

The Minnesota Model

In Brazil

The Treatment of Chemical Dependency in Brazil

A translation of

O Tratamento de Dependência Química no Brasil

By

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Preface to Second Edition

More than a thousand copies of this manuscript have been circulated among the friends and supporters of Vila Serena, and although few have ventured into the thicket of James Hillman's small book Archetypal Psychology, as recommended at the end of the document, the central portion distinguishing between the literal and poetic have been central to the development of Vila Serena's methodology. It is clearly holistic, integral, aesthetic, mythical and artistic, not analytical, academic, literal or scientific. The methodology defines itself once an aesthetic or poetic perspective is maintained. Not always easy.

I am developing an article on how this perspective makes the Minnesota Model, based on the 12 Steps, very effective, especially within the polytheistic climate of Brazil, but have decided to develop a second edition of this manuscript because James Hillman has reviewed it and made a number of observations which I believe are of interest.

Vila Serena has progressed, so there are parts of this document I would eliminate if re-writing it, such as the history of the Minnesota Model which is of interest to Americans, but we have found little interest among Americans for a poetic approach since treatment in that country is controlled by very literal health insurance companies.

I will insert Hillman's observations on this paper in footnotes preceded by the notation: "Hillman comments:" and the remarks in bold type.

In his letter to me, James Hillman concludes:

As you will see from my comments, I do not always agree with how you interpret archetypal psychology, but for the most part you have a good grasp on it. Seeing that you have been to talks of mine, you also know I'm not good on answering the "how" questions. Your approach seems to be one way – and unique – to treat chemical dependency in Brazil by combining the Minnesota Model with archetypal psychology.

**Good luck with best wishes,
James Hillman**

The Treatment of Chemical Dependency in Brazil¹ And The Minnesota Model

The Minnesota Model

In my book, The Path of the Twelve Steps,² I dedicated an entire chapter to describing the Minnesota Model.

In summary: Prohibition in the United States (1920 - 1933), drastically reduced the consumption of alcohol and this reduced the number of alcoholics, in spite of the increased incidence of criminal activity as personified by Al Capone in Chicago. During this period the hospitals and institutions that were dedicated to treating alcoholism nearly disappeared.

The abolition of Prohibition and the chaos of the Second World War, contributed to an epidemic of alcoholism without there being any provision for institutional treatment other than the mental hospitals.³

With the end of the war in 1945, the public mental health system was overloaded and without financial resources or personnel. For example, 80% of the patients in the state hospital in Willmar, Minnesota were diagnosed as alcoholics or inebriates.

Dr. Nelson Bradley, MD, the Superintendent of Willmar and a young psychologist, Dr. Daniel Anderson, in view of the lack of personnel and an effective methodology, took an innovative step to reduce the alcoholic patient population. They invited laypersons, members of Alcoholics Anonymous, alcoholics in recovery, to attempt to minister to this population. The results

¹ I would like to thank the staff counselors and visiting professionals who participate in the monthly Archetypal Psychology Study Group at Vila Serena São Paulo. These ideas were refined in the heat of this group's discussions but I am responsible for them.

² Burns, J., O Caminho dos Doze Passos, Edições Loyola, 1995, page 17.

³ It was in this climate that Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) emerged in 1935, including the first attempt to treat alcoholism in a hospital utilizing the principles of AA. See Sister Ignatia - Angel of Alcoholics Anonymous, by Mary C. Darrah, 1992, Loyola University Press.

were so effective that some of these laypersons were hired as the first lay consultants or counselors in alcoholism.⁴

What developed was a treatment model totally different from the traditional individual and analytic. It became a group process during which persons exchanged stories until they began to feel that they were “getting the program” or arrived at a sense of “aha!”. “I am not alone. What’s happened to me has happened to other people, too.” “This led to an observation made by many practitioners of the Minnesota Model: the real healing begins after the treatment staff goes home.”⁵

Story Therapy

Therapy by telling your story, narration, is increasingly recognized as the most profound of all therapies:

It may yet be realized that Freud’s greatest discovery was not of the unconscious but the validation that a person receives simply in the act of telling her story to an attentive listener.⁶

The history of a person, event or people is infinity of facts for which total recall is impossible. We select facts and events from the history, depending on our memory, interests, values, beliefs, intended audience and we present these facts as a story.⁷ Since we are the ones who develop the story, we can change the story, re-story, and that is the essence of therapy.⁸

⁴ Spicer, J., The Minnesota Model, 1993, Hazelden Educational Materials, page 34. See also: Perspectives on Treatment - The Minnesota Experience, by Daniel J. Anderson, 1981, Hazelden Foundation.

⁵ Spicer, op. cit., page 42.

⁶ Parry, A., “A Universe of Stories”, Family Process Inc., 30, No.1, page 37.

⁷ What makes a “history” interesting is that each “historian” selects the facts a little differently for his version of “history”, which is always presented as the “real” or “objective”, but we know that is impossible.

⁸ In fact, our story is always changing. To verify this, retrieve your box of photographs and spread them out, preferably in chronological order, and perceive how your story as changed over the years. You begin to realize that the reality of the moment is a fantasy because it is going to change. Reality becomes fantasy, and fantasy, reality. “Mark Twain supposedly observed that the older he got the more vividly he remembered things that had not happened.” From: Hillman, J., The Soul’s code - In Search of Character and Calling, 1996, Random House, page 172.

A person's story is their reality at that moment.⁹ It is essential to “stay” with the story. The moment we interpret a story or reduce its significance to a symbol, we destroy the story, the reality of who is telling the story and we pull the story teller into the story of the therapist.

Any implication that “the real significance of what you are saying is . . .” cannot be anything but a message that your experience means something else than you think it does, as it were, a disguise for deeper truth.

A person's experience of the world is the most vital tool she has with which to gather information and decide for herself what it tells her.

When a person finds her own voice, she takes charge of her own story.¹⁰

The essential here is to remember that we are looking at a treatment model that is narrative, poetic and not literal, analytic. This lack of distinction has been a major cause of conflict between the diverse modes of treating chemical dependency.

Since this distinction is fundamental. Let's explore this idea.

A Therapy of the Poetic Story

Poetic, narrative, spiritual or non-linear, is to see the patient in their totality, in their whole context and not only in the context of the problem of the moment. On the other hand, literal is to analyze, reduce, seek a cause. The poetic is synthetic and the literal is analytic.

When we say poetic, we are not referring to poetry, but all the drama of life, the tragedy, the beauty, the esthetic, the picaresque. Poetic is universal, holistic,

⁹ Hillman comments: **The story as fiction is not all important - is usually boring - what I used when I worked was the images in the story as they contain the psychic/transformational power. That's why archetypal psychology does not say stick to the story but stick to the image. A person's reality is not their story - except if they literalize it - it is their fiction (the lie they tell themselves and others).**

¹⁰ Parry, op. cit., page 44. In fact, I have to hear what I am saying to know what I am thinking.

humorous, enthusiastic, romantic.¹¹ Mythologically it refers to Dionysius, Psyche and Eros. Theologically it is polytheist. Jung and D. H. Lawrence are poetic writers. It is essentially spiritual, not religious¹² because it goes beyond the human, focusing on all creation, it's past and future. Poetic is a kaleidoscopic vision.

Literal is subjective, logical, individual, scientific, analytic. Mythologically it refers to Hermes or Apollo. Theologically it must be monotheistic. Kant and Freud are philosophers and literal scientists. The literal is a microscopic vision.

The Poetic in Minnesota

There exist places in the United States that could be considered poetic such as San Francisco, New Orleans or Harlem but certainly not Minnesota.¹³ A cold climate and people, but it was there that a poetic approach to the treatment of alcoholism was born, that which we call the Minnesota Model.

