

## THE SOUL INCARNATES

*The ultimate state is soundless, touchless, formless, imperishable; also tasteless, constant, odorless, without beginning, without end, stable — by discerning That, one is liberated from the mouth of Death.*

—Katha Upanishad

**T**his ancient quotation refers unambiguously to the Great Field. In much of the literature it has been called the Void because we experience it as being incredibly spacious while being empty of thoughts or things.<sup>343</sup> We sense there is nothing anywhere, yet at the same time we also sense there is no thing missing. This haunting paradox is the essence of our experience of the Void that is utterly still yet includes all existence. As the word Void does describe our sense perceptions of what it is like to connect to the Field, I will use the term interchangeably with Field when discussing the sensation that mystics call *spacious emptiness*.

When we meet this state of nothingness we actually cease to think or to experience in any emotive way. There is an ineffable sense of no-thing. No-thingness is the ground of everything, the cradle of all being, the ultimate source of existence. It is the ground within which fields are present, rather than being the fields themselves. It is a still space without movement or information. It is matter-less. In the East this state may be called ‘the nature of mind.’

From here we recognize that the ultimate nature of reality is the Void. Nothing ‘happens’ in this space because there is only flow. Personal will cannot create any disturbance in the Field, as there is nothing that is not in alignment with the flow. The Void transcends the usual categories of time and space. As David Bohm noted, within it there are no “dichotomies and polarities, such as light and dark, good and evil, stability and motion, microcosm and

macrocosm, agony and ecstasy, form and emptiness” because no thing (no condensation into form) remains present for more than a micro-second, even existence itself.<sup>344</sup>

When during therapy clients re-experience their time in the womb, the sensation has the same timelessness and spacelessness that we find in deep meditation and many religious practices. These are the qualities of the Field that are present in our creation. From the moment of conception we take shape within the Void. There is no sense of separation as the fetus is one with the Field, and therefore with mother and with soul. Grof has described this time as one of cosmic engulfment.<sup>345</sup>

The whole of our evolutionary past from sea creature to human being flows through us as we are being created in the womb. This includes our basic drives, our animal needs and survival instincts. In addition the fetus grows within the behavioral fields of the parents, and their parents before them. To a lesser extent we include the fields of all related families back to our simian ancestors and all tribal and group consciousnesses. Our essential nature is formed there, with its elemental balance of will and joy, of mind and curiosity and, most powerfully of all, the form of the soul, its particular collation of qualities and characteristics.

The interaction of all these fields turns the womb into a furnace of transformation. The old expression of a pregnant woman having ‘something in the oven’ is very true. The holographic simultaneity of the Field presents our entire human potential to the growing consciousness of the infant in such an integrated way that every characteristic that lodges there plays in a symphony of incredible diversity in which nothing need be discordant.

## **We are created in the whisper of the soul**

*The soul is our personal inner field of experience, the matrix where all inner events and processes happen.*

—Hameed Ali

The nature of our lives reflects that of our soul. As we manifest the changes in our lives we are the vehicles for manifesting soul’s nature on this plane. As soul existed before us and was present

while we were being formed from the moment of conception, soul's qualities become ours. The vibrations of each person's soul help create the pattern of that person's life. John Nelson wrote, "As a human sperm penetrates an ovum a soft whisper gently permeates the background hum that fills the universe. A new being is forming within its essence...acting as a vortex of spirit, imparting the unique attributes that comprise the human personality."<sup>346</sup>

Soul is one of the primary manifesting agents in our creation along with genes and our parents' own energies and emotions. In the womb, soul's energy system is folding around us transferring its personal mix of characteristics and capacities to the fetus.<sup>347</sup> That is when our evolving cells are most sensitive and delicate and malleable. The larger part of our personality comes from the individuality of our particular soul.

Our soul work has shown that we are not only connected with all fields all the time, but that through the vibrations of our fields we are co-creators of our birth and our lives. However we wish to understand the nature of our existence, and the 'reasons' for our dramas and suffering, there is only one salient and overwhelming fact: soul with a little help from parents and caregivers set up the dance of this life, the way we reacted created personality, and after that it is up to us. At no point are humans victims, and we can change our present and our karmic future the moment we accept that, soul will change with us.

