

clxxxv Hannah Arendt, Ibid., p. 5.

clxxxvi See the June 7, 2010 issue of *Time Magazine* for its extended discussion of the current crisis of faith caused by the Roman Catholic Church's decades-long internal management of its sexually abusive priests.

clxxxvii See: (1) <http://www.andersonadvocates.com/default.aspx>; (2) <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/AbuseTracker/>; (3) <http://www.snapnetwork.org>; and (4) <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/AbuseTracker/>;

Essay # Ten: A Riff on Conflicting Ecclesiologies

clxxxviii See" http://www.jstba.com/Clipart/church_clipart_white.gif

clxxxix See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hélder_Câmara

cx^c An early reader of this essay created and then shared this paraphrase with me with the request that her name not be used to identify her.

cx^{ci} For an early discussion of the principles of liberation theology, see Gustavo Gutierrez (1973). *The Liberation of Theology* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press

^{cxcii} Juan Luis Segundo (1976a). *The Hidden Motives of Pastoral Action: Latin American reflections*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

^{cxci} Retrieve Thomas P. Doyle's lecture at <http://vimeo.com/20075275>

^{cxci} Retrieve Jeffrey Anderson's comments at (<http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/MortalS>).

^{cxci} For his excellent summary and discussion of this kind of analysis, see Robert M. Brown (1987). *Religion and Violence*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster. Brown was a Presbyterian minister and a Christian theologian-ethicist.

^{cxci} Marianne Benkert, a physician and psychiatrist addresses some of these complex developmental issues in her July, 2013 address to SNAP in Washington DC: *The Disruption of Normal Psychological Development in the Sexually Abused Child and Adolescent*. This address is now available in the public realms on www.richardsipe.com

^{cxci} Judith Lewis Herman (1997). *Trauma and Recovery: the aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

^{cxci} Michael Kelly (November 7, 2013). Irish News: Vatican Breaks Silence on Flannery Case (re; Cardinal William Levada, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith). See: <http://www.irishcatholic.ie/article/lavada-breaks-silence-flannery-case>

^{cxci} *Endemic*: regularly found among certain people or in certain areas.

^{cc} *Epidemic*: A rapid spread or increase of something, usually referring to infectious diseases but can also include social phenomenon such as riots or other social disorders, eg., *an epidemic of inner city arson*.

^{cci} For a community development model that describes a practical working methodology for this step, see www.preventioninstitute.org

^{ccii} J. Harold Ellens (Ed.) (2004), *The Destructive Powers of Religion: Violence in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*; Volume Four, Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, p. 6.

^{cciii} Andrew M. Greeley (2004b). *Priests: A calling in crisis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.

^{cciv} To follow this ebb and flow of religious leader sexual abuse around the world, visit the Bishop Accountability Abuse Tracker on a daily basis for one month. See: <http://www.bishop-accountability.org/AbuseTracker/>

^{ccv} For Doyle's extended and illuminating discussion of the role of church theology and the church's hierarchy as underlying problems in his church's sexual abuse crisis, see <http://vimeo.com/67774835>

^{ccvi} Matthew Fox, M. (2011). *The Pope's War: Why Ratzinger's secret crusade has imperiled the church and how it can be saved*. New York, NY: SterlingEthos. **See also**, Jason Berry (2011). *Render Unto Rome: The secret life of money in the Catholic*

Church. New York, NY: Crown Publishers. See also David Yallop (2007). *The Power and the Glory: Inside the dark heart of John Paul II's Vatican*. New York, NY: Carroll and Graf.

ccvii See: <http://vimeo.com/67774835>

ccviii Each of these sites or addressers encourages conversations with other sites: <http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com>; <http://christiancatholicism.com/will-the-next-pope-become-the-vaticans-last-pope/>; <http://catholics4change.com>; <http://reform-network.net>

ccix For a lecture given by Thomas P. Doyle in Belgium, see <http://vimeo.com/20075275>

ccx Martin E. Marty. (2007). *The Mystery of the Child*. Grand Rapids, Mi: William B. Erdman's, p. 31.

ccxi For a discussion of concepts related to this chapter see Thomas Doyle's 2013 conference address to a group of Minnesota lawyers. See: <http://vimeo.com/60664365>

ccxii Gregory Baum (2007). *Religion and Alienation*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, p. 119.

ccxiii Marianne Benkert and Thomas P. Doyle (2009). Clericalism: Religious Duress and its Psychological Impact on Victims of Clergy Sexual Abuse (pp. 221-238), *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* (58).

ccxiv Patrick Bergquist (2010). *The Long Dark Winter's Night: Reflections of a priest in a time of pain and privilege*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.

ccxv Frank Brunt and Elinor Burkett (1993). *Gospel of Shame: Children, sexual abuse and the Catholic Church*. New York, NY: Penguin.

ccxvi James Breslin (2004). *The Church that Forgot Christ*, New York, NY: Free Press.