We must remember that the largest number of beds dedicated to the treatment of chemical dependency in the world utilize the Minnesota Model, a poetic vision.¹⁴

To better understand this we have to recall how AA was conceived:

¹¹ Romantic here not only refers to passion, compassion, the sensual and erotic, but is used in the philosophical and political sense. It refers to that reaction of art, architecture, politics and literature to the rationalist Classicism which dominated from the end of the 18th century to the middle of the 19th century. It refers to Romanticism, an emotional return to nature that focused on the human being in his context. A movement suppressed by the scientific intellectualism and technology of the "Age of Reason" in which we live in today and hopefully is ending. Hillman comments: **I begin to worry when I come upon words like totality, whole, universal, holistic, all - this means to me that the thinking is still trapped in a monotheism that is undifferentiated and not even a bit polytheistic.**

¹² Religion here refers to a system of beliefs, dogmas, cults and ceremonies that congregate a group of persons. Spiritual is the global context of all that we feel that exists but are not able to directly perceive. Religion can express or repress spirituality.

¹³ Hillman comments: **Ah!, but Minnesota is a poetic place with its water and lakes and architecture - my friend Robert Bly and other good poets are from there plus good book stores plus several Spring authors - Nor Hall, Lyn Cowan, and Mary Anne Mattoon - plus the Utne Reader.**

¹⁴ The Salvation Army leads with the number of beds dedicated to the treatment of chemical dependency and utilizes the Twelve Steps of AA. See Understanding and Counseling the Alcoholic, by Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., 1978, Abingdon, page 98. 93% of the treatment centers in the United States utilize the Twelve Steps. See "Bait and Switch in Project Match: What NIAAA Research Actually Shows about Alcohol Treatment", by Stanton Peele, PsychNews International, Vol. 2, May-June 1997.

An admittedly alcoholic patient of Carl Gustav Jung, Rowland Hazard,¹⁵ after more than a year of weekly analytic sessions, was advised by Jung that the analysis was not having the desired effect and that his only hope was a spiritual or religious experience – a conversion, a profound change in personality.¹⁶ Rowland returned to New York and joined a religious movement, Oxford Groups, later known as Moral Rearmament. It was within the Oxford Groups that a number of alcoholics grouped together and through meetings “share their experience, strength and hope”¹⁷, gradually obtaining a record of sobriety.

The co-founders of AA, Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith emerged from this group of alcoholics within the Oxford Group movement, but separated from them in an attempt to broaden their appeal. To divest themselves of any attachment to a religion they inserted the phrase, “God as we understood Him” in the Twelve Steps.

Nan Robertson, the Pulitzer Prize winner, noted in her analysis of AA:

Spiritual and spirituality are words one hears a lot of in AA. “It’s not a religious program, it’s a spiritual program”¹⁸ is a sentence AA’s utter over and over again to newcomers and nonmembers. Many of them feel the difference without being able to define it.¹⁹

¹⁵ Historians of AA utilize the name Rowland and Roland since the two versions appear in his personal records.

¹⁶ B. Pittman, *AA - The Way it Began*, 1988, Glen Abbey Books, page 154, and Kurtz, E., *The Spirituality of Imperfection*, 1992, Bantam, page 111.

¹⁷ Quoted from what is known as the AA Preamble, an interesting summary of that movement: “Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety.” Copyright 1947 by the AA Grapevine, Inc., New York, NY.

¹⁸ Hillman comments: **See in Re-Visioning on “Spirit and Soul”, also another version of this in Archetypal Psychology: A Brief Account. AA, if it reflects the culture we live in, continues the craving for spirit usually at the expense and exclusion of soul.** Hillman’s observation is well taken here. He sees spirit search for the mystical, transcendental on the mountain top, a legitimate part of soul, but only a party. The heart of soul is in the valley in the daily grind of life.

¹⁹ Robertson, N., *Getting Better - Inside Alcoholics Anonymous*, 1988, Morrow, page 145.

AA literature is neither academic nor scientific, but inspirational, idealistic, poetic. Note how Bill Wilson, author of the basic AA text, Alcoholics Anonymous, concludes the text:

Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road to Happy Destiny.²⁰

Alleluia!

The climate of the meetings of the self-help fellowships, and I have assisted a lot of them in many different countries for many years, are not literal or linear. They are spontaneous, humorous, emotional, bordering on the anarchic.

The importance of AA and its program summarized in the Twelve Steps is that it reflects the culture that we live in. A culture that is essentially Christian and monotheistic. The Twelve Steps begin where we are, use a simple language and open a perspective. They open a path and do not attempt to bind to a dogma or belief.

I believe Western society is increasingly moving away from the concept of a male God, that literally resides in heaven, but we still live in a culture based on these beliefs, whether we attend church or not, believe in religion or not.²¹ AA and its Twelve Steps continue relevant.

The Rise and Fall of the Minnesota Model in the United States

Treatment centers that have the three primary characteristics of the Minnesota Model: 1) utilize the Twelve Steps of AA, 2) have laypersons as counselors, and 3) operate within a poetic climate; spread throughout the United States during

²⁰ Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., 1976, New York, page 164.

²¹ A recently published edition of the basic AA text, Alcoholics Anonymous, removed all reference to the masculine or feminine and eliminated the word God: A Simple Program: A Contemporary Translation of the Original Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, by Bill W. and J.J., 1996, Hyperion. Also, in Narcotics Anonymous, there is a tendency to neuterize the text and avoid any reference that can be construed as religious. Since the members are younger, they are more sensitive to this tendency in our Western culture.

the 1970's, with more than 9000 functioning by the late 1980's, with excellent results.²²

I am not very objective on this subject because I was interned in a chemical dependency treatment center, Minnesota Model, by the U.S. Government in 1978. There was nothing in my education or experience to prepare me for this magic, inspirational and poetic climate that completely changed my life. My health insurance paid for the treatment.

However, within the last thirty years, the cost of health care has increased to the point where the market is in collapse.²³ The United States does not possess a social health and welfare system similar to England, Scandinavia or Canada. Attempts by Bill and Hillary Clinton to establish a federal health program have failed before the pressure of the private sector which controls the health plans.

The American citizen generally has access to a health program through the place of work. Since the employer pays a large part of this service, there is a general effort to reduce this cost in an increasingly competitive market. Formerly, the holder of a health plan was free to utilize it at will, but increasingly it is necessary to have prior approval, called "managed care".²⁴

It is Better to be Ill in Brazil

²² Here we touch on a delicate issue because the Minnesota Model has always been accused, especially here in Brazil, of being "a package" in which all cases were forced within the same treatment mold, while psychoanalysis and other interventionist treatment methods prided themselves on their ability to diagnose and prognosticate each case separately and determine the necessary and adequate treatment. First, the Minnesota Model is not a package that pretends to force a methodology. It developed in a climate where it is hoped that each dependent discovers something in this climate that he/she can identify that will permit them to modify their style of life, freeing them from the dependency. The human being is an infinity of complexities, and in the thousands of cases of chemical dependency that we have treated within the last fifteen years, we have never seen two similar cases. Even Freud emphasized that symptoms are "over determined", that is, each symptom has multiple causes.

²³ This is true throughout the world. The technology of medicine has developed rapidly and is prolonging lives, however, transplants, CAT scans and sophisticated drugs are expensive. With a longer life span, the cost of health care increases. Brazil has had an accumulated inflation of 67% since the advent of the Real, but during the same period has had a 127% increase in health costs, and this in a country where the larger part of the population does not have access to modern health services. See "Empresas Começam a Rever Planos de Saúde", *Gazeta Mercantil*, Wednesday, 08/13/97, page C-1.

²⁴ Managed care is simply a euphemism for reducing costs. This is not a new practice in Brazil where health plans have always been managed by health professionals from within the place of employment. The American corporation generally does not have health professionals within the workplace.