Our clients have experienced their souls participating in the moment of conception. During lovemaking the soul may be just outside looking in, or more intimately traveling with the sperm. The act of conception is a very sensuous moment, accompanied by vibrations of both softness and firmness, of fluidity and excitement. George reported, "I was my soul watching out for the moment of conception. There were no emotions in this space. I was just deeply interested. And on later reflection I realized that I knew I was part of the Whole, though with energetically a slight sense of direction, with the bulk of the Whole being somewhat behind my center of attention."

Another client wrote, "I was very aware that feelings came in as the cells became more complex. I saw that feelings were created

within the brain stem and spinal cord and morphed in gradually around the end of the first trimester. I knew them as my animal inheritance when life was driven by hunger and fear. They added great richness to the energetic tendencies that I live with.” Another reported that the most prominent energy in their soul was like a thrusting forward, with “no sense of being in the midst of the Whole. This is affecting the entire emotional side of my life, for I have felt separated from other people. It has created the trail of abandonments that have dogged my life with a bottomless longing for something outside of me: But also drive, purpose... and wariness.”

The recurring feeling of abandonment would seem to have originated in the energetic form of the soul. There is no emotion in the energy, just a movement. Yet we instill that movement with feeling content, and thus turn it into an issue or a trauma. One client reported, “I traveled back into the womb. It felt very still and enfolded. Then there was a flip, and I was just outside, very aware of the bigness of the penis moving within the softness of the vagina. I was my soul watching out for the moment of conception. There were no emotions in this space. I did not experience the conception, but only a very clear movement out of the Field into the cell. It felt like being squeezed through a narrow opening into a new state of being, like a jelly of toothpaste. My total attention was on the way forward. This has affected my entire life attitude — I am not with the Field, in its completeness, but separated. I have therefore had a life of separation that is full of longing to be in the midst of Spirit that I suspect exists but do not experience, save in tiny flashes.”

In this way soul continues throughout life to reinforce the personality it has helped to create. As long as we remain unconscious of our connection with soul, and make no effort to alter any of its vibrations, this influence remains in our basic makeup, but unrecognized. However, energy is no one-way street. Our actions and decisions mingle with those of soul and alter it.

A woman had over the years terminated six pregnancies. Her soul and her aura were cluttered with the impressions of every fetus she had conceived. Her ability to nourish herself was diminished by the energy of those other souls she had been unable to nurture to

birth. It was not that she was actually carrying these six other souls, but that her soul had taken on her anguish at what she had done plus the unfinished grief. This is an immeasurably greater issue than most of us think. Any termination, no matter how justified, leaves a residue of sorrow that is carried in the soul. Healing lies in the recognition of both the grief and our need for forgiveness. Without it, soul serves these conflicting energies back to us, and so maintains the situation.

We reflect what soul becomes to the same extent that soul becomes what we are — we continue to mutually modify each other. In time, this mixture of vibrations moves into the next incarnation, and thus is the nature of our lives that is carried into the Field and returned, again and again.

Is the reverse possible, that we create our own souls? Is the soul as an energetic form created out of our genes and parental energies while in the womb, so that our soul-form-in-the-Field is man-made and naturally adopts its energetic system from ours? This is like applying Carter's anthropic principle to soul (see page 160, "Can the future determine the past?"). From the level of consciousness that soul displays during the inter-uterine stage of life, I would say unambiguously that the radiant community of soul-fields is primary. It is right order to place soul first. There is no natural truth in placing the less conscious that partakes less completely in the Field in front of or 'above' soul that is already one with the Field.

## **The soul is present in the womb**

*Everything you see has its roots in the unseen world.*

*The forms may change, yet the essence remains the same.*

*Every wonderful sight will vanish, every sweet word will fade,*

*But do not be disheartened,*

*The source they come from is eternal.*

—Jalal-ud-Din Rumi

The soul is nearly always present with the fetus in the womb. Soul may or may not be inside the womb itself, though it tends to remain fairly close to the mother. About one-fifth move into the

womb at conception, about the same hover nearby until the birth, and the remainder at times in between. It would follow that the legal arguments that use the presence of soul to determine when a fetus should be aborted are meaningless. The soul is always present.

