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The Wounded Healer

A Conversation with Thomas Moore, Murray Stein, and Russell Lockhart

ROBERT HENDERSON

The analyst must go on learning endlessly. It is his own hurt that gives the measure of his power to heal.
C. G. Jung, "Fundamental Questions of Psychotherapy" (1966, CW 16 ¶ 239)

From New Hampshire, Switzerland, and Washington, Thomas Moore, Murray Stein, and Russell Lockhart, respectively, three elders of the Jungian community, discussed the Wounded Healer, a topic vitally important to each of them. The conversation took place online.

Robert Henderson (RH): How do you understand the Wounded Healer?

Thomas Moore (TM): I often say that I have been in therapy for forty years, meaning that I have been the therapist and yet very much "in therapy." Working with others, I regularly come up against limitations in my knowledge, courage, and maturity. Daily I am humbled by the dedication and tenacity I see in my clients as they deal with many issues I struggle with myself. This humbling doesn't take away the confidence and authority I feel in doing my job. I can be both the flawed human being and the effective therapist.

The equilibrium I am describing is not perfect either. There are days when I am overconfident and times when I wonder if I can continue doing this work, so aware am I of my personal failures. Overall, though, I have learned to live with the mixture of ignorant person and knowledgeable guide. By the way, I'm not advocating a balance. I never look for a balance in matters like this, even though people automatically think that way when dealing with opposites. I want a passionate life that is not balanced but that moves constantly along a range of possibilities. I like the image used by both Nicolas of Cusa (Watts 1982, 101) and W. B. Yeats (1966) of dynamic cones or gyres in which opposites are constantly in flux as they intersect each other's space.

I have to know that I have strength, knowledge, and vision that may help my client deal with complicated and highly emotional matters while simultaneously never forgetting my own mistakes and frailties. It's more like just being a complicated person in relation to my client—not clearly superior and not collapsed into my inferiority.

Years ago, at the prodding of Rafael López-Pedraza, I read the Marquis de Sade's horrifying fiction and inspiring nonfiction essays and wrote a book about the Sadean dynamics in human

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relationships (*Dark Eros*). I came out of that with the image of the "wounding healer," as a companion to the Wounded Healer. This is yet another way of approaching what Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig referred to as the "split archetype" of healer and patient (1976, 89–91). We can also become more aware of our role as wounder. But that is a topic for another time.

Murray Stein (MS): The Wounded Healer is a mythologem, a god figure, an archetypal image. Chiron is the Greek version of this image; Christ is the biblical version of the same fundamental image. The difference is that Chiron had no choice in the matter because it happens to him and he cannot heal himself; Jesus Christ volunteered for the role, could have escaped from his suffering, but did not. Both are healers, both wounded, and both eventually ascend to the heavens at the end of the story. This image is to be distinguished from the healthy healer—Apollo in Greek myth, Jesus before his crucifixion in the biblical version. Christ combines both versions, the healthy and the suffering.

Russell Lockhart (RH): I first encountered Jung's concept of the Wounded Healer in the initial seminar of my analytic training back in 1969. The seminar leader made it clear that this was a fundamental necessity in our becoming not just analysts, but also healing analysts. The wounds of the budding analyst must be front and center and worked with constantly, if one is to become a Wounded Healer. I had no doubt this was true, and it was pounded into me so deeply that I have always been aware of this aspect of being an analyst.

Still, there were parts of this Wounded Healer concept that I found unsettling. The first was that in the reference myth, Chiron is wounded by the hero Hercules with a poisoned arrow, and this wound never heals. A common fault in dealing with myths is that singular aspects are extracted and made into whole psychologies. Freud's use of the Oedipus myth is a prime example. So, with Chiron, we have the image of being wounded by a hero figure (Hercules), the image of a poisoned arrow, a wound that never heals, and that out of this never-healing wound, Chiron becomes an epic healer. I won't belabor this here, but you can see the complexity that is ignored when the singular thread of the Wounded Healer becomes the only thing considered from the richness of the myth.

Back then, I wondered whether one could still be a healer if one's wounds were healed, or whether it is only the never-healing wound that is essential to being a Wounded Healer? I began to reflect on the body's capacities to heal itself when cut, injured, or ill. In reflecting on this, I suddenly realized that the Wounded Healer was archetypal in nature and, for this reason, could not be limited to the "doctor." Rather, everyone had the potential of the Wounded Healer being activated in relation to inevitable wounding whether physical, psychological, or spiritual. From these realizations, my work since as an analyst has included awareness of the Wounded Healer in myself as well as in those I work with. I have come to recognize that the degree of healing is enhanced when the other's Wounded Healer is made manifest—this is not just the doctor's Wounded Healer.