The health and social services are generally in retraction in the United States. This is evident to any tourist that gets beyond Disneyland and notes the increased number of alcoholics, drug addicts and psychotics living on the streets.

Health professionals are losing control of their profession, especially in the area of behavioral medicine, which includes emotional problems, mental pathologies and addiction, because this sector of medicine is less quantifiable or measurable. Who decides treatment in the United States today are often not the health professionals, but administrators of health plans who control the costs but have little experience in the area of medicine.²⁵

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) published by the American Psychiatric Association has been imposed on the treatment of behavioral health. Diagnosis and prognosis has been quantified, measured and evaluated in terms of cost. The process has been literalized. Since the Minnesota Model creates a climate that is not measurable, it has been repressed so that there are probably no more than 2000 Minnesota Model treatment centers in the United States today.²⁶

A Little Just Anger or Just a Little Anger

Perhaps the following observation is not appropriate to this document, but permit me this observation:

Health professionals in the United States are anxiously looking for anything to treat chemical dependency that fits within the constraints imposed by the cost administrators of health plans and they are not finding much that works. Take for instance the largest ever U.S. Government study on matching the patient to

²⁵ Sandra Turner, the former President of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association, the class organization for professionals that administer health plans for corporations commented that she does not know of a managed care professional in the United States with decision making power over chemical dependency treatment that has experience in this area.

²⁶ There exists another aspect, the political. It is generally recognized that treatment is the best means of prevention and means to reduce associated criminality. Prevention and interdiction campaigns, which clearly do not work in the United States, have political appeal and respond to the moral feeling that addicts are evil and should be imprisoned instead of treated, and this is what is happening. 80% of the prison population in the United States today, which has the largest incarcerated population of any country including China and Russia, are imprisoned because of alcohol or drug related causes. The best source for information on this issue is the excellent publication, "Monday Morning Report", Robert L. Hammond, ed., Alcohol Research Information Service, 1106 E. Oakland Ave., Lansing, MI 48906.

one of three literalized treatment modalities, “Project Match”. The results clearly indicated that it was useless to attempt to identify a specific treatment model for each case.²⁷

Because of the collapse of the traditional forms of mental health treatment caused by the health industry, professionals tend to seek a bio-psychic basis for dependency and this has limited their activity to primarily prescribing drugs.²⁸

Worse, we are constantly inviting health professionals to Brazil to expound what does not work in the United States when we have an open field to innovate.²⁹ For many years I did not agree with the memorable Brazilian pioneer in the field of chemical dependency treatment, Jandira Masur who preached this with vehemence, but I have to confess today that Jandira was right.

Excuse the show of anger, but behind the clouds the sun still shines. Minnesota Model treatment centers in the United States are on the return because there is a demand for that which works.³⁰ In medicine as in any field, the market defines value.

Meanwhile back at the ranch. . .

While all this is going on in the United States, at the Minnesota Model treatment centers like Vila Serena in Brazil, another scenario has been developing. To tell this story we are going to have to repeat and reflect what we stated earlier, but now from the point of view of Brazil.

²⁷ For this and related issues see: <http://www.drcnet.org>, especially the article in the “Schaler Library”, “Selling Water by the River, The Project Match Cover-up”, by Jeffrey Schaler, Ph.D.

²⁸ The best commentary on this tendency, called bio-psychiatry is Toxic Psychiatry, by Peter R. Breggin, MD, 1991, St. Martin’s Press.

²⁹ Somewhere Alice in Wonderland says, “Things keep getting worse and worse”. The United States has clearly lost the “War on Drugs”. One of the offensives of this war has been the very expensive prevention programs in schools. One study after another indicates that they not only are not effective but may be having a reverse effect. The “Project Dare” which puts policemen, of all people, in the classrooms and has received US\$ 750 millions this year, reaching 70% of the American students, has been the target of many studies indicating it is useless. See the recent article “Don’t You D.A.R.E.” by Stephen Glass, The New Republic, March 3, 1997. This and similar initiatives are being imported to Brazil, by Brazilians because they are lucrative and politically attractive. You also might want to look at the DARE defense: <http://www.dare.org>.

³⁰ The Hazelden Foundation (<http://www.hazelden.org>) and the Betty Ford Center (<http://www.bettyfordcenter.org>), the two largest and most important Minnesota Model centers are in full expansion. Also in Europe, especially in Portugal where 13 Minnesota Models have been established within the past few years.

Vila Serena and the Minnesota Model

In 1982, Vila Serena trained a group of professionals at the Hazelden Foundation in Minnesota, the progenitor of the Minnesota Model. We did not perceive at that time, that this model was already being literalized and forced into an administrative and therapeutic mold to satisfy American health insurance companies which had nothing to do with our reality and only constrained the creative and poetic soul of the Brazilian culture.

Since we, in Vila Serena, were faithfully copying what we learned in the United States, we began to feel that something was missing but could not identify it. We began to question. We turned to psychiatry, but our great friend, William H. Holloway, MD,³¹ an American psychiatrist with vast experience, observed that psychiatry certainly has its function, but is generally not effective treating chemical dependency.

Continuing on our quest, we explored an aspect of Dr. Holloway's experience, the application of General Systems Theory to mental health. We started with the basic work of Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, subsequently developed by Gregory Bateson, Francisco Varela, Humberto Maturana and Fritjof Capra. We then visited psychiatrists in the United States familiar with this approach and developed fifteen study units which we utilized with our clinic staffs.³²

This opened some intellectual panoramas and confirmed two things:

1. The necessity of constantly and intellectually deepening our knowledge of chemical dependency, which is not only infinitely complex but manifests itself differently in each dependent. As soon as we feel that we have "the

³¹ Actually residing in Brazil, Dr. Holloway was President of the International Transactional Analysis Association, medical officer in the U.S. Air Force and member of multiple professional associations. He has the distinction of being the only psychiatrist to have been acquainted with Dr. Bob Smith, co-founder of AA and Sister Ignatia, at the first hospital based treatment center using the principles of AA in Akron, Ohio.

³² Burns, J., General Systems Theory and the Treatment of Chemical Dependency, 1992, University Microfilm, Inc., University of Michigan.

answer”, the enthusiasm of the professionals withers and the magical climate of the center disappears.³³

2. The Twelve Steps of AA are an excellent vehicle to translate our intellectual discoveries into practical and efficient therapy:

- First, they are numbered, indicating process not an event.
- Second, they are in a simple language which permits an immediate and open dialogue between the professional and the simplest patient, even the unlettered.
- Third, there is a vast literature and group support structure throughout the world at any hour of the day or night.
- Fourth, and the most important, it is an open proposal, not a closed dogma. The Steps are presented in the basic literature of AA as “suggested”. They are presented in the past tense with the idea of something that has worked for the authors and may work for you. It is an invitation to attempt within your reality, your emotional and intellectual capacity, within your historical and cultural moment. The phrase we have already mentioned, “God as we understand Him”, guarantees a paradigm that is in constant evolution and capable of always appearing innovative and modern.³⁴

³³ Our goal in Vila Serena is to change the methodology at least 20% a year. Hillman comments: **Do you have a grasp of the archetype of drug use? [See] my foreword to Freud’s Cocaine Papers.** In that forward Hillman states:

The archetypal factor, the “herb of immortality”, is expressed psychologically by two signs. The first we may describe as the desire to rise above and beyond the daily trouble of all mortals. Seen negatively, it is the escapism of the immortality drive; positively, it is the spiritual ambitions and the quest for liberation. The second is the belief in the properties of a substance which can achieve this aim.

From the inside of the audio tape jacket of “Freud’s Cocaine Papers”, as read by Art O Donoghue, Spring Audio, Inc. 1993.