In one example, a young woman in her twenties remembered under hypnosis seeing her mother sitting on the lounge wearing a dress. She described it in great detail. There was a print on the wall and a woven rug. The radio was playing. Her mother confirmed every detail of the memory. Under hypnosis the mother pointed out this could only have happened when the daughter was six months in the womb. At that time of gestation the fetus can neither see nor distinguish colors, she could not hear nor in any way make sense of what was going on, yet the memory was there, clear for both of them, and verified by third parties.<sup>348</sup>

The observer may be outside the person, as in many near-death experiences. John Lilly wrote that during a particularly hard birth he “split off [and] moved out briefly and watched from the outside for several hours until the head broke through, the baby came out, and he moved back into the baby’s body.”<sup>349</sup> Chamberlain reports a very young child commenting, “I keep looking through the nursery window. It’s weird. I can’t be on both sides of the window, can I? But I’m looking at the baby; it’s me.”<sup>350</sup> The fact that the observer is away from the body is shown from the information they remember, for it could not have been sensed by the body because it happened somewhere else, in another room or even another country.<sup>351</sup> This very clearly shows that memory is resident not only in the body, but has other locations. It may even be that memory is just where our personal energetic key fits into the information larder that is the Field.

A young child remembered an event that had been kept a secret from the parents. Cathy was an assistant midwife, and when she was left with the newborn baby she stilled its crying by offering her own breast until she slept, but told nobody as she felt guilty about being the first to nurse the child. Four years later Cathy asked the child if she remembered being born. “The girl not only proceeded to give an accurate account of who was present and their roles during labor and delivery but, apparently sensitive to Cathy’s unspoken guilt, leaned up close and whispered in a confidential tone, ‘You

held me and gave me titty when I cried and Mommy wasn't there.'" At less than an hour old she was aware and remembered, and in addition picked up Cathy's feelings.<sup>352</sup> Who could the rememberer be but soul?

Jenny Wade describes how children were regressed to recall their time either *in utero* or experiences at the time of their birth, using acupressure, hypnosis, and breathwork. Clients were able to recall such details as the moment of conception, what their mothers were wearing, what was said and what their birth was like. "Often accounts contain accurate reports of complex impressions, such as abstruse medical conditions of procedures few laypeople would know about."<sup>353</sup> Wade then interviewed or regressed the mothers, contacted relatives and obstetricians, and obtained medical records to test the validity of the information.

She has tried to relate these events to possible real memories from the fetus, and recognized this is improbable. "Aural memories are not possible until mid-term...yet subjects can repeat conversations."<sup>354</sup> She went on to ask whether sounds that would be meaningless to the fetus could be retained in memory and later decoded into language by a more mature subject under hypnosis? That idea is untenable as the neurons in the brain that hold memory are not formed early enough to fill this role. Her explanation was for the existence of a "materially transcendent awareness," another name for what we would call soul.<sup>355</sup>

Wade included research by Helen Wambach who regressed more than 750 people and had them describe their experiences of fetal life. This showed "two intermittent streams of awareness, one assuming a vantage point within the uterus, the other one located outside the baby's body, and apparently outside the mother's body as well."<sup>356</sup>

Some memories come from long before there was any significant brain development, and in the following case even before the actual conception. "Ingrid remembered her mother and father making love on a couch before they were married. The doorbell rang to announce that grandmother and aunt had come back from shopping when they weren't supposed to. Ingrid says, 'Mother was beside

herself. She knew she got pregnant. She was ashamed. She didn't want to do it in the first place."<sup>357</sup>

The connection of soul to the Field is apparent when David Chamberlain's subjects report a sense of a timeless present. Even where the situation is stressful their reports are devoid of emotion when observing from outside the body, but sometimes a little emotional when observing from inside. Add to this that the observer is aware of other's thoughts and feelings without having to hear anything and we know we are dealing with an observing medium that can connect with the vibrations of others.<sup>358</sup>

Though many people will tell you that their soul does not want to be here, and though Wade reports an occasional feeling that life is a rather unpleasant thing to go through, we find in therapy that there was no obligation to incarnate. Even in extreme cases, we have never found souls being happy at attempts to abort them. Being threatened with termination nearly always leaves a negative impression in the field. If souls had an opinion about liking or disliking incarnation, we surely would have sensed that when clearing these cases.

One of Chamberlain's clients remembered being a very tiny fetus, "just a little blob," when she was attacked by a chemical. She described it as having "a strong harsh smell, almost a disinfectant smell, like ammonia, strong, vile." She wanted passionately to live and reacted to the invasion with, "I was determined, I was a fighter even then."<sup>359</sup>

I have my own experience of a conversation between my mother and my granny, who was appalled that my mom had jumped headlong into marriage with an artist, and a broke artist at that, rather than arranging a more 'suitable' match to a rich stockbroker. Granny urged my mother to abort me. I must have been three months at the most. The memory of their voices is absolutely clear. The impact was so shocking that when I remembered it I cried and shivered and curled up on somebody's lap and wanted to stay there for half the day.