Recently, I have begun reflecting on the wounds in institutions, in work places, in cultures, countries, and even wounds to the earth. The prospect of rousing the Wounded Healer in these

larger dimensions fascinates me and brings attention to something that is rarely noticed but is most certainly a crucial resource for us to consider in these dark days.

MS: In response to Tom's and Russ's thoughtful comments, I will say that I find their accounts sensitive and revealing, but think I take a slightly different view. I regard the Wounded Healer as an archetypal image and as such, not something I would want to identify with or take personally. I don't see myself as a healer. Working as a psychotherapist now for forty-plus years, I can't say that I have ever healed anyone. If some measure of healing has occurred, it is a result of factors constellated in the relationship beyond my will or control. The healing I leave to the archetypal powers of the unconscious and the self.

I do, of course, like Tom and Russ, regard myself as "wounded," not unlike my clients, and my wounds have doubtless contributed to the compassion I can feel for others, including the people who come to me for analysis. On the other hand, my wounds may have also gotten in the way of my being able to make helpful contributions to the analytic work. They can clutter the mind and get in the way.

I look for manifestations of the Wounded Healer in dreams and visions emerging from the client's unconscious. On the other hand, if I find myself suffering from the wounds of clients, I try to find some healing in myself and maybe this will transfer to them in the form of helpful comments or empathic communications on a less conscious level. This is a mild kind of shamanic operation, and usually it is very subtle, unlike what one sees real shamans doing when they are engaged in healing.

One question that did occur to me while thinking about these matters is this: is it possible for someone to be healed through the woundedness of another? This is the Christ model. His suffering is mysteriously curative for others. I wonder if this might happen sometimes, also mysteriously, in psychotherapy.

RL: Let's see if it's possible to unpack the image of Wounded Healer in the sense in which Jung is said to have coined the expression. What sort of wounding is it? And what does the healer do in relation to the wound that engenders the full sense of the Wounded Healer, including the aspect of the "never-healing wound?"

Tom, you first refer to limitations of your knowledge, courage, and maturity. But are these "wounds" in the sense we are after here? To be sure they are limitations, even inabilities, that all of us face and that ethically require of us a never-ending development. Do you mean these limitations to be wounds in the sense that Jung refers to?

The second theme you mention is "humility." I'm reminded of John 13:1–17, which is often referred to in discussions of the Wounded Healer, where Jesus washes the feet of the disciples at the last supper, and when the disciples object to his humbling himself, he makes clear this is a lesson they all need to learn, a lesson in humility. But in what sense is this example of humility a "wounding" of Jesus or his disciples? Is it a wounding to their pride? In what way are the disciples Wounded Healers?

Jung is credited with coining the phrase *Wounded Healer,* but this phrase is never used by Jung in his published writings, seminars, letters, or in *The Red Book*. One place where Jung

refers to the idea is in paragraph 239 of his essay "Fundamental Questions of Psychotherapy" (1966, CW 16, ¶239), which Rob has quoted as an introduction to our topic. Jung writes, "It is his own hurt that gives the measure of his power to heal. This and nothing else, is the meaning of the Greek myth of the wounded physician." This quote refers to the third footnote referencing Carl Kerenyi's *Asklepios: Archetypal Image of the Physicians' Existence*. He does not refer to Chiron directly who, as Murray noted, is the Greek version of the archetypal image of the Wounded Healer.

I have always been impressed with the extreme degree of precision in mythic imagery as well as in dream imagery. I take these precise details in mythic stories as psychic deposits that are crucial, informative, and instructional and should not be ignored. Note that Jung refers to a book on Asclepius in relation to the "wounded physician."

Whereas Asclepius had a difficult "birth," being snatched from the womb of his mother by Apollo while she was burning on a pyre, he is not referred to as a Wounded Healer. His mother had been set afire because of her unfaithfulness to Apollo. Apollo took the infant to be raised and instructed in healing by Chiron. It was Chiron who was wounded with the never-healing wound by the hero Hercules. Asclepius became the greatest healer, surpassing his father Apollo as well as his mentor Chiron. He was so good at healing that he could raise the dead to life again, and for this he was killed by Zeus with a thunderbolt, because Hades (Zeus's brother) feared there would be no more souls coming to the netherworld.