³⁴ Like many people, I was educated in philosophy, sociology and theology so that my first contact with the Twelve Steps engendered disdain. Superficial bumper sticker theology. However, as time passed, I began to see that we were before an invitation to deepen our beliefs and not blindly accept a code of dogmas, in spite of the fact that AA has its fundamentalists.

- Finally, the Steps begin where we are, within a Western, monotheistic culture. They are an invitation to explore, and it is exactly that which we are trying to do with this document and moment in Vila Serena.

The Spirituality of the Minnesota Model

In Vila Serena, we initially hesitated to present the spirituality of the Twelve Steps for fear we would be identified as a religious group, but immediately felt the empathy and enthusiasm of the residents³⁵ when the theme of spirituality was explored.³⁶

We deepened this work reading Alan Watts, Ken Wilber, Fernando Grof and Scott Peck. We developed a fifteen month cycle of studies based on the Scott Peck book, The Road Less Traveled, (1988, Touchstone Books) which remained on the New York Times book list for a record number of weeks and has been translated into all common languages. It unexpectedly touched on a contemporary cultural nerve throughout the world.

However, the more we attempted to escape the bonds of the dogmas of organized religion, the more we bumped into the problem of a masculine, extrinsic God that loves and demands perfection while at the same time permitting so much suffering. A system guaranteed to generate guilt and remorse. We looked deeper and the Twelve Steps encourage this.

Scott Peck who contributed so much to our journey published another book, Further Along the Road Less Traveled, (1993, Touchstone Books), in which he describes AA as the “only existing program for. . . ‘spiritual’ conversion”.³⁷

³⁵ We prefer the word resident instead of patient which indicates a certain passivity.

³⁶ An interesting indicator of how the Twelve Steps changed and adapted is a comparison with their perception today and fifty years ago. Coincidentally, I was born at the same time and place, Ohio, where the Steps evolved and can attest that there was a very intense prevalent religious climate and the Twelve Steps were considered to be very bold and progressive. Not so today. The Steps speak of God and a “spiritual awakening” in the same text. When written, spirituality and religiosity were inseparable. Today, there is a universal distinction between the spiritual and the religious.

³⁷ Page 139. This book has a notable epilogue of the presentation that Scott Peck made as the Distinguished Psychiatrist Lecturer to the American Psychiatric Association entitled “Psychiatry’s Predicament”, in which he speaks of “American psychiatry’s profound neglect of spirituality and the virtually total ignorance on the part of psychiatrists of the stages of spiritual development.” Page 238.

After fifty years, AA continues to maintain that “It’s not a religious program, it’s a spiritual program.”³⁸

Scott Peck emphasized the role of Carl Jung in AA.³⁹ We mentioned this previously, but let us look at it more closely. Carl Jung had a crucial role in the foundation of AA, and in 1961, just before his death, he wrote a letter to Bill Wilson, the co-founder of AA recognizing this role. We will remember that Jung treated Rowland Hazard, an admitted alcoholic from a very wealthy family, during a weekly psychotherapy session for nearly a year during 1934. Since the treatment was not having the desired effect, Jung recommended that Rowland return to New York and seek “a spiritual or religious experience – in short, a genuine conversion . . .” cautioning “that while such experiences had sometimes brought recovery to alcoholics, they were . . . comparatively rare.” As we have related, Rowland joined a religious movement and identified with a group of alcoholics who founded AA. Towards the end of 1960 Bill Wilson wrote a letter to Jung and referred to the “the conversation between you [and Rowland] that was to become the first link in the chain of events that led to the foundation of Alcoholics Anonymous.”⁴⁰ Jung’s reply has had a substantial influence on the formation of AA and is worthwhile reading. Some highlights:

I had no news from Roland H. anymore and often wondered what has been his fate. Our conversation which he has adequately reported to you had an aspect of which he did not know. The reason that I could not tell him everything was that in those days I had to be exceedingly careful of what I said. I had found that I was misunderstood in every possible way.⁴¹ Thus I was very careful when I talked to Roland H. But what I really thought about was the result of many experiences with men of his kind.

³⁸ Op. cit., Robertson, page 145.

³⁹ Hillman comments: **Before that Jung treated Medill McCormick among many others for alcoholism. It seems he did not find analytical psychology very effective for treating alcoholics. I also never had much success as their problem seems to have been with spirit.**

⁴⁰ Kurtz, E., Not-God - A History of Alcoholics Anonymous, 1975, Hazelden, page 8.

⁴¹ Even though it was more than twenty years that Jung separated from Freud, Freud was still alive and the relationship between the two schools was acrimonious.

His craving for alcohol was the equivalent, on a low level, of the spiritual thirst of our being for wholeness, expressed in medieval language: the Union with God. . .

You see, “alcohol” in Latin is “spiritus” and you use the same word for the highest religious experience as well as for the most depraving poison. The helpful formula therefore is: *spiritus contra spiritum*.⁴²

James Hillman⁴³

Through contact with the writings of Jung, I discovered the post-Jungian James Hillman and archetypal psychology. Four things attracted me to archetypal psychology:

First, Hillman wants to deepen and expand psychology which he considers the study of the soul, the *psyche*. As we will see, he bases his work on a very broad notion of the soul or *psyche*, so that he sees psychology as it is presented today as very superficial and severely criticizes this discipline, but not the psychologist who he feels is doing heroic work with limited tools. Remembering this we can understand this criticism:

When psychology becomes a specialism and the psyche is set forth in an academic textbook, the soul disappears. . . thus academic psychology has been a psychology without soul from the beginning.⁴⁴

There is an iron curtain between therapy and theory.⁴⁵

This last observation exploded on me with a blinding flash of the obvious. I believe it is the most apparent but least perceived analysis of psychology.

For years I have recognized the difference between the personality of the therapist and his/her methodology. Transactional Analysis and Neuro-linguistic theory derived from the observation that some therapists have personal

⁴² Thompson, R., Bill W., 1975, Harper, page 362.

⁴³ Hillman comments: **Founder of archetypal psychology.**

⁴⁴ Hillman, J., The Myth of Analysis, 1972, Harper Collins, p. 122.

⁴⁵ Giegerich, W., “On the Neurosis of Psychology or the Third of the Two”, Spring Journal, 1977.

characteristics which make them more effective than others regardless of their methodology.

During the 1970's Carkuff and Berenson did a study that questioned the value of training in the social sciences. They arrived at the conclusion that natural abilities are improved in 50% of the professionals and are prejudiced in 50%.⁴⁶

For fifteen years I have been attending conferences and congresses on the treatment of chemical dependency and I always come away frustrated. I admire most of these professionals and the excellent results they obtain, regardless of their methodology, but I feel frustrated listening to their scientific and academic declarations which often seem incoherent with their practice.

Suddenly, I felt like Paul of Tarsus, struck off his horse by lightning, the scales fell from my eyes: These professionals are Brazilians first and professionals second.⁴⁷ As simple as that.

As I've already mentioned, I feel that in many cases the professionalism inhibits natural ability. Perhaps it is for this reason that I have always admired the social workers who have a very broad and holistic training, not analytic, and for this reason they intuitively know how to treat alcoholism, directly and economically.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ See, Confrontation for Better or Worse, by Bernard Berenson and Kevin M. Mitchel, 1975, Human Resources Development, or Skills of Teaching: Teaching Delivery Skills, by Sally R. Berenson, David H. Berenson and Robert R. Carkhuff, 1979, Human Resources Development. We've noted in Vila Serena that some excellent lay therapists, after formal training, especially in psychology, lose their intuitive capacity to be effective.

⁴⁷ The psychiatrist, William H. Holloway, MD, that I mentioned earlier, once commented that the methodology of mental health professionals is, "What those do who are licensed to do it." It is a personal observation, but I believe that the Brazilian psychologist and psychiatrist maintain their humanity in the arid field of academic training with more agility than their North American colleagues.