ccxvii James Carroll, (2002). *Priests' Victims Victimized Twice*. Retrieve from <http://www.companionsinhope.com/Sunlight/Commentary/Victimizedtwice.htm>

ccxviii Joseph P. Chinicci (2010). *When Values Collide: The Catholic Church, Sexual Abuse and the challenges to leadership*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

ccxix Emmett Coyne (2012). *The Theology of Fear*. Charlestown, SC: Self-published

ccxx Paul R. Doeckki (2004). *The Clergy Sexual Abuse Crisis: Reform and renewal in the Catholic Community*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

ccxxi Thomas P. Doyle (2011). Sexual Abuse by Catholic Clergy: The spiritual damage (pp. 171-182) in T. Plant and K. McChesney (Eds.). *Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church: A decade of crisis, 2002-2012* (Eds.). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

ccxxii Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea (Manuscript, February 23, 2012). Naples, Fl: Manuscript: *Perversion of Power: When Mourning Never Comes: A speech to Voice of the Faithful*.

ccxxiii Phillip Jenkins (1996). *Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a contemporary crisis*. New York, NY: Oxford.

ccxxiv Eugene C. Kennedy (2001). *The Unhealed Wound: The church, the priesthood, and the question of sexuality*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

ccxxv William Lobdell (2009). *Losing My Religion: How I lost my faith reporting on religion in America --- and found unexpected peace*. New York, NY: Harper/Collins.

ccxxvi Leon J. Podles (2008). *Sacrilege: Sexual abuse in the Catholic Church*. Baltimore, MD: Crossland.

ccxxvii Geoffrey Robinson (2008). *Confronting Power and Sex in the Roman Catholic Church*. Retrieve from <http://www.bishopgeoffrobinson.org/usa/lecture.htm>

ccxxviii Peter Steinfels (2003). *A People Adrift: The crisis in the Roman Catholic Church of America*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

ccxxix Garry Wills (2013). *Why Priests: A failed tradition*. New York, NY: Viking.

ccxxx For an early discussion vis-à-vis some of these issues with United States Bishops, see Eugene C. Kennedy and Victor Heckler (1972). *The Catholic Priest in the United States: Psychological investigations*. Washington DC. U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Essay # Eleven: Jeremiah, the Weeping Prophet

ccxxxi See: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9b/Michelangelo_Buonarroti_027.jpg/300px-Michelangelo_Buonarroti_027.jpg. In the public domain.

ccxxxii See: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/302676/Jeremiah>

ccxxxiii The online Jewish virtual library identifies B'al as the great weather god of Western Semites. See: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0003_0_01786.html

Essay # Twelve: Sacrificing the Children

ccxxxiv See: <http://0.tqn.com/d/christianity/1/7/L/6/23IsraelGoldCalfAltar800x600.jpg>

ccxxxv Thomas P. Doyle, A. W. Richard Sipe and Patrick J. Wall (2006). *Sex, Priests and Secret Codes: The Catholic Church's 2000-year paper trail of sexual abuse*, Los Angeles, CA: Volt.

ccxxxvi See: <http://vimeo.com/60664365>

ccxxvii See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xHTkwnuszS4>

ccxxviii Doyle, Sipe, and Wall, op. cit.

ccxxix See: <http://snapworldconference.org/videos-speakers.html>

ccxi Idolatry is a word with many nuances. It can mean the worship of idols – inanimate objects believed to have spiritual powers. It can also mean intense adoration of, devotion to, or reverencing of someone or some abstract ideal. Worshipping at the various altars of human creation is another form. The overriding love of and devotion to the pursuit of money (and its accompanying power over others) is an example given in the Biblical text (For the love of money is the root of all evil; First Timothy 6:10). See also, Matthew 6:24 (You cannot serve God and mammon). Additional texts include the following:

(1) Matthew 21: 12-13: (It is written, Jesus said, *my house will be called a house of prayer but you have made it a den of thieves.*)

(2) Mark 11: 17 And as he taught them he (Jesus) said *Is it not written that my house will be a house of prayer for all nations but you have made it a den of thieves*

(3) Isaiah 56: 7: *My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations*

(4) Jeremiah 7: 11: *Don't you, yourselves, admit that this Temple, which bears my name, has become a den of thieves? Surely I see the evil going on there.*

ccxli See: <http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com/2013/06/bishop-geoffrey-robinson-to-pope.html>

ccxlii See;
<http://www.awrsipe.com/reports/2013/Spirituality%20and%20the%20Culture%20of%20Narcissism%20-%20Complete%20article%20-%20208-30-2013.pdf>

ccxliii See lecture given by Lonna Hunter, <http://vimeo.com/60670367>

ccxliv James George Frazier (1998). *The Golden Bough: Volumes One and Two*. London, UK: Wentworth Editions Ltd.

ccxlv Sigmund Freud (1950). *Totem and Taboo*. New York, NY: Norton.