We can see how complex the mythical details and "backstory" can be. And note that we have three healer images: Apollo Medicus; Chiron, the Wounded Healer; and Asclepius, the greatest physician and healer. These are each an aspect of healing potential and, most likely, an aspect of the healing potential in ourselves as well as our patients. Yet, Marie-Louise von Franz goes so far as to say, "the Wounded Healer IS the archetype of the Self . . . and is at the bottom of all genuine healing procedures" (2000, 114).

And what do you make of this? Jung writes, "Being wounded by one's own arrow signifies, therefore, a state of introversion" (1956 CW 5, ¶448). Is this our heroic state wounding itself into a state of introversion? Could this be an example of what Tom speaks of as the "wounding healer," where we wound ourselves as a way toward deeper healing? I throw out these bits and pieces to open further paths for our discussion.

RH: As you understand Jung, what wound, or wounds, did he discover in himself that gave him the measure of his own power to heal?

MS: I'd like to thank Russ for his clarifying comments. If you go to Wikipedia and look up *Wounded Healer* you will get the impression that Jung used this concept quite a lot. In fact, as Russ shows, he does not. The Wikipedia entry also lists a number of books that have *Wounded Healer* in the title and make reference to Jung. So we need to distinguish between Jung and the works of subsequent Jungian writers.

When I think of the Wounded Healer, I'm thinking of an archetypal figure. Perhaps this figure can be invoked or constellated in an analytical relationship, and in that case, it would be a part of the process and belong to both people in the process. Both would receive the benefits,

both would be healed. But, again, I'm thinking here of Christ ("by his wounds we are healed") rather than about Chiron, who was a teacher of the physician, Asclepius. I don't think Chiron healed with his wounds, nor did Asclepius.

As far as the matter of a "self-inflicted wound" is concerned, Jung reads that as introversion. It might be that the analyst's ability to introvert contributes to healing by constellating the archetypal powers.

TM: Russ's point about reading images closely is an important one. Being imperfect is not the same as being wounded. So, I ask myself, when I have really felt emotional wounds in my life, have they played a part, constructive or not, in my work with others? The ones that come to mind are from the early days of my practice, when my emotional wounds made me raw and open to the issues others brought me. I felt a certain effectiveness then that was due to my wounds. I didn't know much and was not experienced, but my capacity to empathize with my clients was strong. Now, years later, my experience is different. I have the confidence of experience, and that has replaced the power of feeling raw. I continue to be afflicted by life, but generally I feel less raw. Experience and more knowledge have a positive impact. I don't feel I ever healed with my wounds (no, I don't heal but try to evoke healing), but they have allowed me not to be excessively defended in the work.

I'm quite taken by Murray's two references to Jesus healing through his suffering. For years I have tried to appreciate Jesus as an archetypal/mythic figure, but I haven't explored his role of healer in relation to his own wounds. His possible identity as a puer or young man figure harkens back to what I said about the role of my wounds early in my practice. Traditionally his physical wounds have been seen as openings of compassion, and that is certainly one way a healer's wounds may have positive effect. I'm also reminded of Rafael López-Pedraza's suggestion that the spirit of the hermaphrodite in therapy can offer a constructive weakening and the Hermes spirit a constructive loss of dignity. We could discuss whether these are wounds. I think they are.

RL: I think any wound—physical, psychological, or spiritual—has the potential for engendering the archetype of the Wounded Healer, as well as other archetypal prefigurations that relate to healing. But your question is seeking specifics. A specific wound that Jung experienced, and one I believe was a major factor in his healing and in his access to powers of healing, is to be found in the precincts of introversion, to which I have already alluded. But to make this comprehensible requires some background, so bear with me.

The issue begins in Jung's early days as a medical student. Jung had joined a fraternity known as Zofingia and had become a powerful member because of his physical stature, his imposing intellect, and his abundant passion. He was particularly passionate about phenomena included under the umbrella of spiritualism, and it was in this area of literature that he immersed himself long before anything to do with psychiatry. His mentors at the time were found in the psychology literature of figures who were quite taken by spirit phenomena (the occult, spiritism, parapsychology, and so on). Jung gave a series of lectures and in one (May 1897), he distinguished between consciousness and "soul." He indicated that "the soul of the human being exists far beyond consciousness," and that "the soul is an intelligence independent of space and time"

(Capobianco 1993, 45). He argued that the intelligence of this realm beyond consciousness was a higher intelligence with capacities beyond consciousness. As Capobianco notes, Jung here gives his first articulation of the basic idea that would inform his life's work.