⁴⁸ It is not the subject of this document but I cannot resist indicating that it has been the social workers in Brazil from corporations like Johnson & Johnson, CVRD, AVON and Petrobras, among others who have pioneered a revolutionary and cost effective treatment methodology: Treatment groups at the workplace during work hours. This is impossible in the United States, Canada and Europe. At a recent congress on alcoholism, Margarida Inocência Constância from Petrobrás-Reduc rose and calmly explained that in the oil refinery where she works there are 2000 employees, and during the past four years she has treated 145 employees for alcoholism on the work site and that 80% are sober according to five different indicators. No one clapped or thought it extraordinary and we returned to a long and tiresome explanation by a visitor from the United States that was presenting a methodology that I feel had nothing to do with Brazil. Brazil should be exporting not importing alcoholism treatment methodology.

The second thing that attracted me to Hillman was his rediscovery of the word soul. He returns to its origins in ancient Greece and applies it to our society today with a profound and revolutionary effect.

Third is his insistence on deepening as opposed to growing.⁴⁹ I am 67 years old and am tired of attempting to be perfect and live with all the guilt generated by our Christian and monotheistic culture. As Picasso remarked, “I don’t develop; I am”.⁵⁰ Hillman begins with the literature, sociology and philosophy of ancient Greece (the Greeks didn’t have a word for theology – we invented this later), and accompanies Homer and Plato, especially, through Plotinus, Ficino, Vico, Dante, Shakespeare, Blake, Yeats and Whitman.

Finally, archetypal psychology is polytheistic. It doesn’t oppose Christian, Islamic or Jewish monotheism, but sees them as incomplete. Archetypal psychology absorbs and completes them.⁵¹

Hillman Can Be Disturbing

His writings are generally difficult in content and style. While you are attempting to penetrate what he is presenting, you may have a sense of free-falling in space. All your old points of reference begin to disappear. I have had diverse “conversions” but nothing quite like the impact of an immersion in the writings of Hillman and associates. It is seductive. Hillman does magic with words which he calls angels.

I tried to locate Hillman adepts in Brazil, post-Jungians, but with the exception of his translators, Lúcia Rosenberg and Gustavo Barcellos, I left with the impression that most don’t really understand how profound a shift he is offering and simply use some of his concepts within the old treatment paradigms. New wine in old skins.

I traveled to the United States a number of times to hear Hillman, and have chatted with his adepts, Jay Livernois, Cindy Sebrell and Ben Sells. They not

⁴⁹ Someone commented that if an adult is still growing it is cancer.

⁵⁰ Hillman, J., The Soul’s Code - In Search of Character and Calling, 1996, Random House, page 7.

⁵¹ Hillman comments: **Actually archetypal psychology is Christian, Islamic and Jewish. See my article in Spring 53.** The referred to article: “How Jewish is Archetypal Psychology?” Spring 53, Spring Journal, Connecticut, page. 121.

only confirmed my impressions and taught me much, but I discovered that I could contribute because Brazil is a poetic and polytheistic country,⁵² influenced by the African, Portuguese and Indian presence in Brazil⁵³ which makes it fertile ground for the poetic archetypal psychology. I was invited to write an article⁵⁴ for “Spring”, the original journal of Jungian psychology and the voice of archetypal psychology today.⁵⁵

Archetypal Psychology and the Treatment of Chemical Dependency

What has all this to do with treating chemical dependency? If the dependent rejects the world by using drugs, the only response we have is to present a more profound vision of the world, and this is what archetypal psychology offers.

Let us attempt to better understand James Hillman. With a certain reluctance, he wrote an article for an Italian encyclopedia summarizing archetypal psychology. With reluctance because he does not wish to establish a “school” or “methodology”, and considers psychology to be an open field that includes everything and that we are always in the process of deepening.⁵⁶

The article from this encyclopedia was published as a small book expounding⁵⁷ archetypal psychology and translated into many languages including Portuguese. It is a difficult book, so I will attempt to indicate some fundamental items in each chapter to help absorb, not understand, archetypal psychology.

⁵² Brazilians use the following phrase to demonstrate their polytheistic bent, but show their ambivalence by maintaining it in Spanish when it is more applicable to Brazil than the Spanish speaking countries: *Yô no creo en las brujas, pero que las hay, las hay.*

⁵³ The Africans forced to immigrate to Brazil as slaves came primarily for the Yoruban peoples, considered the most creative Africans. See d’Azevedo, W.L. (Ed.), *The Traditional Artist in African Societies*, 1973, Indiana University Press, page 64.

⁵⁴ Burns, J., “A 12-Step Meeting of the Afro-Brazilian Gods”, Spring, 1997.

⁵⁵ I’ve often thought of organizing a conference in Brazil to invite some associates of Hillman, or perhaps convince Hillman himself (he is 72 years old), but a profound preparation would be necessary to understand the context of what he presents, in spite of the fact that he is a patient and charismatic teacher. Participating in some of Hillman’s presentations to American professionals, I had the sensation they were not appreciating what he was saying, not absorbing with their soul what he was poetically presenting, whereas if the audience were Brazilian, they would have would have enthusiastically appreciated his presentation.

⁵⁶ Hillman comments: **Not always deepening, just often.**

⁵⁷ Hillman comments: **Explaining not expounding.**

Title of book: Archetypal Psychology - A Brief Account⁵⁸

Much of Hillman's writing is complex because he doesn't simply offer a new system, but places his vision in its historical, philosophical, religious, economic and sociological context. No mean task. He displays a formidable erudition and few have the intellectual depth to accompany him. I don't. That is not important because archetypal psychology has much to say to all regardless of where you are in your studies.

What makes Hillman difficult is not his erudition, but the extreme simplicity and depth of his concepts. It is not Hillman's academic style which makes his writing difficult, but the philosophical, economic and religious systems in which we are immersed in our Western monotheistic culture. What confounds is not what we know or don't know, but what is erroneous in what we believe, or better, incomplete. Hillman escapes the traditional by being extremely simple, aesthetic, humorous and practical. We have to remove our traditional cultural filters and open to a new vision which is at the same time rooted in ancient Greece.

This book is compact like a compacted computer program that explodes when you open it. It cannot be read at a single setting, but assimilated with time, reading and re-reading each paragraph until you absorb its implications.

Here are some superficially summarized central ideas of archetypal psychology:

- Soul: A poetic perspective, not a thing.⁵⁹
- Image: The whole drama not only that which is apparent.
- Archetypes: Primary forms which govern the soul.
- Myths: Stories that express archetypes, images and soul.
- Personality theory: Multiple personalities.
- Metaphors: Everything.

Remember, the approach here is poetic, not literal. It is difficult to remain with a perception of reality that is essentially poetic. For that reason, let us pause here for a moment and again focus on the distinction between literal and poetic.

⁵⁸ Hillman, J. fourth printing, 1990, Spring Publications, Dallas, Texas. The Brazilian edition: Hillman, J., Psicologia Arquetípica - Um Breve Relato, Translators: Barcellos, G and Rosenberg, L., 1983, Editora Cultrix.

⁵⁹ Hillman comments: **Try to see soul not as singular but multiple itself.**

THE LITERAL

Literal language emphasizes substantives, nouns and is the manner in which we are generally accustomed to express ourselves within our civilization. It is direct, exact, rigorous and scientific.

In our culture today, we are accustomed to describe abstract concepts as if they were things. For example, we refer to soul, unconscious, heaven hell, or God as if they were specific concrete things in a given place.

Psychiatry and psychology as they are practiced today are expressed in a literal language: ego, libido, transference, repression.

