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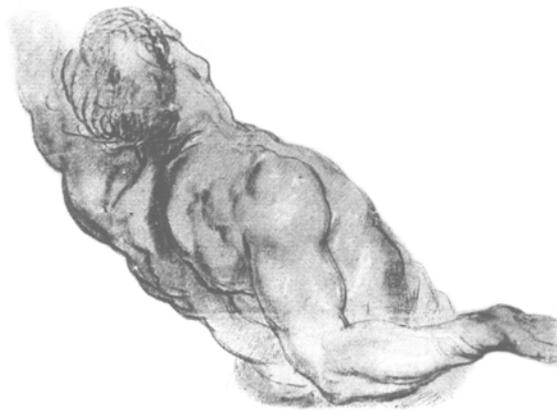


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USABP Mission Statement

The USABP believes that integration of the body and mind is essential to effective psychotherapy, and to that end, its mission is to develop and advance the art, science, and practice of body psychotherapy in a professional, ethical, and caring manner in order to promote the health and welfare of humanity. (revised October 1999)

Shadows on the Moon: The Neglect of the Soul and the Feminine in Body-Psychotherapy

Katherine Brown, MA

Abstract

This paper, originally a talk in Lindau at the 1991 EABP conference, deals with the unique challenge to every body psychotherapist to remain true to his/her inner self in the role of a psychotherapist and never to be straitjacketed by what the mind or rational ego has been taught by others. Women body psychotherapists who imitate the masculine orientation in terms of its dominant logos and spiritual warrior modes that affirm the will primarily betray the feminine soul. We must learn to trust the slower, quietly pervasive energy flow which emanates through our dominant chest and belly regions from endodermal depths. This flow connects us intuitively by way of immediate feeling resonances with the client's longings for personal growth and encourages the latter to explore and discover the natural healer within.

Keywords

Ego - Feminine - Flow - Masculine - Self - Shadows on the moon

Various aspects of the soul and the feminine have been working in the more unconscious dimensions of my body-psyche for many years. As they became more conscious they assumed great importance, demanding more and more of my attention, time, and devotion. My search for my own soul and for my feminine roots has not been an intellectual exercise, but an inner journey.

While struggling with the elusiveness of soul, these words of the poet John Keats captured my attention: "Call the world if you please, 'The Vale of Soul-making' then you will find out the use of the world". They come from a letter to his brother dated April 1819 in which he goes on to say, "...I say 'Soul-making'... There may be intelligence or sparks of divinity in millions but they are not Souls till they acquire identities, till each one is personally itself. This point I sincerely wish to consider because I think it a grander system of salvation than the Christian religion."

I was haunted by this quotation. On the one hand it seemed to sum up the direction of my inner journey and of my work as an organismic psychotherapist. On the other hand I knew that something was escaping me and that my continuing preoccupation with it was pointing to a deeper meaning. For years my major concern for others and myself has revolved around the necessity for acquiring personal identity by discovering and living the peculiar and unique aspects of our being in this world which guides each of us toward becoming who we truly are¹. Finally I realized that during all my years of personal psychotherapy, body-work and analysis, years of asking myself "Who am I?", I had not been asking the larger question, "Who am I as a woman?". I slowly realized that finding my identity as a woman demanded a much broader understanding of what it means to be a woman than the one I had learned growing up, and that finding my identity as a woman was connected with finding my soul. Only after years of therapy did I realize that I had any right to be other than the sweet, kind, quiet, polite, loving, thoughtful child my parents and grandparents expected me to be. It took me even longer to realize that, although I had always been "feminine identified", I had failed to see that my ideas of what it meant to be "feminine" had been narrowly conditioned by the cultural demands, and that from the wide range of inherent feminine possibilities, the patriarchal ego had found only the life-giving and protective motherly qualities acceptable. With this new understanding, I begin to ask myself how a girl or a woman could be if she were rooted in the feminine dimensions of her organism - instead of in the cultural ideas of how she should be. That question took me beyond psychology into the studies of myth, of history and prehistory. Those studies have brought me to a better understanding of why I had to be outside the field of psychology to find my feminine roots and they have also raised many questions about my work as an organismic psychotherapist, and about the field of body-psychotherapy.