But not without some injurious detours. As he took up his position at Burghölzli, he devoured the psychiatric literature. By the time he had published his dissertation to become a medical doctor (1902), Jung abandoned his Zofingia ideas, in favor of seeing all such phenomena as dissociated from consciousness and pathological. This, I believe, is the early ground for Jung's later comment (1911) of "being wounded by one's own arrows" (Jung 1956, CW 5, ¶448). He did this to himself. And in that comment, he refers to introversion. What has introversion got to do with this?

Jung introduced the concept of introversion in 1910. He followed Freud's view that this inward turning of libido was pathological, but observed that this introversion led to "a loosening up of the historical layers of the unconscious" (Jung 1974, 427). He felt this was, in part, responsible for his colleague Honegger's suicide and spoke of the "perilous formations which come to light" (426). Here we see the full sense of wounding of oneself by one's own arrows, signifying introversion.

Freud considered introversion pathological because it turned energy away from the demands of "real" life. He said of such inner experiences that they were "nothing other than carefully cultivated daydreams" (Freud 1974, 429). No matter how rich the material of these inner states (for example, the impressive images of psychotics), they were always simply expressions of repressed childhood conflicts. Freud questioned Jung's interest in some further meaning of these fantasies beyond the obvious.

But Jung had found something that I believe restored his earlier passion of the Zofingia days, telling Freud that his interest was turning more and more to these fantasies, which he said were an amazing witches' cauldron and calling them the "matrix of the mind" (Jung 1974, 431). You can hear the echo of Zofingia. Freud rejected everything Jung said about the value and significance of unconscious fantasies of introversion, emphasizing again that they were only pathological. Here, I believe, is the wounding experience in full view. For Freud, the energy of introversion must be converted and redirected toward reality. I believe it is this absolute negation of Jung's position that is the breaking point between the two men and the key to Jung's return to his Zofingia passion, to his turn inward, and leading eventually (in 1913) to the experiences that produced the inner events recounted and pictured in *The Red Book* (Jung 2009a, 2009b).

These gave rise to his major works, which are evidence of the degree to which he was healed by what came of his wounding, and what came to be his capacities to heal others, namely, by connecting them to their soul. It is the contact with soul in this sense that heals, while the "doctor" (or others) serve to activate the path to soul.

MS: Jung's "wound," to put a name to his gift for constellating the healing of patients he worked with, would amount to his openness to the unconscious. It seems he had an extraordinary ability to intuit what was going on in the unconscious of the people with whom he worked, and it was this sensitivity to what was going on behind or beneath the obvious level of communication and interaction that would instigate a process that we could call "healing" in

the sense that it helped patients to connect to their own inner worlds. In *The Red Book* there is a scene where Jung and another figure shoot and kill the hero, Siegfried (Jung 2009, 160–161). This is in a sense a self-inflicted wound, since as Jung interprets this vision/dream, he was killing his superior function, thinking, in order to go further in his exploration of the inner world. Out of this exploration came his confidence that the inner world had treasures to offer, including archetypal powers such as that of the Wounded Healer. Again, I associate this figure to the Christ image, which Jung actually becomes identified with in *The Red Book* shortly after the scene of murdering the hero, Siegfried. He gave up the Nietzschean superman ideal (the Germanic hero Siegfried) for the biblical savior figure who heals through his sacrificial death and resurrection. In this sense Jung identifies momentarily with the Wounded Healer archetype.

RL: It might be useful to bring into our discussion what I call "word work" on this phrase *Wounded Healer*. This involves letting go of our ready-made meanings and following the imaginal stirrings prompted by the etymological roots of the words. Keep in mind that etymological literally means "truth speaking."

Wound comes from the Indo-European root *wen-,* which meant "to beat." A derivative led to the meaning "to swell." Generally, word work leads to images that are embodied. Here, too, we see an action (*beating*) and a result (*swelling*). In my work, I find that these embodied images are more psychoactive than the word one started with and always bring in something that was not there in using the word itself. *Healer* is from the Indo-European root *kailo-,* which meant "to become whole," "to be uninjured," and "of good omen." Some English words deriving from this nest are *whole, hale, health, holy, hallow, Halloween,* and *Helge* (*Heloise*), among others, including *celibate* and *whore. Cure* is a synonym for *heal* and brings with it the important words *care* and *curiosity*.