The literal has a tendency to be analytical, reducing to parts in an attempt to respond to the questions of how or why. Why is this happening or how does this work? It strives for depth but is superficial. It fragments. The literal is not a language of the emotional or beauty.

THE POETIC

Poetic language tends to use more adjectives and is inexact and indirect. For example, poetry, music, dance or a dream awaken a perception that is deeper than the words or music used to express them. We hear the poetic more with the imagination than with the intellect. It is synthetic. It constellates.

Poetic language uses examples, metaphors, and adjectives. Poetic language opens perspectives individual to each person but universal at the same time. It responds to the question of what is happening, and provides a perspective that is never fixed but always deepening. It is the language of the emotions and beauty. We perceive more than we understand.

HISTORY

The world has always fluctuated between the poetic and literal. A thumbnail glance:

*The Greeks*⁶⁰

Ancient Greece, the cradle of our civilization was poetic. They did not divide reality simply into material/body and spirit/mind as we do in our literal world today. The Greeks divided into three aspects: 1) the material/body, perceived through the senses, 2) spirit/mind perceived with the intellect and between these two and dominating them is 3) soul, perceived with the poetic imagination.

The Greeks held that the soul is the predominate human faculty through which all is perceived poetically. This is the key to understanding Greek civilization.

The Christian Era

Christianity was initially poetic, and the bible can be best understood in this sense, but between Saint Paul⁶¹ and the Emperor Constantine, the Church became a political organization, and concepts like heaven, hell, mortal, and venial sin became literal. This more or less held into the Middle Ages.

Renaissance

Florence was the center of a 15th century rebirth of Greek poetic philosophy which influenced the arts and literature from Dante to Shakespeare. This was the Golden Age.

The Reformation

With the return of a poetic Greek philosophy, the literal Church disintegrated. Martin Luther led the reform which created a Church with a literal philosophy and theology. Soul returned to being something concrete and individual.

This was strengthened a century later by Descartes who not only denied the soul, but separated the spirit/mind from the material/body. Thus we arrive in our industrial, scientific, literal era of today.

The Modern Era

⁶⁰ Hillman comments: **This can be imagined as a Golden Age.**

⁶¹ Ogden Nash: Paul/Spoiled/It all.

In our days, Freud reintroduced Greek mythology with the Oedipus story, even though his interpretation of it was literal. He opened the door, and Jung introduced a poetic vision of the whole of mythology.⁶² Here a curious thing happened.

The disciples of Jung during the last years of his life and against his will developed a literal school and methodology which today is practiced by the majority of Jungians.⁶³ It is how we've come to have the literal Freud and Jung teachings that we know today.

However, James Hillman was the Director of Studies at the Jung Institute when Jung died. Noting this tendency to literalize, he left the Institute ten years later and since that period has been developing the work of Jung from a poetic point of view.⁶⁴

Hillman summarizes his work:

Here I am working towards a psychology of soul that is based in a psychology of image. Here I am suggesting both a *poetic basis of mind* and a psychology that starts neither in the physiology of the brain, the structure of language, the organization of society, nor the analysis of behavior, but in the processes of imagination.⁶⁵

Let us return to a summary of the book:

(The Portuguese version has an excellent introductory overview by the primary translator, Gustavo Barcellos with ample tie-ins to Carl Jung.)

Foreword

⁶² Hillman comments: **Jung introduced a poetic psychology using mythology.**

⁶³ See the article: "The Imitation of Jung", by James Yandell, *Spring*, 1978, page 54, in which the author relates how Jung told a story to indicate his frustration at being imitated by his disciples. An old man in a cave made some random drawings on the wall of a cave. These were erroneously considered the "truth" by his disciples who joined together to ardently defend these "truths".

⁶⁴ Hillman comments: **Ideas not teaching of Jung, he was quite clear on this although the Jungfrauen never got it.**

⁶⁵ Hillman, J., *Re-visioning Psychology*, 1976, Harper Collins, page xvii.

Hillman wrote this summary for an Italian encyclopedia, a country where he is well known. As I mentioned previously, he wrote this with a certain reluctance because he did not want archetypal psychology to be reduced to a single format, text, or school. He believes that it is a process always in evolution.

Chapter: Sources of Archetypal Psychology

Hillman wants to take psychology beyond the clinic and place it in the culture, including art and history. Broad in scope. It is more philosophy than what we normally designate as psychology, although Hillman would say that what we normally call psychology is not. Here we have to leave aside our traditional concepts of psychology and for this reason it is called archetypal, not analytic, “because ‘archetypal’ belongs to all cultures, all forms of human activity, and not only to professional practitioners of modern therapeutics.”⁶⁶

It is a cultural movement.

Hillman’s primary sources are Freud, Jung and Henry Corbin, “the French scholar, philosopher, and mystic, principally known for his interpretation of Islamic thought,” the imaginal.⁶⁷ Archetypes are central to Jung’s work, but it is exactly on this issue that Hillman separates himself from Jung. Jung sees archetypes as points of reference, while Hillman considers archetypes as always phenomenal, the basic building blocks of reality.

Hillman begins with Jung and Corbin, but returns to their predecessors, taking his thought back through the Renaissance, Vico, Ficino, Plotinus, to Plato and Heraclitus of Greece.

It is important to leave this chapter with an understanding that Hillman is presenting something different than our traditional concept of psychology. He returns to Greece, where he locates the notions of soul, images and myths that he

⁶⁶ All quotes in this summary of the book can be located in the chapter being cited unless otherwise noted.

⁶⁷ We immediately have a link with Brazilian culture, because Portugal was under Islamic dominion for almost five centuries. A Brazilian encyclopedia mentions that, “the superior Muslim civilization left abundant vestiges in Spain and also Portugal.” Enciclopédia Mirador Internacional, Vol. 17, p. 9174, 1983, Encyclopaedia Britannica do Brasil Publicações.

believes more fully and deeply expresses reality. An image that was subsequently disfigured by monotheistic Christianity.

Chapter: Image and Soul: the Poetic Basis of Mind

Soul is a perspective, a lens, a way of seeing; images are the colors that pass through the lens. However, attempting to describe or explain soul as a way of seeing a picture or painting and the colors as images, besides being superficial, tends to literalize what is poetic. It is difficult to remain in the poetic.

The key to understanding Hillman is here in the concept of the soul and image and we should pause in this chapter. Without these simple ideas we cannot go forward.

It is as easy as this:

The soul is the act of perceiving, a way of seeing, a poetic perspective.

We know the soul through images:

[T]he usefulness of referring to an image as context, mood and scene; when considered in this light, an image cannot be something only set before my eyeballs, or even before my mind's eye, since it is also something into which I enter and by which I am embraced. Images hold us; we can be in the grip of an image. Indeed they can be gutsy.⁶⁸

Images are not what we remember or things that represent something. An image only presents itself. An image does not represent, it presents. Analyzing or representing the image as a symbol, destroys the image. We don't look for the hidden sense in the image, inserting what is not there, but we stay with the image, always better appreciating it, deepening it.

We are in the images, not the images in us. Our dreams are all images.

⁶⁸ Hillman, J., "Further Notes on Images", Spring Journal, 1976, page 159.

Images in themselves are neither good nor bad, true or false, but bring value.⁶⁹

The motto of archetypal psychology is to “stay with the image”.⁷⁰

To repeat, archetypal psychology “starts neither in the physiology of the brain, the structure of language, the organization of society, nor the analysis of behavior, but in the process of imagination”.

Chapter: Archetypal Image

Images contain archetypes which are the primary forms that govern the psyche. They are individual and universal, like anger, the erotic, depression, the child, beauty, motherhood and ageing. They cannot be explained, they are simply the basic forms. The fundamental building blocks.⁷¹

Images need to be worked, developed, or deepened for us to appreciate their archetypes which are presented, not represented.