Now I realize that each moment or stage in our individual lives has its own requirements. My preoccupation with the neglect of soul, although it began years ago, may be an expression of aging, that time of life when the needs of the soul eclipse ego needs, when an internal rightness with Self becomes more important than rightness with the values of the outer world. My concern for the neglect of feminine principles and values, however, cannot be laid at the doorstep of my age. It represents a change of consciousness toward the inclusion of feminine values, which is not mine alone: many others are actively engaged in this process also.

The words and ideals of the patriarchy, which have shaped our lives, continue to shape the language, concepts and theories of psychology and of our field of body-psychotherapy. And they will continue to do so until we begin to realize that the scientific-medical model, which we follow, and the essentially soulless tenants of academic psychology we have been taught are the products of and the perpetuators of the disembodied ego which formulated them. This ego, which is the representative of the cerebro-spinal system, has separated itself

¹ Modified from an address by Katherine L. Brown to the 3rd European Congress of Body Psychotherapy, Lindau, Germany, 17-20 Sept. 1991.

off from the totality of the organism and assumed dominance over the body and other parts of the psyche that are essential to our wholeness as human beings. It is the dominance of the disembodied ego that has split us within, depriving us of the richness of our inner-world - of connection to the feminine aspects of our beings - to our own souls and to the souls and bodies of others. This dominance of ego-consciousness can be corrected only by a descent into our bodies and to the more unconscious parts of our psyches where we will discover the unlived parts of ourselves. Bringing those hitherto unknown parts into consciousness will serve to balance the arrogant demands of the ego, thereby broadening and deepening our lives.

It has been heartening for me to discover that, although there has been little mention of the soul or the feminine in the literature of body-psychotherapy, there has been an increasing flow of publications from other disciplines which indicate that the shift of consciousness toward the incorporation of feminine values which I mentioned earlier is occurring in the hearts and minds of others. In the latter half of the last century, from Eric Neumann's "On the Moon and Matriarchal Consciousness" in 1950 to Elinor Gadon's The Once and Future Goddess in 1989, we find expression of the growing awareness that the eons-old repression of feminine values has resulted in a one-sided masculine-egoic view of the world, of nature, and of the relationships between human beings which begs correction. What is emerging in consciousness in women and men is the realization that despite more than 5,000 years of repression by the forces and force of the patriarchy - the Goddess still lives! When her temples in the outer world were destroyed, She went underground, withdrawing into the unconscious depths of the body-psyche where She still dwells. Her passion and power will never be destroyed for She is the other side of ourselves and we will never be at one with others or ourselves until we realize that the dominance of the patriarchal-ego, which drives us, also divides us. Whether we are male or female, wholeness demands a balance between our feminine and masculine sides. And if we want to re-discover and renew our connection with our feminine side we must be prepared to make the journey inward into our unconscious depths where we will discover not only the memories and images of our personal history, but our collective prehistory as well.

This journey inward and backward in time has been a long and often lonely one for me, and coming into the presence of the Goddess shook me to my core. Those of you who have had such experiences whether waking or sleeping will know what I am talking about, or if you have ever seen and been transfixed by the frescoes in the "Villa of Mysteries" at Pompeii you will know something about the power and numinosity of the archetypes which, once constellated, refuse to let go until they are assimilated. Those messages have the power to change our lives and assimilating them demands all of our faculties, rational and irrational. They have the power to turn our attention away from the demands of the outer world to the demands of the Soul and the inner world. We have been taught to place our trust in outer world authorities - mothers, fathers, pastors, doctors, teachers, etc. - and it is therefore extremely difficult for us to discover our inner authority and to have the courage to look at, or listen to the demands from our own depths, especially when we discover that those demands diverge sharply from what we have been taught. In those moments when we are caught between the demands of inner and outer authority we may distrust our sanity and need containment, understanding and support.