ccxlvi See discussion of the Canaanite underworld deities:
<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/faithpromotingrumor/2010/01/child-sacrifice-a-traditional-religious-practice-in-ancient-israel/>

ccxlvii See *Archeology and the Bible*:
<http://www.diggingonline.com/pages/rese/books/comment/joshua.htm>

ccxlviii As one example, see First Samuel 15 in what appears to be a commandment for genocide – specifically mentioning the children as an object of murdering intentionality.

ccxlix See: Judges 11: 1-40; see also: Phyllis Trible (1984). *Texts of Terror: Literary-feminist readings of biblical narratives*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

ccl Massimiliano Soldani Benzi's (1772), *The Sacrifice of Jephtha's Daughter* [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/54/Massimiliano Soldani Benzi - The Sacrifice of Jephthah%27s Daughter.JPG](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/54/Massimiliano_Soldani_Benzi_-_The_Sacrifice_of_Jephthah%27s_Daughter.JPG), in the public domain

ccli Phyllis Trible, op. cit.

cclii Genesis 22" 1-19

ccliii Phyllis Trible, op. cit.

ccliv James Carroll (2001). *Constantine's Sword*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin. See also: DVD *Constantine's Sword* (September 10, 2008), First Run Features. For purchasing information see: http://www.amazon.com/Constantines-Sword-Philip-Bosco/dp/B00181XY6M/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1378161251&sr=8-1&keywords=constantine%27s+sword+movie

cclv See: http://news.bbc.co.uk/olmedia/145000/images/149303_300auschwitz_crosses_7-8.jpg

cclvi See: <http://cdn.theatlantic.com/static/mt/assets/international/Concentration-Camp-1939.jpg>

cclvii Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker (2009) *Saving Paradise: How Christianity Traded Love of this World for Crucifixion and Empire*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press. (2) See also: (2001) *Proverbs to Ashes: Violence, redemptive suffering and the search for what saves us*. Boston, MA: Beacon.

cclviii See: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_ysbqAK-74JE/R7erViEe6cl/AAAAAAAAAE/kGcoYkN1Mvo/s320/A020_OurLordScourged005.jpg

cclix See: <http://www.katsandogz.com/onchildren.html>

cclx See: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCVvoL_F5gA

cclxi See: Micah 6:7' Deuteronomy 18: 10-12

cclxii See: Matthew 18: 6

cclxiii The works of Alice Miller, a European analyst, are a good beginning place for grown-ups to understand the damages of child abuse in the lifetime of individuals. (1) Alice Miller (1990). *Banished Knowledge*, New York, NY: Doubleday; (1991). (2) *Breaking Down the Wall of Silence: The liberating experience of facing painful truth*. New York, NY: Penguin/Dutton; (1980a). (3) *The Drama of the Gifted Child*. New York, NY: Basic Books; (1983). (4) *For Your Own Good: Hidden cruelty in child-rearing and the roots of violence*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux; (1980b). (5) *The Untouched Key: Tracing childhood trauma in creativity and destructiveness*, (H. and H. Hnum, Trans.).

New York, NY: Doubleday; (1984); (6) *Thou Shalt Not Be Aware: Society's betrayal of the child*. New York, NY: Meridian

cclxiv Nelle Morton (1985). *The Journey is Home*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

cclxv See lecture given by Michael V. Johnson at <http://vimeo.com/60677991>

Essay # Thirteen: Dreams as Portals of Knowing

cclxvi See

<http://www.trbimg.com/img-512defc6/turbine/la-thousands-jam-st-peters-for-popes-last-gene-001/600>

cclxvii Vatican Two Report, *Guadium et Spies*, quoted in Juan Luis Segundo (1976). *The Liberation of Theology* (p. 45). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

cclxviii Matthew Fox (2000). (1) *One River, Many Wells*. New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin; (2) (2011); *The Pope's War: Why Ratzinger's secret crusade has imperiled the church and how it can be saved*. New York, NY: SterlingEthos.

Essay # Fourteen: Religious and Spiritual Problems

cclxix See: http://www.jstba.com/Clipart/church_clipart_white.gif

cclxx Rafael Chodas, (2004). God Does Not Require Obedience: He Abhors it (pp. 77-110) in J. Harold Ellens, (Ed.), Volume Four: *The Destructive Power of Religion: Violence in Judaism, Christianity and Islam: Contemporary views on spirituality and violence*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

cclxxi American Psychiatric Association, (1994). *DSM-iv-r*. Washington, DC: APA, p. 685.

cclxxii David Lukoff (1998). From Spiritual Emergency to Spiritual Problem: The Transpersonal Roots of the New DSM IV Category. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 38 (2), 21-50. See: <http://www.spiritualcompetency.com/hpseart.htm>

cclxxiii Jennifer L. Freyd (1996). *Betrayal Trauma: The legacy of forgetting childhood abuse*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Jennifer J. Freyd, 1998, p. 164

cclxxiv See www.ruthkrall.com to download these volumes

cclxxv Clericalism: An institutional clergy structure and practice that protects the clergy and church institutions at the expense of the laity.

