

Trauma, Dissociation, and the Soul A Certificate Training Program

A Limited-Enrollment Intensive for Clinicians With
Donald Kalsched, Ph.D.
At Pacifica Graduate Institute, Santa Barbara California

Three Four-Day Sessions in 2017-2018
(November 1-5, January 8-11, February 28--March 4)



Blake's good and evil angels struggling for the possession of a child

This program is an opportunity for clinicians from a variety of disciplines to explore the clinical, theoretical, and symbolic/spiritual dimensions of Donald Kalsched's model of the inner world of trauma and its archetypal defenses of the imperishable personal spirit or soul--as described in his two books,¹ many articles, and four decades of Jungian analytic practice.

This understanding of dissociative structure, described as the *Self-Care-System (SCS)*, holds open the possibility of a new way of thinking about the symbolic processes in trauma as they open a window into the mystical dimensions of existence, a new way of understanding other contemporary dissociative models of the mind, and a new way of envisioning the unique contribution of Jungian Depth Psychology to modern clinical practice.

The model describes a dissociative system of *daimonic* inner personifications representing powerful *affects* and *defenses* that structure the unconscious mind, and define the universal struggle in human life to actualize a sacred core of true selfhood under environmental conditions that are often unfavorable or traumatic. Myths and Fairy Tales record this struggle for individuation in their narratives, which usually portray a heroic figure (often a “child”) suspended between the powers of light (love) and darkness (hate), aided by benevolent powers and thwarted by malevolent ones. When trauma enters this story, it *injures the capacity for feeling-in-the-body upon which the life-forces depend*, thereby strengthening the malevolent anti-life forces of defense. These dark, depressive forces appear as powerful resistances in the psychotherapy situation leading to the negative therapeutic reaction, and often to a “repetition compulsion” of self-destructive activity in outer life. Learning how these oppressive forces operate in the personality, and how to intervene when they have taken over, helps us to become more effective in our work with trauma survivors.

In each of the three extended sessions of the program, different facets of the model and its implications for understanding and healing trauma, while restoring the soul to embodied life, will be discussed. Film-clips will be used throughout as illustrations, and assigned reading between sessions will add important developmental background, especially in the areas of infant observation, attachment theory, and affective neuroscience.

The program will take place on the Ladera Campus of Pacifica Graduate Institute in Santa Barbara, California. Housing for all participants is offered in the Retreat Facilities of Pacifica Graduate Institute.

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First Session—Mapping the System Through Dreams, Transference, and Film

In this intensive session, the focus will be on the dramatic inner structures within the Self-Care System (SCS) –especially the lost child and his/her Spirit-protectors or persecutors. Comparisons with other psychoanalytic dissociative models will be made, most notably Ferenczi,² Bollas,³ Steiner,⁴ Symington,⁵ Grotstein,⁶ van der Hart et al,⁷ Fairbairn,⁸ and Modell⁹ in order to demonstrate the universality of the findings and to highlight the importance of Jung’s mytho-poetic understanding. Extremes on the dissociative spectrum will be examined-- especially DID and the role of alter-personalities (Kluft,¹⁰ Ross¹¹) or discreet “self-states” (Bromberg¹²) as they appear in the treatment situation. The role of unbearable affect in dissociative fragmentation, and the way the defensive system provides an unconscious strategy for affect-regulation, will be demonstrated through clinical vignettes as well as through symbolic exploration of dramatic themes in fairy tales and contemporary films. The spiritual importance of generative innocence and the role of the SCS in encapsulating innocence and keeping it out of experience will be explored as well as the problem of “malignant innocence” and the “borderline” dynamics that result from this sequestration. Finally, the problem of affect tolerance, affect competence¹³ and a restored capacity for feeling-aliveness will be linked to the process of Soul-recovery.

Second Session—Transactional Pathology and Treatment Approaches

Clinicians working with dissociative patients rapidly discover that the defensive system is not just an inner structure, but is also a worldview—an interpretive narrative--and that this narrative, built around the inner figures in the SCS, is externalized in the field of the patient’s relationships and in the bi-personal field of the transference. Trauma-surviving patients who enter psychotherapy, do not realize that they are *identified* with the powers of the defensive system. Nor do they understand that their ego-identities and narratives are often constructed around generic patterns and relational schemas originating in the powers of the *system*, rather than a personal story, written from an animated center in *themselves*. The therapeutic challenge of helping these patients to integrate and reclaim their own aliveness from the deadening grip of the Self-Care-System and its victim-perpetrator narrative will be explored, as well as the frequent anger and rage that erupts as the system fights for its life, like a Golum or a Zombie.