In the last two years the writings of Elinor Gadon, an art historian, and Riane Eisler, a sociologist, anthropologist, and attorney, have not only supported my search for an inner feminine image which would guide me but have also made me aware of the explosion of archeological findings data which have been discovered since World War II. Those discoveries have confirmed the worship of a female deity for nearly 30,000 years, from the latter part of the Paleolithic Age through the flowering of her worship in the Neolithic period, and well into the early Christian era when the last of the Goddess temples was closed in the fifth century BC. Goddess religion, as Elinor Gadon describes it,

...was earth centered, not heaven centered, of this world not otherworldly, body-affirming not body-denying, holistic not dualistic. The Goddess was immanent within every human being, not transcendent, and humanity was viewed as part of nature, death as a part of life. Her worship was sensual, celebrating the erotic, embracing all that was alive. The religious quest was for renewal, for regeneration of life, and the Goddess was the life force.

That is a far cry from the Judeo-Christian religious tradition, which posits a male god as the creator, whose realm is in heaven not in this world, and who decrees that our only means of attaining salvation is to deny the needs of our bodies and our instincts.

When the first evidence of the Goddess-oriented societies was unearthed in the 19th Century they were referred to as "matriarchal". The assumption then was that because they were centers of Goddess worship, they must have been ruled by women, and that, therefore, men were subservient. More recent evidence reveals that while they were matrilineal or matrilocal they were not "matriarchal" - that is, women did not rule those societies. As Riane Eisler, Elinor Gadon, James Mellaart, Marija Gimbutus and other archeologists, sociologists and ethnologists have demonstrated, those societies were far more egalitarian than any society that has developed since they were overrun by the barbaric invasions of nomadic tribes from Northern Europe and Asia between 4300 - 4200 BC. In those early societies which conceptualized the powers governing the universe in female form,

neither women nor men were subservient and both revered the life giving - life sustaining feminine qualities which the Goddess represented. They were concerned with protecting and nurturing the lives and the quality of life of all who lived within their borders: women, men, and children, and they revered and sought to live in harmony with the natural resources upon which their existence depended. In Eisler's words,

that although the feminine principle as the primary symbol of the miracle of life permeated Neolithic art and ideology, the male principle also played an important role ... neither was subordinate to the other: by complementing one another their power (was) doubled ... a power that was more equated with responsibility and love than with oppression, privilege and fear" (The Chalice and the Blade pp. 26-28).

In the peace and prosperity, which those early civilizations enjoyed, our social, cultural and technological evolution was advanced, and in a social system that promoted partnership, rather than male dominance and hierarchy, the basic technologies on which civilization is erected were developed.

The dominance of patriarchal consciousness was built upon the loss of reverence and respect for the Goddess, for the values of the feminine, and for nature. That loss affects all of us, for the feminine is not the prerogative of women - it belongs to men also - and the repression of the feminine principle has resulted in the sense of a loss of soul that both men and women are suffering today. Women, whose bodies have been bought, sold, bartered, and beaten for centuries have lost reverence for their own bodies. They are no longer aware that their bodies are closely aligned with nature: with the cyclical phases of the moon, the tides and the seasons. When men chose the life of the Ego and the Spirit over the life of the body and its instinctual needs, they were compelled to repress the values of the feminine - not only in the outer world but in the inner world as well. Men lost trust in their capacity for feeling and denied the mystery of their emotional depths. Little wonder that today both men and women find themselves isolated and faced with discontent, loneliness, and a loss of meaning.

The balance between the masculine and feminine principles, which has the power to unite us internally and externally, has been sundered by the over-evaluation of masculine ego-consciousness and rationality. The suffering of our bodies and psyches is trying to tell us that we have become too one-sided and are in a perilous state of imbalance. Physically, for example, the warnings come from the rise of stress-related disorders: high-blood pressure, heart attacks, and strokes. The psyche sends other messages of distress: in the day, by feeling states of isolation and distrust of ourselves and others; through our sense of boredom, restlessness and the loss of meaning in our lives; and through our fantasies of becoming ill, crippled, unable to work, poor, deserted, homeless and unloved. At night the dreams come: nightmares of global destruction, of earthquakes, storms, tidal waves or fires raging out of control. Perhaps we see ourselves mired in quicksand or enormous piles of shit - or running from thieves, rapists and murders. We awake in terror, soaked with sweat or tears. The disease of our psyches and the diseases of our bodies are two sides of the same coin, and both are trying to correct our one-sided preoccupation with the masculine principle and the dominance of the disembodied ego. These messages from the personal and collective body-psyche beg to be heard, not as manifestations of psychosomatic symptoms, or of personal neuroses, but as descriptions of the soul's suffering both personally and collectively.