cclxxvi Judith L. Herman (1992). Complex PTSD: A syndrome in survivors of prolonged and repeated trauma (PP. 377-391). *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, (3).

cclxxvii Jennifer L. Freyd (1996). *Betrayal Trauma: The legacy of forgetting childhood abuse*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

cclxxviii Lewis K. Goldberg and Jennifer L. Freyd (2006). Self-reports of potentially traumatic experiences in an adult community sample: gender differences and test-retest stabilities of the items in a brief betrayal trauma survey (pp. 39-63). *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation* 7 (3).

cclxxix Marianne Benkert and Thomas P. Doyle (November 27, 2008). *Religious Duress and its Impact on Victims of Clergy Sexual Abuse* [Manuscript, pp. 1-28.].

cclxxx See <http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/MortalS>

cclxxxi Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea (February 23, 2012). Naples, FL: *Perversion of Power: When Mourning Never Comes: A speech to Voice of the Faithful*. Retrieve from www.richardsipe.com

cclxxxii Andrew M. Greeley (2004b). *Priests: A calling in crisis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

cclxxxiii Thomas P. Doyle (July 13, 2008). (1) *The Survival of the Spirit While Mired in the Toxic Wastes of the Ecclesiastical Swamp*. Retrieve from www.richardsipe.com; (2) (December 31, 2008 [2009]). The Spiritual Trauma Experienced by Victims of Catholic Clergy Abuse (239-250). *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* (58); (2011). (3) Sexual Abuse by Catholic Clergy: The Spiritual Damage (pp. 171-182) in T. Plant and K. McChesney (Eds.), *Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church: A decade of crisis, 2002-2012*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger. (4). See also a live lecture presentation on <http://vimeo.com/60664365>

cclxxxiv See <http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com/2013/10/bill-tammeuss-open-letter-to-pope.html>

cclxxxv Geoffrey Robinson.

See: <http://bilgrimage.blogspot.com/2013/06/bishop-geoffrey-robinson-to-pope.html>

cclxxxvi A. W. Richard Sipe (November 15, 2009). *Unspeakable Damage: The Effect of Clergy Sexual Abuse*. Retrieve from <http://richardsipe.com>

cclxxxvii See <http://patrickjwall.wordpress.com>

cclxxxviii For one example of this kind of deconstruction, see Father Thomas Doyle's discussion of the Roman Catholic priest's identity. Retrieve from <http://vimeo.com/67774835>

cclxxxix Natalie Goldberg (2004). *The Great Failure: A bartender, a Monk and my unlikely path to truth*. San Francisco, CA: Harper San Francisco.

ccxc Stephen. J. Rosetti (Ed). (1990) *Slayer of the Soul: Child Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church*. Mystic, CT: Twenty Third Publications; (2) Leonard Shengold (1989). *Soul Murder: The effects of childhood abuse and deprivation*. New York, NY: Fawcett

Columbine; (3) Leonard Shengold (1999). *Soul Murder Revisited: Thoughts about therapy, hate, love and memory*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press; (4) A. W. R. Sipe, (August 5, 2009). *Unspeakable Damage: The Effects of Clergy Sexual Abuse*. See http://richardsipe.com/click_and_learn/2009-11-15_unspeakabledamage.htm

^{ccxcxi} Judith L. Herman (1992). Complex PTSD: A syndrome in survivors of prolonged and repeated trauma (pp. 377-391). *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, (3).

^{ccxcii} Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea (Manuscript, June 14, 2002), *The Experience of the Victim: A Reflection*. Dallas, TX: An Address to the [Roman Catholic] Hierarchy. Retrieve from:

http://www.snapnorthwest.org/experience_of_the_victim_survivor.htm; (2) (2007), *Perversion of Power: Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church*. Nashville, TN: University of Vanderbilt Press; (3) Judith Lewis Herman and L. Hirschman (1977), Father-daughter Incest (pp. 735-756). *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 2, 735-756; (2000), (4) *Father-daughter Incest*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

^{ccxciii} Frank Lafermere. (2013, p. 1). I Don't Want to Hate Anymore: Help us Forgive. See

http://www.berlindailysun.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47561:i-don-t-want-to-hate-anymore-help-us-forgive&catid=73:letter&Itemid=428

^{ccxciv} Frank Lafermere, *ibid*, p. 2

^{ccxcv} For a detailed description of compassion fatigue, traumatic transference, etc., see the website for the American Institute of Stress at <http://www.stress.org/military/for-practitionersleaders/compassion-fatigue/>

^{ccxcvi} J. Harold Ellens, 2007, Volume One, p. 3

^{ccxcvii} Elizabeth Lesser (July-August, 2010). Ten Pitfalls to Avoid on the Path (p. 54). *Spirituality and Healing* 13 (4).