Repeating, to deepen the image we need to stay with the image and not interpret it. Interpreting, using the image as a symbol destroys the image. Remember, images present they do not represent.⁷²

Chapter: Soul

Soul is a poetic perspective.

⁶⁹ Hillman comments: **Images carry value.**

⁷⁰ To get ahead of ourselves: Remaining faithful to the image, the story is the fundamental therapeutic principle of treating chemical dependency. This phrase is attributed to Rafael Lopez-Pedraza. See “An Approach to the Dream”, Patricia Berry, Spring, 1978, page 61.

⁷¹ Hillman comments: **Archetypes are imagined as primary forms - don’t literalize archetypes. They are not generalizations or abstractions, and they can be explained.**

⁷² In a marvelous article, “Marriage, Intimacy, Freedom”, Spring 60, 1996, p. 9, Hillman cites the following delightful poem written by Felix Pollack, Subject to Change, 1978, Juniper Press:

He dreamed of an open window.
 A vagina, said his psychiatrist.
 Your divorce, said his mistress.
 Suicide, said an ominous voice within him.
 It means you should close the window or you’ll catch cold, said his mother.
 His wife said nothing.
 He dared not tell her such a dangerous dream.

Soul is a poetic perspective that is always in danger of being literalized.

Soul is deliberately ambiguous because we are within soul attempting to explain soul.

This way of seeing, this perspective which we call soul has a number of characteristics: It turns events into experiences, is communicated in love, has religious aspects, and permits us to recognize all reality as primarily metaphors. It is a perspective.

This is perhaps the most difficult aspect of archetypal psychology. We are focusing on that which is so obvious that we do not see it. Soul is the manner in which we perceive, discover, and discern reality, a poetic perspective.⁷³

Chapter: Anima and Rhetoric

“The perspective of soul is inseparable from the manner of speaking of soul . . . In its concern with rhetoric, archetypal psychology has relied on literary and poetic devices to expound its vision.^{74,75}

Chapter: Soul and Myth

The literature, the primary and fundamental poetry that we utilized to express the soul, the rhetoric, are the myths. Freud and Jung introduced them back into civilization, and archetypal psychology deepens them. Myths are utilized as metaphors.

The role of myth in archetypal psychology is not to provide an exhaustive catalogue of possible behaviors. . . but rather to open the questions of life to transpersonal and culturally imaginative reflection.

⁷³ Reminds me of the tale of the three young fish trying to locate the ocean, and not willing to accept the reply of the older fish that they are already in the ocean.

⁷⁴ Hillman comments: **... its rhetoric, are myths.**

⁷⁵ It is perfectly reasonable to treat chemical dependency or emotional problems using the Divine Comedy, King Lear or the soap opera of the moment.

Myths do not ground, they open.⁷⁶

Chapter: Soul, Metaphor and Fantasy

Prepare for a poetic roller-coaster:

The language of the soul is poetic and the poetic is metaphoric, so that the language of the soul is the metaphor.

As the metaphorical perspective gives new animation to soul, so too it re-vitalizes areas that had been assumed not en-souled and not psychological: the events of the body and medicine, the ecological world, the man-made phenomena of architecture and transportation, education, food, bureaucratic language and systems.

In this way, the poetic basis of mind takes psychology out of the confines of the laboratory and consulting room, and even beyond the personal subjectivity of the human person, into a psychology of things as objectification of images and interiority, things as the display of fantasy.

For archetypal psychology, “fantasy” and “reality” change places and values.

[W]hatever is physically or literally “real” is also a fantasy image. Thus the world of so-called hard factual reality is always also the display of a specifically shaped fantasy, as if to say, along with Wallace Stevens, the American philosopher-poet of imagination on whom archetypal psychology often draws, there is always “a poem at the heart of things”.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Hillman emphasizes the Greek myths, but of course they are not the only ones. There is the whole body of Nordic and German myth as well as those of the existing indigenous peoples.

⁷⁷ The chemically dependent person has lost the poem at the heart of things.

Chapter: Soul and Spirit

The distinction between soul and spirit further guards against psychological therapy becoming confused with spiritual disciplines – whether Eastern or Western – and gives yet another reason for archetypal psychology to eschew borrowings from meditative techniques and/or operant conditioning, both of which conceptualize psychic events in spiritual terms.

Chapter: Soul-Making

Citing the observation of William Blake and John Keats: “Call the world if you please, ‘the vale of Soul-making.’ Then you will find out the use of the world. . . , the principal objective of archetypal psychology is ‘soul-making’”.

The center of the soul is in the center of the world and not in the individual or the transcendental.⁷⁸

Soul-making is “staying with the image” in the day to day, whether our activities are manual or intellectual.

So the question of soul-making is what does this event, this thing, this moment move in my soul? What does it mean to my death?

The dream is . . . making soul each night.

Chapter: Depth and Vertical Direction

To “stay with the image”, archetypal psychology needs to deepen each event or image to find “something deeper,” to “insearch” rather than to research, for yet further significance below what seems merely evident and natural.

Since the soul is centralized in the world, cultivating the soul through deepening images, ever placing them more within the world (Jung would call this

⁷⁸ Hillman cites Wallace Stevens: “The way through the world is more difficult to find than the way beyond it.”

individuation), we flee from the individual deep psychoanalysis that only isolates a person from soul and the world.

Chapter: Cultural Locus: North and South

Hillman places archetypal psychology in the South of Europe, not in the North. He flees from the Vienna of Freud, the Zurich of Jung, and the schools of California, to the South of Europe, principally Greece.⁷⁹

“South” is both an ethnic, cultural, geographic place and a symbolic one. It is both the Mediterranean culture, its images and textual sources, its sensual and concrete humanity, its Gods and Goddesses and their myths, its tragic and picaresque genres (rather than the epic heroism of the North); and it is a symbolic stance “below the border” which does not view that region of the soul only from a northern moralistic perspective.

Archetypal psychology does not concern itself with the East/West, Oriental/Occidental, because it encompasses oriental philosophy.⁸⁰

Chapter: Polytheistic Psychology and Religion

Archetypal psychology is polytheistic:

- 1. The most accurate model of human existence will be able to account for its innate diversity, both among individuals and within each individual. . .**
- 2. The tradition of thought (Greek, Renaissance, Romantic) to which archetypal psychology claims it is an heir is set in polytheistic attitudes. . .**

⁷⁹ Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece are on the same latitude.

⁸⁰ Hillman comments: **Archetypal psychology is not so arrogant as to encompass Oriental philosophy. It sees the Orient as other and respects it - keeping a certain distance.**

3. **The social, political and psychiatric critique implied throughout archetypal psychology mainly concerns the monotheistic hero-myth (now called ego-psychology) of secular humanism, i.e., the single-centered, self-identified notion of subjective consciousness of humanism (from Protagoras to Sartre). It is this myth which has dominated the soul and which leads to both unreflected action and self-blindness (Oedipus). It is responsible for the repression of a psychological diversity that then appears as psychopathology. Hence, a polytheistic psychology is necessary for re-awakening reflective consciousness and bringing a new reflection to psychopathology.**

This chapter is very rich, but let us conclude with this quote:

Yet, archetypal psychology is not out to worship Greek Gods or those of any other polytheistic high culture. . . We are not reviving a dead faith. For we are not concerned with faith. The Gods of psychology are not believed in, nor taken literally, not imagined theologically. Religion approaches Gods with ritual, prayer, sacrifice, worship, creed. . . In archetypal psychology, Gods are *imagined*.

Chapter: Psychopathology

Archetypal psychology does not want to abolish pathology, but questions and deepens to seek what pathology wants.

[I]t is mainly through the wounds in human life that the Gods enter (rather than through pronouncedly sacred or mystical events), because pathology is the most palpable manner of bearing witness to the powers beyond ego control and the insufficiency of the ego perspective.