In work with many women and men during these last years, I have seen how they have been forced from within by their own dreams and fantasies and the unconscious needs of their bodies to re-examine the value-system in which we have all been raised. Furthermore, as the feminine aspects emerge, the language of psychology is inadequate to explain or express the changes in inner and outer worlds. Our language has become as impoverished as our hearts and souls. The language, which we have all been taught, is the language of the disembodied ego - abstract, rational, scientific and above all impersonal and unemotional. It divides, separates and categorizes us and is descriptive of logical and mechanical causation, not of relationship. There are no words - no metaphors - to express the mystery of life, which is woven into the complexities and interrelationships that exist within and between human beings and the natural world they inhabit. We have been slow to realize that this language was formulated by and is the expression of an ego, which had separated itself from the body. We have also been deluded by centuries of rational, scientific thought into believing that it is the only language that has validity. We have long been taught that reason is the guiding authority and that only the mind thinks. We have forgotten the speech of the heart, which is imaginative and poetic, and have lost faith in the language of the body, which circulates through every cell.

Eric Neumann tell us in The Origin and History of Consciousness (p.310) that

the development of ego-consciousness is paralleled by a tendency to make itself independent of the body. This tendency finds its most obvious expression in masculine asceticism, world negation, mortification of the body and hatred of women ... (and the point of the struggle against the body and the feminine) was to strengthen the ego's stability, the will, and the higher (i.e. Spiritual) masculinity, and to establish a conscious sense of superiority over the body.

Those words of Neumann's offer an exact definition for and description of the term disembodied ego that I have been using. It seems necessary to me that we realize (1) that during the third Millennium BC it was the development of this disembodied ego-consciousness which fostered the rise of the Patriarchy, (2) that well before the writing of the Hebrew Bible, in a process which required some 2,500 years the values of the patriarchy had become well established and (3) that the Hebrew Bible crystallizes, codifies and records those established sustaining beliefs of the patriarchy that: a male God created the world, humans have the right to dominate nature, and men have the right to dominate women.

It was inevitable that during centuries of rule by the patriarchy those beliefs would become accepted as natural and unassailable. However, if we accept the premise that the strivings of the body-psyche are toward wholeness, it seems just as inevitable that eventually the one-sidedness of such a belief system and the culture which has been built upon it would demand a reversal, and that the energy and power of the repressed feminine would eventually attempt to reassert itself.

Our power ridden, materialistic western culture and the ecological fragility of the planet on which we live bear witness to the "success" of the dominance of masculine ego-consciousness. It seems that it has taken the extremity of our outer world situation and our inner-world distress to bring us to our senses, to our bodies, and to the unconscious dimensions of our psyches where the Goddess still dwells and where she waits to lead us back into a connection with the feminine side of ourselves. This renewal of feminine energy is needed in the world today to balance the masculine forces, which have led us to the verge of self and other destruction. I believe that we have reached the point which Eric Neumann spoke about 50 years ago when he wrote, "Only in later periods of development when patriarchy has fulfilled itself or gone to absurd lengths, losing its connection with Mother Earth does individuation bring about a reversal" (The Moon and Matriarchal Consciousness, p. 60). Certainly this reversal is only beginning to make its way into consciousness but as the destructive values of the patriarchal system continue to be lived out in their extremity - such as we have witnessed in Kuwait and Iraq and in Eastern Europe, Africa and other parts of the world - the need for the regenerative power of the repressed feminine will assume more and more urgency.

I am not advocating a return to the "Great Mother" - or to some matrilineal or matrilocal pattern of society - that would be neither possible nor desirable. I am suggesting that we need to find a balance between the masculine and feminine forces within and support that balance in the outer world. We need to acknowledge that we are divided internally as well as externally. Until each of us finds his or her own way of uniting the feminine and masculine elements within, the outer world will continue to be the battlefield upon which we enact our inner dilemma. It seems to me that we are again at one of those points in time when the voice of the repressed feminine is rising above a whisper. The future of civilization may well depend upon whether we listen to it, focus our attention on it and amplify it - or whether we continue to follow the din of the well known voice of masculine consciousness, which preaches power over others and backs up its demands with threats of violence backed by megatons of nuclear energy which can destroy us and lay waste to the planet which has nurtured us.