In this intensive we will review, discuss and demonstrate various treatment techniques that are rooted in the findings of affective neuroscience, (Schore,¹⁴ Siegel¹⁵) attachment theory (Wallin¹⁶) and infant-observation (Tronick,¹⁷ Beebe¹⁸). These will include affect-focused ways of working, with special attention to affects in the body (Ogden,¹⁹ Levine,²⁰) and safety in the moment (Porges²¹). An affect-centered approach to dreams will be presented and participants will be exposed to different ways of working with parts of the personality such as Internal Family Systems Theory (IFS)²², and other grounded techniques such as those outlined in van der Kolk²³ and Badenoch²⁴. This weekend will also explore the difference between authentic suffering (of the soul) and neurotic suffering (of the defended ego), as highlighted by C. G. Jung,²⁵ Helen Luke,²⁶ and others.

Third Session: Mystical Dimensions of Psychotherapy with Trauma Survivors

From the very beginning, Psychoanalysts²⁷ have observed the “extraordinary knowing” that sometimes manifests in the lives of gifted or troubled individuals. It is as though when trauma-surviving patients are “broken” by unbearable experiences, they are also broken *open* to a psycho-spiritual dimension of the psyche in which mysterious, uncanny powers reside. While these powers are often deployed defensively, they can also provide important inner resources for the survivor and give access to an alternative reality in which genuinely mystical experiences occur. Including these “spiritual” aspects in the treatment of dissociative patients can be very important in promoting a healing outcome. This session will review the many accounts in the psychoanalytic literature of anomalous, or extra-sensory experiences in analysis. These paranormal experiences seem to defy explanation by the normal physical laws that organize our sense of reality. Many dissociative patients have verifiable psychic abilities and therapeutic work with them often opens both partners to mysterious connecting experiences that can be disorganizing and problematic on the one hand, or powerfully healing on the other. The weekend will include theoretical discussion of the ideas of Jung on Synchronicity and the Psychoid,²⁸ the theories of David Peat,²⁹ David Bohm,³⁰ Joseph Cambay³¹, and others.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Registration Fees: Tuition for the entire program is \$3,200. For Pacifica Students the fee is \$2,795 and for Alumni, \$2895. Limited Scholarship funds up to \$500/person are available and must be applied for. Forms will be sent upon acceptance to the program

Qualifications and CE Credits: Participants are required to be engaged in some form of clinical/healing practice and to be licensed in their respective fields. For those who complete the program, approximately 80 CEC credits will be available. To receive continuing education credits, participants must complete all aspects of the program.

Application: To apply for the program please submit a refundable application fee of \$100 (payable online or by check to PGI) along with a one or two page letter containing the following information: Your name, address, telephone number and e-mail, a brief review of your clinical experience, and a statement about why you are interested in the program. Letters (including any questions about the program) should be sent via email to The Retreat at Pacifica Graduate Institute-- retreat@pacific.edu

Enrollment: Enrollment is limited, and is based on a first-come, first-served basis. An enrollment invitation, including further details about participation, will be sent via e-mail to those who are accepted into the program. Payment for registration fees will be processed at that time.

Schedule: Fall and Spring sessions start on Wednesday evening with a program at 7:00, and end on Sunday at 4 p.m. The mid-winter January session begins on Monday morning at 9 a.m. and ends on Thursday at 4 p.m. Single and double-occupancy rooms are available on site at Pacifica's Retreat facility and can be reserved at the time of registration. Meals are served at the Ladera Campus. For additional information, including meals offered and dining hours, please visit <retreat.pacific.edu>.

Cancellation Policy: Cancellation 30 days or more prior to the program receives a 100% refund of application fees. After 30 days, a 50% refund and 5 days or less, no refund.

Certificate of Completion: A Certificate of Completion will be given to all participants who complete the program.

References

¹ Kalsched, D. (1996) *The Inner World of Trauma; Archetypal Defenses of the Personal Spirit*, London: Routledge, and Kalsched, D. (2013) *Trauma and the Soul: A Psycho-Spiritual Approach to Human Development and its Interruption*, London: Routledge.

² Ferenczi, S. (1988) *The Clinical Diary of Sandor Ferenczi*, J. Dupont (ed.) Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

³ Bollas, C. (1989) *Forces of Destiny: Psychoanalysis and the Human Idiom*, London: Free Association Books.

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