As Freud's paradigm of psychopathology was hysteria (and paranoia) and Jung's was schizophrenia, archetypal psychology has so far spoken mainly about depression. Depression has also provided a focus for. . . an attack upon social and medical conventions that do not allow the vertical depth of depressions.

Hillman links the Western horror of depression with the tradition of the heroic ego and Christian salvation through upward resurrection. Depression is still the Great Enemy. . . Yet through depression we enter depths and in depths find soul. Depression is essential to the tragic sense of life. It moistens the dry soul and dries the wet. It brings refuge, limitation, focus, gravity, weight, and humble powerlessness. It reminds of death. The true revolution (in behalf of soul) begins in the individual who can be true to his or her depression.

Chapter: The Practice of Therapy⁸¹

On this point I have a difference with our author. Hillman speaks of archetypal psychology following the rituals of the classical analysis of Freud and Jung: regular individual face to face encounters in a therapeutic locus in exchange for a fee. Although Hillman does mention, “these. . . procedures are not rigid”.

I believe that in Brazil we need to fundamentally alter the structure of therapy. The universal context of psychological therapy in Brazil is similar to the medical clinic. The patient brings “their problem” to the therapist to be resolved in exchange for a fee. If it is not resolved, often through medication, it is taken to another therapist.

I believe that a more integral approach that is rapidly spreading from Europe to Brazil is Philosophical Counseling. The person wishing to discuss their philosophy, principles, or the mundane problems of life pays a fee to a philosopher for regular visits. Unfortunately in Brazil it is called Clinical Philosophy which still carries of sense of “solving your problem” and creates an unnecessary conflict with psychotherapy.⁸²

Since our interest is specifically the treatment of chemical dependency, let’s detour a bit from our summary of the book and comment on the application of archetypal psychology to the treatment of chemical dependency.

⁸¹ Hillman comments: **Please see We’ve A Had 100 Years of Psychotherapy...** See: Hillman, J. and Ventura, M. *We’ve Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy and the World’s Getting Worse*, Harper, San Francisco, 1992.

⁸² “Folha de São Paulo”, “Filósofo vira clínico e põe paciente no divã”, Domingo, 6 de julho de 1997, 3º Caderno, páginas 2 à 7.

We do not pretend to be able to analyze the problem of the dependent in order to provide a therapy that will resolve the problem. I believe it is tremendously arrogant to think we can analyze the infinity of complexities that compose the human being and arrive at a conclusion that the cause is this or that and the solution is such or so.

The most we can do is create a climate in which the resident has an opportunity to examine, deepen his/her style of life or philosophy and began to perceive that a result of compulsive drug use is a life that is not lived. We can encourage them to deepen “the mythologies of the world of darkness, Hades, Persephone, Dionysius”, and not promise a state of chemically induced serenity. The result? Calmly read the following with attention:

There is a further consequence of the credit one pays to the images of the soul. A new feeling of self-forgiveness and self-acceptance begins to spread and circulate. It is as if the heart and the left side were extending their dominion. Shadow aspects of the personality continue to play their burdensome roles but now within a larger “tale”, the myth of oneself, just what one is which begins to feel as if that is how one is meant to be. My myth becomes my truth; my life symbolic and allegorical. Self-forgiveness, self-acceptance, self-love; more, one finds oneself sinful but not guilty, grateful for the sins one has and not another’s, loving one’s lot even to the point of desire to have and to be always in this vivid inner connection with one’s own individual portion.⁸³

I believe that using the Twelve Steps as a point of departure (because it is where we are in our Christian monotheistic culture) and open a vision through archetypal psychology within the poetic climate of Brazil is the most efficacious and economical existing therapy for the treatment of chemical dependency.⁸⁴

The vision of archetypal psychology has immediate implications in the daily program of treatment centers based on the Twelve Steps, the Minnesota Model. Since these centers generally focus on the first five Steps, I suggest that a

⁸³ Hillman, J., *Insearch - Psychology & Religion*, 1967, Spring Publications, page 119.

⁸⁴ Hillman comments: **I usually hate to answer how, but you seem to have got it here.**

perception of the treatment process from the view of archetypal psychology would immediately bring significant modifications. For example:

- The climate of the center is poetic, not literal.
- The First Step, “admitted we were powerless” is a deepening of the story, the novella, image of the dependent and not a confrontation or moral pressure to grow and seek perfection or a state of serenity.
- The Second and Third Steps that refer to a Higher Power are rooted in the patient’s story, image, metaphor of the moment as the member of a community in the treatment center and the world at large. Higher Power is not something solely intrinsic or extrinsic.
- The Fourth and Fifth Steps that recommend sharing a “moral inventory”, not an immoral inventory, remains focused on the story, the image, and is not interpreted or analyzed. Pathologies and eccentricities are accepted as normal.
- All peripheral activities to the process of deepening the story such as group dynamics or occupational therapy have the purpose of deepening the story of the individual within the story of the group.
- The fundamental principle of treatment is to “stay with the image”.

Let us return to our text.

Chapter: Feeling

Traditional psychology and psychotherapy place emotions and feelings within the individual. Archetypal psychology believes that feelings “are not merely personal but belong to imaginal reality, the reality of the image, and help make the image felt as a specific value”.

The task of therapy is to return personal feelings (anxiety, desire, confusion, boredom, misery) to the specific images which hold them.

To isolate and work with a feeling or emotion without deepening its image is superficial and loses the message of the feeling or emotion.

Chapter: Eros

The omnipresence of eros in therapy and in the theory of all depth psychologies receives recognition under the technical term transference.

Since love of soul is also love of image, archetypal psychology considers transference, including its strongest sexualized demonstration, to be a phenomenon of imagination.

Chapter: Personality Theory: Personifying

Archetypal psychology's personality theory differs fundamentally from the main views of personality in Western psychology.

It is not egocentric because archetypal psychology assumes that each human being has a number of personalities.

The healthy or mature or ideal personality will thus show cognizance of its dramatically masked and ambiguous situation. Irony, humor and compassion will be its hallmarks, since these traits bespeak an awareness of the multiplicity of meanings and fates and the multiplicity of intentions embodied by any subject at any moment.

For me, Hillman is describing the best of Brazilian culture.

Chapter: Biographical

As shown above, archetypal psychology is not a theoretical system emanating from the thought of one person for whom it is named, then

identifying with a small group, becoming a school, and moving into the world in the manner of Freudian or Jungian psychologies; nor does it emerge from a particular clinic, laboratory, or city giving it its name. Rather, archetypal psychology presents the polytheistic structure of a post-modern consciousness. It is a style of thinking, a fashion of mind, a revisionist engagement on many fronts: therapy, education, literary criticism, medicine, philosophy, and the material world. It assembles and lends its terms and viewpoints to a variety of intellectual concerns in contemporary thought. Eros and a common concern for soul, image, and pathology draw individuals from diverse geographical and intellectual areas into rapport with each other for the revisioning of their ideas and their worlds.

The book presents a vast bibliography of archetypal psychology including all the works of James Hillman to date, indicating which have been translated.

Conclusion

The Minnesota Model, the prevalent methodology for the treatment of chemical dependency in the world today, was engendered in the United States in a holistic, poetic, non-literal climate as an art not a science. In the last few years within the United States this model has become literalized, losing much of its enthusiasm and efficacy, while in Brazil the seed of the Minnesota Model fell on a soil that is naturally poetic, esthetic, exuberant and is flowering, fertilized by its encounter with archetypal psychology, a poetic, natural, and symbiotic approach. More, it has spread to Brazilian industry, creating a form of treatment that is the most effective and efficient the world has seen. For this reason, I suggest we re-baptize the Minnesota Model in Brazil as the Minnesota/Brazil Model.

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