Now what, if anything, does all that I have said before about the feminine and soul - about prehistoric partnership societies and their overthrow by patriarchal dominance - have to do with the practice of body-psychotherapy today? First, I believe that we can gain new perspectives on our lives and our work if we attend to our own souls by befriending our bodies and the feminine in ourselves. Second, we have been so conditioned by the values of the patriarchy and the dominance of the disembodied ego that it is extremely difficult for us to see them for what they are - to see that they are parodies of our human possibilities. Third, we need new insights and information, such as those provided by recent archeological evidence, to stimulate our creative imagination and to confront our established ways of thinking and being. And fourth, we need new images and understandings of the body-psyche connection with which we all work. I do not believe that they will be found only by our refining and re-defining the concepts of EGO-psychology, which we inherited from Freud, Reich and Lowen.

The threat of global destruction that has brought questions of soul into consciousness, and the growing concern for the repressed aspects of the feminine in men and women, indicate that psychological consciousness is changing. Yet much of the language of psychology, psychiatry and psychotherapy which was developed during the 19th century by medical doctors and academic psychologists schooled in the diagnosis and treatment of disease remains the same. As Hillman points out in The Myth of Analysis, the words we use tend to become reified, giving us some kind of security that there are things to which those words refer. In using diagnostic categories - whether they come from the classic psychiatric model or from the character-muscular typology of Reich and Lowen - we make judgments about people from the outside and classify them according to what we call their disorders. Then we attempt to "cure" them of whatever illness we have conferred upon them. That reminds me of a very old joke - a famous psychiatrist was asked how long it took him to "cure" a patient. He was silent for a few moments and then replied, "Well, it depends on the "case", I'm very fast in "curing" schizoids but sometimes it takes a long time to make them into schizoids before I can cure them."

The language of diagnostic categories - of labeling, treating and curing what has been named - has been an anathema to me. Furthermore, in my 18 years of practice as an organismic psychotherapist I have found no justification for using these diagnostic categories to describe the soul suffering of the students and clients who

have come to work with us. On this point of diagnoses, Malcolm Brown's concept of the "Four Dynamic Being Centers of the Embodied Soul" and his theory of armoring - which bears little resemblance to Reich's - provides a much more fruitful approach to understanding the interpenetration and interdependence of body-psyche phenomena than do the character-muscular typologies of Reich and Lowen. The writings of Jung were support for my strong intuitive feeling that the abstractions of diagnostic categories obscure more of the individual than they reveal. Jung was concerned with Soul and, in contrast to his contemporaries, he steadfastly refused to provide a systematic theory of neurosis, descriptions of the etiology, or prescriptions for treatment. While others criticize him for this "lack", I feel indebted to his point of view.

I believe neurotic classifications are based on outwardly observable, classifiable behavioral acts, and in using them, we reduce the individual to the categories of behavior, such as oral, hysteric, masochistic, compulsive or whatever. Then, as therapists, we attempt to change the outward behavior to effect a "cure." This may give us some false sense of security - some belief that we know what we are doing - but it may also blind us to the fact that the individual differences, the unique qualities or quirks which distinguish one individual from every other individual, are overlooked and unsupported and the needs of the Soul which brought the individual into therapy in the first place remain unmet. When clients come to us they are searching for someone who understands their suffering. If we meet them from the outside - from our analytical, rational ego-consciousness - they will feel that they have not been seen or heard. On the other hand, if we meet them from our inside - from our embodied souls rather than as authority figures who "know what's wrong with them and how to fix it" - we may instead communicate our willingness to accompany them on their journey inward, to the unknown parts of the psyche, and downward into the depths and mysteries of the body which has been plundered, desecrated, and subjugated by the demands of the ego and the will.

Now it may well take a leap of faith - faith in ourselves rather than in theories - for us to trust and work from our embodied souls rather than from the rational ego, which we have been taught, to believe has all the answers. To make this leap toward soul-connection with the other we must be willing to leave our theories in the background and work phenomenologically, moment by moment.