As you can see, we have a harvest of images we didn't have before and that, in one sense or another, belong to our discussion. Some of these are obvious in what we have referred to already, but others are not and may lead us into byways of discussion we had not imagined before, but which we might be curious about now.

I'm mindful that when speaking of roots, we are necessarily referring to the rhizomic layer of the psyche. Those roots, like those of trees in the forest, have impacts on each other and give rise to unpredictable things. These things become known to us, not directly, but through dreams, through synchronicities, through unexpected changes in language, and through deep imagination.

RH: How has a wound or wounds assisted you in your work as an analyst, psychotherapist, author, and teacher?

MS: When I went to Yale on a full scholarship having made straight *A*s in high school, the first grade I received on an essay, which I wrote for my class in English literature, was a "59," barely passing. It completely deflated me and set me to work in learning how to write. I've never forgotten that wound, and I believe it has helped me immensely in all these later years of writing essays and books. For a writer, critics are friends. The same is true of failures in analysis.

We learn more from failure than success, which is usually due to synchronicity and the working of the unconscious. Mainly, the wounds have kept me from grandiose inflation as a healer of any kind, wounded or otherwise.

TM: The main strength I feel as a therapist comes from my education. I've studied Jung closely for forty years and often reread his writings on therapy, especially his alchemical works and Volume 16 of the *Collected Works, The Practice of Psychotherapy*. In addition, I was a close friend and colleague of James Hillman for thirty-eight years and learned a great deal from his writings, lectures, and private conversations. My studies in religions at Syracuse University, too, gave me a broad background for the idea of caring for the soul. So, on one side, I feel deep confidence from good ideas. On the other side, I am always aware of my own character gaps and the many mistakes I have made. I never feel that I am better or healthier than my client, but I do feel relatively at peace and highly educated in deep psychological thought. I have something valuable to offer. I have an Irish-Catholic emotional foundation, which is beautiful in many ways, but highly neurotic in others. My particular neurotic habits keep me from being authoritarian and dominating with my clients, but at the same time encourage me to be too soft and accepting. My Taoist habits of thought incline me to foster the yin and yang of soft and tough, and I believe that if my woundedness is always near my own kinds of strength, all is well. So, in short, I am not a Wounded Healer but a strong healer with wounds.

RL: One of the earliest feelings of being wounded was in my Cub Scout days. I had fallen off a trail and started rolling down the mountainside getting pretty bashed up from hitting rocks and brush and being scared to death. As I was tumbling down, I became aware of an image in the sky. It was a huge owl and it thundered at me to grab hold of the tree. Moments later, I crashed into a small tree and grabbed hold. I became aware that I was at the edge of the cliff and, had I not followed the owl's instruction, I would have gone over and died. I can remember this clearly to this day. I was more terrified than at any other time in my life. The fact that I was saved by an image did not touch the terror, a terror that flooded every cell of my body. I can still feel it.

Over these decades, of course, the sense of being saved by an image has come to dominate my experience. The owl became my totem animal; I collected owls, sculpted owls, painted owls, conversed with owls, had many experiences with owls. To this day, if you see me in person you will see me in an owl T-shirt. For a long time, I never talked about this experience. I became aware that many accused me of an inflated over-identification with the owl archetype. I never tried to argue the point. But I became deeply impressed with how wrong and injurious interpretive moves can be when the full story is not known. I was also deeply impressed with the fact that in that early experience, the owl knew about the tree before I hit it. This fact has played a major role in my understanding of the deep psyche, what I attend to in an image as an analyst, and it has played a major role in my teaching and writing. Everything I have written has begun with some connection to the source of the image that saved my life.