^{ccxcviii} Thomas P. Doyle (2013). SNAP Address in Dublin, Ireland. Retrieve from: <http://vimeo.com/67774835>

^{ccxcix} David. Lukoff, (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>

^{ccc} Rufus M. Jones, (undated). Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Retrieve from: http://christianbookshelf.org/jones/spiritual_reformers_in_the_16th_and_17th_centuries/chapter_ii_hans_denck_and.htm

^{ccci} See” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inner_light

^{cccii} Matthew Fox (2000). *One River: Many Wells: Wisdom Emerging from Global Faiths*. New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher.

^{ccciii} James Hillman (1996). *The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling*. New York, NY: Random House.

ccciv Will Oursler (1960). *The Road to Faith*. New York, JY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, p. 13.

cccv Frank Lafermere, op.cit, p. 3

cccvi Eckhart Tolle (2011) Eckhart on the Dark Night of the Soul. *Creating a New Earth Together*. See: <http://www.eckhartolle.com/newsletter/october-2011>

cccvii Eckhart Tolle, Ibid.

cccviii Frank Lafermere, op.cit, p.2

cccix During early spring, 2013, Father Thomas Doyle spoke in Dublin, Ireland to a group of Roman Catholic survivors of sexual abuse. In this lecture he began the much-needed work of deconstructing the Catholic Church's classical theology of priests as ontologically changed human beings as one correlating aspect of the cultural form of clergy sexual violence. See <http://vimeo.com/67774835>

cccx Emilie P. Rose (1996). *Reaching for the Light: A Guide for Ritual Abuse Survivors and Their Therapists*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press.

cccxi For a brief discussion of the Stockholm Syndrome, see <http://health.howstuffworks.com/mental-health/mental-disorders/stockholm-syndrome.htm>

cccxi See: <http://reform-network.net/?p=22122>

cccxi See: <http://vimeo.com/60664365>

cccxiv Patricia Roth Schwartz (1988). Women and Spirituality (p. 10). *Belles Lettres* 3 (20).

cccxv Cognitive dissonance is a term used to describe the human experience which happens when one belief or attitude or experience contradicts another belief, attitude of experience. As human beings we tend to seek consistency between beliefs, attitudes, behavior, and our experience of the world. When there is a discrepancy or an overt conflict between any of these domains of our experience, we tend to be very uncomfortable. When such a discrepancy becomes obvious to us, something must change in order that we can lower the intense feelings of discomfort. See: <http://psychology.about.com/od/cognitivepsychology/f/dissonance.htm>

cccxvi Joel Kramer and Diana Alstad. (1993). *The Guru Papers: Masks of Authoritarian Power*. Berkeley, CA: Frog Ltd.

cccxvii Milton M. Berger (Ed.). (1978). *Beyond the Double Bind*, New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel and Sluzki, C. E. and D.C. Ransom, (Eds.). (1976). *Double-bind: The foundation of the communicational approach to the family*. New York, NY: Grune and Stratton.

cccxviii (1) Peter A. Levine and Ann Frederick (1997), *Waking the Tiger, Healing Trauma: The innate capacity to transform overwhelming experiences*, New York, NY: North Atlantic; (2) Robert M. Sapolsky (1994), *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: A guide to stress, stress-related diseases, and coping*. New York, NY: W. H. Freeman and Company; and (3) Babette Rothschild (2000). *The Body Remembers: The psycho-physiology of trauma and trauma treatment*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.

cccix See: <http://reform-network.net/?p=22122>

cccxx Saundra Ingerman, (2006) *Mending the Fragmented Self*. New York, NY: Harper and Row

cccxxi In Zen Buddhism, a koan is a riddle which cannot be solved by logical reasoning. I am adapting the use of the word koan to the victim's experiences because in situations of clergy sexual abuse and in situations of systemic clericalism, the victim encounters a form of cognitive dissonance which cannot be solved by logical reasoning.

cccxxii Frank Lafermere, op.cit, p.3.

cccxxiii Frank Lafermere, op.cit, p.2

cccxxiv In a 2013 conference address to Minnesota lawyers, Father Thomas Doyle describes and discusses "outsourcing the gospel to liability lawyers."

See: <http://vimeo.com/60664365>

cccxxv Clive Staples Lewis (1967). *The Screwtape Letters*. New York, NY: Harpers.

cccxxvi Walter Wink (1) (1992). *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and resistance in a world of domination*, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress; (2) (1984). *Naming the Powers: The language of power in the New Testament*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress; (3) (1988). *The Powers that Be: Theology for a new millennium*. New York, NY: Doubleday; and (4) (1985). *Unmasking the Powers: The invisible forces that determine human existence*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress.

cccxxvii Huston Smith (1) (1958/1986). *The Illustrated World's Religions: A Guide to our Wisdom Traditions*. New York, NY: HarperOne; (2) (2010). *Tales of Wonder: Chasing the Divine, An autobiography*. New York, NY: HarperOne; (3) (1958/1991) *The World's Religions*. New York, NY: Harper One.

cccxxviii Will Oursler, op.cit. p. 73.