Even to want to work in this way assumes that we have discovered - from our own journey inward and downward - the necessity for bringing the needs of the vegetative or autonomic nervous system into awareness before there is any possibility of challenging the power of the rational ego and the will which are the products of the dominant cerebrospinal circuits in combination with the voluntary musculature. In other words, if we have discovered and learned to trust the balancing power of the slower, more quietly pervasive energy flow which emanates from our endodermal depths we will understand the necessity for helping our clients - male and female - to sense, by experiencing moment-to-moment in the sessions, the immediacy of the body and the workings of the autonomic nervous system upon which the endodermal flow is dependent. Our focus as therapists then will be on supporting the client's growing awareness of and trust in his or her body-psyche processes as the locus of inner authority. In so doing, we help the client embody the ego and establish the inner authority which either had no chance to develop, or was lost, as the mother and family began to over-ride the primary needs and feelings of the infant or young child with ideas and ideals, i.e., mental constructs about how he or she should be. In order to survive and to feel loved, the child had to learn to control the instinctual impulses from within in order to adapt to the demands of internal feelings and sensations which would eventually separate him or her from the "here and now" experience of the unity of the body-psyche.

We now know that even in utero the fetus receives and reacts to many sensory stimuli, and during the first weeks after birth the neonate's experiences are primarily sensory. Through the sensations which stream through the organism the embryo or infant gains a sense of whether or not the environment is loving or hostile; of whether or not he or she is welcome in the world. As many of you know from your own personal experience, or from your clients, early woundedness stems from the sense of being unwanted even in utero, and/or unloved as an infant or child. It is in this earliest period of life that the stage is set for the separation between intellectual and sensory experiencing - the mind-body split which is so devastatingly pronounced in our Western culture. That we are seeing more of it in our clients today is not due to our being more aware of the signs which point to it, but to the fact that it is more prevalent because the mind-body split has been growing for centuries. With each succeeding generation, girls and women, became increasingly identified with the dominant masculine consciousness and further alienated from their instinctual feminine roots, from their senses and their inner authority. Having lost respect for their own bodies there was little chance they could love the bodies of their children - particularly their daughters whose bodies were and are so like their own. I am not interested in blaming, but in understanding how this state of alienation evolved and how we as body-psychotherapists can help to correct it. In this endeavor, the autonomic nervous system is our ally and restoring its functions to their rightful place in the organism is necessary.

The autonomic nervous system is particularly vulnerable in the psychophysical development process. This may be due to the fact that sensations from the visceral organs and the involuntary muscular system are often unclear and poorly organized, and the impulses from them often do not reach consciousness. When all parts of the organism are functioning harmoniously, there is no need for those sensations to come into consciousness.

However, when the closed cerebro-spinal system is dominant, it is necessary to awaken the conscious awareness of these sensations before the ego will be willing to accept the proposition that there are other factors at work in the organism that will enhance and enlarge its boundaries. Experience with many of our clients and students has shown that they seldom appreciate the importance of the autonomic nervous system and the many subtle ways in which both of its divisions - sympathetic and parasympathetic - have been overruled by the disembodied ego.

One of our most basic needs as human beings is for connection and relationship with others. As Jung pointed out many years ago, it is the

nervous system that for ages has been known as the 'sympathetic' ... (which) though functioning without sense organs ... maintains the balance of life and, through the mysterious paths of sympathetic excitation, not only gives us knowledge of the innermost life of other beings but also has an inner effect upon them. In this sense it is an extremely collective system, the operative basis of all participation mystique, ... (Jung, 1934. C.W. 9ii41).