Twins are often studied for the clarity they shed on issues. Identical twins have so many behavioral similarities that researchers are fascinated by the questions raised, particularly compared to



nonidentical twins who have no more ways in common than the rest of us. One pair who had been separated at birth and met only in later adulthood showed that without any intervening contact they shared the same preferences for stock car racing, carpentry, and vacationing on the same beach in Florida. The both disliked baseball, named their dogs Troy, and not only had wives named Betty but each had earlier divorced women named Linda. Their firstborns had been given the same name.<sup>360</sup>

Genetic determination cannot provide a sufficient explanation for such bizarre ‘coincidences.’ Morphic fields and extrasensory perception are not enough either. Our research shows that it is the soul that provides the essential personal characteristics that are integrated into the fetus from the moment of conception.<sup>361</sup> The presence of different souls during parturition may explain why children from the same womb are so different.

Very close connections are made between the souls of twins. There is a widely disseminated photo called the “Rescuing Hug.”<sup>362</sup> The Massachusetts hospital staff felt that one twin would die. Nurse Gayle Kasparian flouted orders and placed both babies into the same incubator. Instantly, the two nestled together, the stronger one placing her arm across the shoulder of the other, who calmed down and changed her breathing to her sister’s pace and so survived.



Fig. 40—The Rescuing Hug.

Simply experiencing touch and sharing energies made her stronger. “It was so instantaneous,” Kasparian said. “What happened to that baby was miraculous. Nothing else had worked.”

This closeness is even deeper among identical twins. They come from the implantation of one sperm into one ovum. The division into two blastocysts from the one source creates cells that are very different to two cells coming from separate impregnations. They create two people that have many shared characteristics that cannot come from nurture that we surmise there would have been a single soul at conception that divided in two as the cells themselves split to form two people. It suggests that the instant of insemination is when the soul attaches to the embryo, and that among identical twins the personal soul-qualities destined for one fetus were shared between two.<sup>363</sup>

Sometimes identical twins develop opposite qualities, even to the point of deeply disliking one another. We have not had the opportunity of working with such a pair, but have met them. Logic persuades me that the split in the soul may create a variety of vibrations. Some of these would be coherent so that the two would remain synchronized and their lives would be in tune with each other. But some would react against each other, perhaps from the shock of splitting, and this would set up a pattern of vibrations that would, over time, develop antagonistically. However, though this is only a guess at this stage, the possibility emphasizes that the soul energy is not a fixed form, but is changeable and malleable.

## **Soul is affected by death in the womb**

*When the soul comes to the nameless place, she takes her rest. There, where all things have been God, in God she rest.*

—Meister Eckhart

One example of the changeability of soul lies in what has come to be called the Vanishing Twin Syndrome.<sup>364</sup> This is when a twin dies in the womb. The outcome can affect the whole of life without giving any clue to the cause of the feelings that come from the loss. The client in this sandplay has given up on life as pretty worthless. She works steadily yet without much sense of achieve-

ment, as if there was an incommunicable abandonment. She combines this with a constant and eager search for a man, but cannot form intimate or lasting bonds. After repeated attempts she drifted into deeper lassitude.

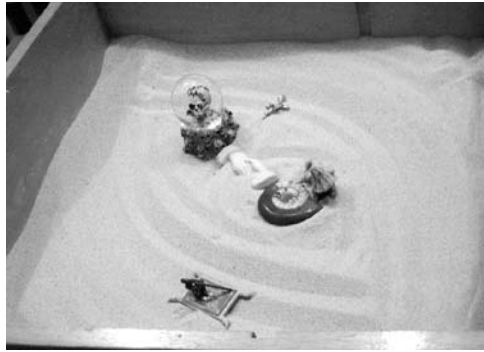


Fig. 41 — Vanishing twin sandplay.

At times the four corners of the tray have specific meanings. The top left may occasionally refer to a spiritual issue while the bottom right may refer to the material present.<sup>365</sup> She created an axis between these two with an almond-shaped mandorla marked in the sand — an ancient spiritual symbol for higher unity. She drew a circle in the center.