cccxxix <http://www.citiministries.org>

Essay # Fifteen: Spiritual Maturity

cccxxx Quoted on a Syracuse Cultural Worker's Poster

cccxxxi American Psychiatric Association (1994). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, (4th ed.). Washington, DC: APA Press.

ccxxxix Anson Shupe (1995). (1) *In the Name of All that's Holy: A theology of clergy malfeasance*. Westport, CT: Yale University Press; (2008). (2) *Rogue Clerics: The social problem of clergy deviance*. Brunswick, NJ: Transaction; (3) (Ed.,1998). *Wolves within the Fold: Religious leadership and abuses of power*. Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press; (4) with W. A. Stacey and S. D. Darnell (Eds., 2000). *Bad Pastors: Clergy misconduct in America*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

ccxxxix See www.richardsipe.com for many of Sipe's lectures and articles on topic of clergy psycho-sexual-social maturation.

ccxxxix Current estimates average between 10 and 12 % of Christian clergy are sexually abusive. Denominational heritage does not seem to alter these statistics to significant degrees. See Karen Labacqz and Ronald G. Barton (1991). *Sex in the Parish*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox.

ccxxxix Ann Terruwe and Conrad Baars (November, 1971). Manuscript: *The Role of the church in the Causation, Treatment, and Prevention of Crisis in the Priesthood*. Retrieve from www.richardsipe.com”

ccxxxix Ann Terruwe and Conrad Baars, *ibid*.

ccxxxix Ann Terruwe and Conrad Baars, *ibid*.

ccxxxix Eugene C. Kennedy and Victor Heckler (1972). *The Catholic Priest in the United States: Psychological investigations*. Washington DC. U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops. See: <http://www.abebooks.com/book-search/author/eugene-c-kennedy-victor-j-heckler/page-1/>

ccxxxix Eugene C. Kennedy and Victor Heckler, *Ibid*, p. 18.

ccxxxix We here means anyone who has seriously worked over time with the issues of clergy and religious leader sexual abuse – lawyers, psychotherapists, physicians, police, district attorneys, victim advocates, theologians, ethicists, politicians, etc. I have bracketed out victims of abuse unless they have emerged as leaders in the abuse prevention movement or victim healing movement and have moved beyond the overwhelming personal need to deal with their personal victimization to deliberately and actively helping others.

ccxli Natalie Goldberg (2004). *The Great Failure: A bartender, a monk and my unlikely path to truth*. Boulder, CO: Sounds True

ccxli Anson Shupe, *op.cit*.

ccxlii Natalie Goldberg (2004). *The Great Failure: A bartender, a monk and my unlikely path to truth*. Boulder, CO: Sounds True; (2) Sam Keen (1994). *Hymn to an Unknown God: Awakening the Spirit in everyday life*. New York, NY: Bantam; (3) Joel Kramer and Diana Alstad (1993). *The Guru Papers: Masks of authoritarian power*. Berkeley, CA: Frog Ltd; (4) Elizabeth Lesser (July-August, 2010). Ten Pitfalls to Avoid on the Path (p. 54). *Spirituality and Healing* 13 (4).

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- cccxliv Matthew Fox (2002). *One River, Many Wells: Wisdom Springing from Global Faiths*. New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin.
- cccxliv Huston Smith (2009). *Tales of Wonder: Adventures chasing the divine*. New York, NY: Harper/One
- cccxliv Erik H. Erikson (1994). *Identity and the Life Cycle*. New York: NY: W. W. Norton.
- cccxlvi Erik H. Erikson, Joan M. Erikson, and Helen Q. Kivnick (1986). *Vital Involvement in Old Age*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton and Co., pp. 38-40.
- cccxlvi Erik H. Erikson, Joan M. Erikson, and Helen Q. Kivnick, *ibid*, p. 34.
- cccxlvi For a brief discussion of the various stages from infancy to old age, see [http://info.psu.edu.sa/psu/math/Erikson's%20Theory%20of%20Psychosocial%20Development%20\(2\).pdf](http://info.psu.edu.sa/psu/math/Erikson's%20Theory%20of%20Psychosocial%20Development%20(2).pdf)
- cccxlvi Gregory Bateson, G. (1976). Double-bind in C. E. Sluzki and D.C. Ransom,(Eds.). *Double-bind: The foundation of the communicational approach to the family* (pp. 237-242). New York, NY: Grune and Stratton.
- cccxlvi A. W. Richard Sipe (September 30, 2010). *The Road to Celibacy; Let's Pretend* (July 25, 2007); *Sex in Roman Catholic Seminaries and Beyond*. Retrieve both from <http://richardsipe.com>
- cccxlvi Peter a. Levine and Ann Frederick (1997). *Waking the Tiger, Healing Trauma: The innate capacity to transform overwhelming experiences*, New York, NY: North Atlantic; Babette Rothschild (2000). *The Body Remembers: The psychophysiology of trauma and trauma treatment*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.
- cccxlvi James Fowler (1995). *Stages of Faith: The psychology of human development and the quest for meaning*. New York, NY: Harper/One; (1999) *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian: Adult development and Christian faith*. New York, NY: Jossey-Bass.
- cccxlvi Lawrence Kohlberg (1981). *Essays on Moral Development* (Volume One): *The philosophy of moral development: Moral stages and the idea of justice*. New York, NY: Harper and Row.
- cccxlvi Carol Gilligan (1993). *In a Different Voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Carol Gilligan, Janine Victoria Ward, Jill McLean with Betty Baird (1990). *Mapping the Moral Domain: A contribution of women's theory and education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- cccxlvi Theodore W. Adorno, Elsa Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levenson and R. Nevitt Sanford (1980). *The Authoritarian Personality*. New York, NY: Harper and Row.
- cccxlvi Herbert C. Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton (1989). *Crimes of Obedience*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- cccxlvi Rollo May (ca 1975), Personal conversations, Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