Many wounds I have experienced were prefigured in a repeating childhood dream that began soon after the experience with the owl. In the dream, I was walking home from school. All along the

way home, I noticed that every house looked like my house. I couldn't tell which mine was, so I just went in to one. It was not mine. This dream occurred many times over the next few years. I never found my home in the dream. Repeating dreams in childhood picture a developing leitmotif, a major recurring theme that becomes an essential storyline, a narrative of one's future life. And, indeed, it has been that. During high school I was set on a path to become a professional tennis player. Pancho Gonzales, the best player in the world, was my teacher, and he taught me well. I was on my way, playing with all the top players. Tennis would be my home. Then, in the summer between high school and college, I developed calcinosis in my serving arm. That was the end of my tennis career. Then, near the end of my junior year of college, I woke up one morning and "knew" I must end my career path to becoming a medical doctor. This made no sense to me or anyone else. I was super-achieving. How could I change? But the interior experience was so implacable—I could not go against it. It severely disappointed my parents; I lost my long-term girlfriend and my best friend, as well. Medicine would not be my home.

After many years in academia, I discovered it, too, was not my home. After becoming a Jungian analyst, I thought I had found my home and fell headlong into a full career as an analyst: a large practice, teaching, supervising, lecturing, serving on boards, committees, professional associations, all of it.

Many dreams came along, all essentially saying "No!" And for a long while I went against these dreams until it was clear that, as with the owl experience, my life was on the line. Yet, it took a quintuple bypass surgery to fully manifest the "No!" And since that time, I have withdrawn from all Jungian groups and collectives, stopped all lecturing, stopped all institutional teaching. The professional Jungian world was not my home.

As I told Robert in an earlier interview some years ago, I have at last found my home—at least I've never felt more at home. Strange as it may seem, my home is in the dream, working with my dreams and the dreams of others. I'm particularly focused now on what dreams are saying about the coming calamities befalling us from climate change, very likely the greatest wounding humans have ever experienced.

Wounds of any magnitude will always have an impact on what I call the "story mind." The story mind is an engine of narrative, whether in the form of visions, dreams, or creative impulses. In short, the story mind is the home of deep imagination. In many ways, the deep imagination is analogous to quantum reality. In both geographies, time flows forward and backward, things can be in two or more places at the same time, the constraints of our "real-world" experiences are unbound. In both cases, we have no direct experience of these realities until something manifests in our conscious experience.

The deep imagination is the home of archetypal realities, of the past and of the future, of the changeless and the changing. It is contact with the deep imagination that is the source of the healing potentials that engage our efforts with ourselves and with others. It is the home of the Wounded Healers we know from myths and myths not yet revealed. It is the home of healers of all types and degrees, available to us and to those we work with. And we must realize that many things are not yet manifested, not yet revealed. The collective unconscious, the

objective psyche, the deep imagination—whatever we name "it"—is alive and engendering, creating and destroying, and not limited to the "old stories" we already know.

What I have learned from being wounded, from being with the wounds of others, in my forty-plus years of practice as an analyst, is that life itself is a wound that seeks reflection of itself (consciousness) in story, to be told in the myriad forms that prompt us: from the fictive purpose of dreams to the eros engagement with the seeds of creative potential lying within the wound of life. We invariably wound ourselves when we try to escape the wound of life through addictions, distractions, compulsions, and all such. These might be thought of as the escapist fictions that delude us and keep us from tending the story of life, as manifested in our individual life, which by other names, is called soul.

RL: Murray, your experience at Yale reminds me of an experience I had at a younger age. I was thirteen, and my English teacher's assignment was to write a short story. I had had a recent dream that impressed me about what happens to the world when people stop dreaming. The dream focused on a young boy who reported what the trees were saying, what the animals were telling him, how the trees were singing. He was taken to doctors and declared insane. People no longer knew what dreams were. So I used the dream as the basis for my story. When I got my story back, I was shocked to have received an *F*. The teacher told me if she knew where I had copied it from, she would see to it that I would be punished. I had been writing since kindergarten, even had a childhood poem published, so I was crushed by this accusation. I did not write another story until I took a summer course in my senior year at college. The professor gave twelve *F*s and one *D* and said we needed to know how much we had to learn. I got the *D,* so I was making progress. Sporadically over the years, I would try again to write something from these stories but never got very far. It was not until I was seventy, that I finally overcame whatever was blocking me and began to write, not a short story, but a novel: *Dreams: The Final Heresy*. It's not quite done, but it is a balm on that wound of long ago.

Thomas, you say you are a strong healer with wounds. Murray, you say your wounds have kept you from a grandiose inflation as a healer of any kind. This disparity intrigues me. I do not feel like "I" personally am a healer in any sense (and so agree with Murray), but I do feel that through my experiences with the deep psyche (in both wounded and nonwounded ways) that I have learned to attend to my own dreams and psychic processes, as well as those with whom I work, in such a way that healing of various kinds is constellated. It is always a mystery as to how this happens. So, I can say that strong healing happens through me in some mysterious way that I can lay no claim to. It's always something like being cut severely. The doctor cleans the wound, applies the antibacterial, sews up the wound. But the healing happens not because the doctor does it, or the patient does it, but because the natural healing mechanism of the body does it.