In our zeal to be "scientific" we may have overlooked the importance of the phenomenon of the participation mystique. Our tendency has been to see projection, transference and counter-transference as psychic processes, seemingly forgetting that they have bodily components as well. I am raising the possibility that it is through the "mysterious paths of sympathetic excitation" that the organism inherently senses whether another individual or situation is potentially positive or negative. And furthermore, we as therapists might benefit from the working assumption that the positive or negative projections and transferences of the client reflect the client's unconscious bodily perceptions of our unconscious embodied responses to them which all of our mentalized "good intentions" toward them cannot hide. When the emanations from a more or less "alien other" are not "sympathetic" it is the same system which governs the flight or fight responses in the organism. As we know from our own personal experiences and from our clients, this relational response to others has been severely hampered by parental and societal injunctions against either responding to the overtures of "strangers" or expressing spontaneously the anger or fear we feel in their presence. We have also been taught to deny physical or psychological pain and to repress our reaction to it. All of these superimposed learnings have taught us to distrust and deny our internal feelings and responses. The way in which those injunctions were enforced and reinforced by the parents and society encouraged the child to enlist the aid of the cortex and the voluntary musculature in his or her battle against the expression of those instinctual responses. By the time adulthood has been reached, the impulses from within, and the awareness of their messages will have become so weakened that in all but the most extreme circumstances they will not reach conscious awareness in the moment.

The parasympathetic division, which operates principally during periods of rest to ensure the functioning of the restorative processes and the energy replenishment necessary to the organism, suffers also. When the egoic demands for social power and economic success result in overwork and continuous cortical activity, the natural energy resources of the organism, which are dependent upon rest and inactivity for replenishment, become depleted. Then, adrenaline must provide the fuel whereby the excessive egoic demands are fulfilled.

It is the autonomic nervous system which regulates the involuntary activities of the visceral organs to the heart, blood vessels, respiratory organs, alimentary canal, kidneys, bladder, reproductive organs, endocrine glands, etc. There are many intricate processes involved in the functions of these organs, and the movement and regulation of the fluids or secretions, which they produce, are dependent upon the proper functioning of, and the balance between, both the sympathetic and parasympathetic divisions. Even though the activities of the autonomic nervous system are involuntary, this system does not operate separately and independently of the central nervous system. Control is exercised over it by centers in the brain, in particular the cerebral cortex, the hypothalamus and the medulla oblongata. When the demands of the cerebralized ego are excessive, the control of the central nervous system over the autonomic constricts the fluid energy flow throughout the organism leading to stasis and dysfunction in various parts.

Re-establishing the balance between the two divisions of the autonomic nervous system as well as between the central, peripheral and autonomic nervous systems is basic to the harmony and vitality of the organism. It is the revitalization of the fluid energy flow within which will serve to dissolve the armoring and unite those parts of the body-psyche which have been isolated from awareness by the disembodied ego.

I have given time to the autonomic nervous system for two reasons. One comes from my concern with the over emphasis on "building ego" and "breaking down character-muscular armoring" which has characterized the body-psychotherapy movement. When those are the goals of the therapeutic endeavor, we tend to disregard and under evaluate the natural healing capacities within the client's body-psyche and work from the outside to bring about what can only be brought about from the inside by the client. Whereas if we recognize the importance of the autonomic nervous system to the energy-economy of the human organism, we will realize that restoring its full function in the organism is basic to any enduring change in the client's body-psyche. The second reason stems from my conviction that the autonomic nervous system and the feminine aspects of our beings are inseparably interconnected. They are not complementary; they are the two sides of the same body-psyche phenomena. What

is experienced as literal and material in organic functions is experienced as image and symbol in psychic functions, and whether we speak with our hands or voices we address both at the same time. Their functions and their fate are important to our wholeness as human beings regardless of our sex. However we may approach them, we find that both are hidden, mysterious and vulnerable; both have been repressed by the demands of the patriarchal ego; both require our awareness of their existence and attention to their needs before they can exert their positive influence in our lives; and both are available to all of us - men and women.

In attending to the autonomic nervous system and nurturing the endodermal flow we are nurturing the feminine dimensions in ourselves and in our clients, and, in essence, building Soul.

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Biography

Katherine Brown holds an M.A. in Psychology from Antioch College, San Francisco. She was with Malcolm Brown, Ph.D., her husband and professional colleague, the Co-Director of the European Institute of Organismic Psychotherapy from 1977 to 1994. She co-directed with Malcolm at the Institute's location in northern Italy long-term training groups and individual treatment/training sessions with European professionals from many different countries. As the present Co-Director of the USA Organismic Psychotherapy Training Institute, which is located in Atlanta, Georgia, she co-leads training programs in Germany, Italy, and Denmark seven mo

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