ccclviii See Father Thomas P. Doyle's discussion of Roman Catholic spiritual and moral immaturity – among leaders and among members of the laity” <http://reform-network.net/?p=22122>

ccclix See: <http://vimeo.com/60664365>

ccclx A. W. Richard Sipe (October 15, 2007). *Witness from Seminaries*. See <http://richardsipe.com/Dialogue/Dialogue-13-2007-10-15.html>

ccclxi Stanley Milgram (1974). *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View*. New York, NY: Harper and Row.

ccclxii Hannah Arendt (2006). *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, New York, NY: Penguin; (1973) *The Origin of Totalitarianism*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich; (2) Philip G. Zimbardo (2008). *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding how good people turn evil*. New York, NY: Random House Trade Paperbacks; (3) William George Eckhard (2000, Chief Prosecutor, My Lai trials). *My Lai: An American Tragedy*. See: <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/mylai/ecktragedy.html>

ccclxiii See: Marianne Benkert (2013). <http://www.awrsipe.com/Lectures/SNAP/THE%20DISRUPTION%20OF%20NORMAL%20PSYCHOLOGICAL%20DEV.pdf>

ccclxiv See Thomas P. Doyle (2013): <http://reform-network.net/?p=22122>

ccclxv See Marianne Benkert, Thomas P. Doyle, and A. W. Richard Sipe (2013): <http://www.awrsipe.com/reports/2013/Spirituality%20and%20the%20Culture%20of%20Narcissism%20-%20Complete%20article%20-%2008-30-2013.pdf>; See also Thomas P. Doyle (2013): <http://reform-network.net/?p=22122>

ccclxvi Thomas P. Doyle (2013) addresses these complex issues of authoritarianism and secrecy in an address to Minnesota lawyers. See: <http://vimeo.com/60664365>

ccclxvii See <http://vimeo.com/67774835>

ccclxviii Herbert C. Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton (1989) *Crimes of Obedience*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

ccclxix Herbert C. Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton, *ibid.*

ccclxx Johnetta Cole (December 10, 2014). Interview with Jeffrey Brown regarding the moral and political legacy of Nelson Mandela, PBS News Hour.

ccclxxi PBS – The News Hour (December 6, 2013) commentary on the life and death of Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa and Nobel Peace Prize winner.

ccclxxii A. W. Richard Sipe (July 25, 2007). *Sex in Roman Catholic Seminaries and Beyond*. See: <http://richardsipe.com/Dialogue/Dialogue-12-2007-07-25.html>

ccclxxiii See Rachel Naomi Remen's work on this topic, for example, the essay written for *Shambala Sun*:

http://www.shambhalasun.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2323

ccclxxiv See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCrSigY-TVw> to watch a segment of curling finals.

ccclxxv Matthew Fox, (op. cit).

ccclxxvi Thomas P. Doyle (June 27, 2013) *Thirty Years: What We've Learned and What I've Learned*. Washington, DC: SNAP. See <http://reform-network.net/?p=22122>

ccclxxvii Ruth E. Krall (Spring, 1996). Anger and an Anabaptist Feminist Hermeneutic (pp. 145-163), *Conrad Grebel Review* 14(2).

ccclxxviii I am Indebted to Father Thomas Doyle for this penetrating insight. See <http://vimeo.com/60664365>

ccclxxix Starhawk. (1981). *Truth or Dare: Encounters with power, authority and mystery*. San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row.

Essay # Sixteen: A Riff on the Present Moment

ccclxxx Herbert C. Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton (1989). *Crimes of Obedience*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, p. 124.

ccclxxxi I no longer have the reference data for this particular quotation. I copied it and carried it with me during a painful transition in my life and it continues to inform me when I face stressful or painful realities in my personal life.

ccclxxxii I am indebted to physician Emmett Miller for his example of the game of curling as a metaphor about healing.

ccclxxxiii Jean Shinoda Bolen, (1999). *The Millionth Circle: How to change ourselves and the world*. Berkeley, CA: Conari, p. 3.

ccclxxxiv Thomas Doyle's 2013 lecture to SNAP in Dublin. Retrieve from <http://vimeo.com/67774835>