Healing through psyche is natural too. Both patient and analyst must be present, open, and ready to participate in what the psyche presents to us. That is one way healing manifests. I think we have three different storylines, three different stories in response to Robert's questions, each different in various ways, reflecting our different and individual natures and experiences.

TM: Murray, I first read your words saying that failure is due to "synchronicity and the working of the unconscious," and they struck me. Recently a friend wrote to tell me that she has a serious illness, and my first thought was to ask "What is it asking of you and what does it want to give you." I'm not comfortable with the image of the Wounded Healer. It has just a pinch of sentimentality in it, for me. But I can appreciate the wound, such as an unexpected illness, that is a gift of fate. To deal with it in that way, which I would call religious, is a good posture for being with others exploring their souls. Maybe you meant that success is the working of the unconscious. The process is the same. I'll have to think long about that barely passing "59," a simple number but a vast disappointment that led to such amazing work.

And Russell, you've offered so much for thought: etymology, the owl, and answering the call to abandon the institutions. I can imagine the three of us talking about these things far into the night. I feel that forty years of engaging dreams of clients has twisted me around so that I look at life from behind the mirror. I've taken to using an obsidian stone for most of my questions and wonderings. I know the word *heal* is a problem. I think that's why I use it without excuse. I have avoided it and now I return to it. There is a mountain; there is no mountain; there is a mountain. I think of healing not as "whole" but "hole." The stone is a hole in the fabric that screens out the dark universe and allows for some dialogue. My degree is in religion. I began my adolescent/adult life in a monastery. *Therapeia,* a beautiful word equal to dharma and Tao and Logos, is a religious activity for me. I know people today would say *spiritual*. The entire business is about finding a hole, looking through it carefully, and abiding by the instruction that emerges. I once took a vow of obedience and didn't know what it meant. Now I feel that the whole thing is about obeying the instruction that comes through the hole, and the hole is often a wound, like the one in the side of Jesus.

MS: In reply to Russ, I think if we take Jung's understanding that the "wound" is a self-inflicted one and means the deliberate turning to introversion in the form of active imagination and serious work with dreams, then I can say that this has been essential for my work as an analyst. I don't see how one can work effectively in the "care of souls" without this experience. This isn't a matter of empathy but of knowledge ("gnosis") of what soul work is and how it matters. Your stories have illustrated your deep commitment to the unconscious and your long connection to the powers that we call "spiritual." From the writings and testimony of Thomas, too, I gather that he would share this view. So on this point I think we are in agreement even if we differ in some other respects.

RH: Thanks to each of you for sharing about the Wounded Healer and how it has been lived in your life and work.

RL: As a final word, people are being more and more consumed by the digital world. I'm concerned that this weakens the connection to the healing potentials of the psyche, and that analysts and those they serve are at risk as well. How to keep a connection to the resources of the deeper psyche is fast becoming a paramount task, both now and in the future. I feel interactive interviews such as this help attune us to this task. Many thanks, Rob, for creating this opportunity.

MS: I am grateful for the opportunity to reflect on this important image in Jungian psychology with two distinguished colleagues. The exchange has opened some new perspectives for me, and I will continue to reflect on the Wounded Healer theme for a long time to come. Thank you, Robert.

TM: Thanks to my colleagues for thoughtful reflections on the Wounded Healer. It's a special opportunity to have a conversation with these two writers, Murray and Russ, who have contributed so much over the years. Thanks to Rob Henderson, too, for his gift of getting people together. The image of the Wounded Healer touches many people. It is sometimes treated sentimentally, and so the sharp details offered here are valuable.

NOTE

References to *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* are cited in the text as CW, volume number, and paragraph number. *The Collected Works* are published in English by Routledge (UK) and Princeton University Press (USA).

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ABSTRACT

The idea and archetype of the Wounded Healer is informative for depth psychotherapy and Jungian analysis. In this enterview, three seasoned Jungian analysts share what it has meant to them in their work and life.

KEY WORDS

healing, introversion, C. G. Jung, wounds, Wounded Healer