Essay # Seventeen: Deep Grief

ccclxxxv See: http://s3.amazonaws.com/rapgenius/1371217300_jesuswept-zoom.jpg

ccclxxxvi See: <http://thinkingpacifism.net/2013/07/31/whats-to-be-done-about-john-howard-yoder-guestpost/>

ccclxxxvii See: <http://thinkingpacifism.net/2013/08/05/reflections-from-a-chagrined-yoderian-part-four-yoders-theology/>

ccclxxxviii Survivor's Network of those Abused by Priests

ccclxxxix See: <http://www.awrsipe.com/Lectures/SNAP/SNAP%202013%20PLENARY.pdf>

cccxc Thomas P. Doyle (June 27, 2013) SNAP Address: *Thirty Years: What we've learned and what I've learned*. See: <http://reform-network.net/?p=22122>

cccxcj Nelle Morton (1989). *The Journey is Home*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

cccxcii I have found two books – as a non-liturgist – to be helpful: The first is Tom Driver's book (1991). *Liberating Rites: The transformative power of ritual*. San Francisco, CA: Harper/San Francisco. The second is Ronald L. Grimes book (2002). *Deeply Into the Bone: Re-visiting rites of passage*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

cccxciii Simon Wiesenthal, (1997). *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness*, Book One: Wiesenthal's Question. New York, Y: Schocken.

cccxciv Deborah E. Lipstadt (1998). Symposium Response (pp.193-196) in H. J. Cargas and B.V. Fetterman (Eds.). Book Two: *The Sunflower Symposium*. New York, NY: Schocken.

cccxcv See the collected anthology of articles in Sharon Lamb and Jeffrie Murphey (Eds.). (2002). *Before Forgiving: Cautionary Views of Forgiveness in Psychotherapy*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. An important descriptive and analytical essay in this collection is that written by Janet Landman (2002), Earning Forgiveness: The Story of Perpetrator Katherine Ann Power (pp. 232-261),

cccxcvi Tom Driver (1991), *op.cit.* p.8.

cccxcvii In the same way that some African-American feminists and womanists have gone to the House of Slaves and its *gate of no return* on Goree Island, Senegal, Africa and have ritually sought to seal it (and its historical evils) from ever again being used to export black individuals into slavery, I have often pondered what ritual acts might be used to seal the doors and driveways to abusive enabling institutions so that small children, adolescents, and vulnerable adults might forever be protected from the dual evils of abuse (sexual abuse and the institutional enablement of sexual abusers) done in God's name by the ruling elites of these institutions.

For the house of slaves, see: See:

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/97/Senegal_Gor%C3%A9e_%288%29.jpg/220px-Senegal_Gor%C3%A9e_%288%29.jpg;

For the portal of suffering, see:

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/56/Portal_of_sorrow-senegal-01.jpg/220px-Portal_of_sorrow-senegal-01.jpg



House of Slaves



Portal of Suffering:
The Gate of no Return

cccxcviii <http://i869.photobucket.com/albums/ab256/crystalfalls/waterfalls-04.jpg>

Essay # Seventeen: It Only Takes One

cccxcix The Hon. Helen Meyer: See <http://vimeo.com/60661676>

Appendix A: Sexual Abuse Glossary

cd Jennifer J. Fried, *Betrayal Trauma: The Logic of Forgetting Childhood Abuse*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 9

cdi Anson Shupe (Ed.). (2000). *Wolves within the Fold: Religious leadership and abuses of power*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, p. 1.

cdii Anson Shupe (2008). *Rogue Clerics: The social problems of clergy deviance*. Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publications, p.11.

cdiii Anson Shupe. (2008). p. 11.

cdiv Retrieved April 12, 2011 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elephant-in-the-room>

cdv A. W., Richard Sipe (May 3, 2010). *Sexual Abuse of Minors by U.S. Roman Catholic Bishops and Priests* (p. 1). Retrieve from <http://www.richardspie.com/Forensic/201-05-03-fact-check.htm>

cdvi Gregory Baum (2007). *Religion and Alienation*. New York, NY: Orbis, 76.

cdvii A. W. Richard Sipe (May 3, 2010). (ibid.,)

cdviii On January 6, 2012, United States Attorney General Eric Holder announced the first change in the federal definition of rape since 1929 (*The carnal knowledge of a female, forcibly and against her will*). The 2012 definition of rape is: *the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object or oral penetration by a sex*

organ of another person, without the consent of the person. This new wording will assist police in criminal investigations and prosecution. It will also affect the collection of demographic crime data. Finally, it will affect the summary reports of American Crime which are published annually in the *Uniform Crime Reports*. For additional information, see the Department of Justice webpage, www.justice.gov.

^{cdix} Mikele Rauch. (2009). *Healing the Soul after Religious Abuse: The dark heaven of recovery*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

^{cdx} Marianne Benkert and Thomas P. Doyle. (November 2, 2008)
Manuscript: *Religious Duress and Its Impact on Victims of Clergy Sexual Abuse*. p. 2.