The pieces, in order of placement, are a glass ball enclosing a skull on the axis of the mandorla closest to the spiritual quadrant; a fossil near-right, and between them clasped hands. A little goanna was placed on the fossil, which she described as “soft and uncertain, longing.” The cross points to the skull and outside the mandorla a magic carpet and didgeridoo player.

In the session she gradually regressed into being very young, and the discoveries that were stimulated by the sandplay surprised her. She remembered that when she was about three she had been told she had been a twin, but that the other had died well before her birth. She knew this had been a boy.

She then became very emotional as she identified with the goanna and the fossil, helplessly holding on to the departed brother and feeling as dead as the fossil without him. Her inner ‘center’ lay in the white hands, clasping onto the male who had abandoned her. It was perceived as a frightening emptiness, not as the ‘fertile void.’<sup>366</sup>

This was a fetal memory of a broken connection between two souls while in the womb.

Over the past fifteen years we have found that the impact of the 'disappearance' of a prenatal twin is profound, and can affect all of life. The syndrome can create some of the most powerful forces within a psyche, and has an ongoing impact on later life.<sup>367</sup> Besides the psychological trauma, there are often physical consequences from the toxins and poisoning of the mother's body that affects both the mother and the fetus. There is also the profound question of where do the memories of someone's inter-uterine relationship with their twin reside?<sup>368</sup>

A client lived her life with the feeling that she was outside herself, experiencing events as if she was not inside her body, but outside. She had little connection with feelings, and her greatest joy was in collecting and assembling things, like picking up shells to string them into beads. Her twin had died early and she felt she was chasing him here, there, and everywhere. It felt like life was a broken string of beads, and that she was endlessly on the hunt to pick up the lost parts of herself.

Sibling death in the womb has been variously estimated as affecting between 15 and 35 percent of all conceptions.<sup>369</sup> We have now worked with many dozens of clients who have presented such a history, and consider the proportion closer to one-in-three. It is nearly always the boy twin that dies and the female who survives, reflecting lots of evidence that males are the weaker sex in their early years.

Our clinical experience suggests that resolves may be formed at or just before the twin's death, and become locked into the body and psyche of the remaining fetus. In an adult we would call these resolves decisions, and we find it more effective to work with them as if they were the outcome of conscious choice. They present as energetic attitudes that have become ingrained during the remainder of their time in the womb. The impact on later life made by the 'decisions' is so profound that the whole tenor of personality may be affected.

But were they made by the fetus? When death occurs in the early months the fetus has not developed the capacity to hear or

see, let alone sense or remember experiences beyond the placenta. Yet the memories are precise, and clearly spelled out. It can only be the soul who remembers. Where there are twins in the womb their souls form a relationship that seems to begin from the moment of conception, if not before. Traumas follow from the twin vanishing, or when a twin is stillborn, and lie more between the two souls than in the psyche of the human. In some cases the surviving soul will 'hold on' to the one that would have disappeared, actually attaching an impression of its energy to the life of the fetus that lives.

The consequences manifest as an unfulfillment and longing in the surviving twin, without any sense of where these feelings come from. One person dreaded she may have taken a larger share of nutrients so her twin starved, and compensated by overeating and becoming a very large woman. Another felt the pain of the loss intensely in her heart, felt that if she had loved more her companion would not have died, and closed down her own heart. The outcome through life was to be constantly on a spiritual search without being able to share her love with herself, while feeling unworthy and self-critical.

These issues are almost intractable under normal therapy — the origin is so hidden that it hardly matters how long the counseling would be, it is unlikely to be uncovered. As the 'event' took place during the baby's creation, the impact is totally imbued into the cellular structure of the bones and muscles. Once understood consciously the disturbance can dissipate slowly with self-awareness and vigilance.

One client wrote:

*After a series of sandplays I realized one of the reasons I was scared of the dark was that when my male twin died I was left in the dark feeling alone and abandoned. I had always felt an eerie feeling behind me especially in the dark like someone was there, watching me. Later on, I discovered that when my twin died his sac collapsed onto my back where it stuck until it was absorbed into the placenta. My sadness at losing him turned to horror as his remains clung to my back. This created my fear of what was behind me: It was in fact my beloved, my lost twin.*

In this example both identical male twins survived. The one who was our client I will call George, the other Sam. George was constantly out of step with himself, as if he was being run by two fundamental drives that cancelled each other out. One drive was the romantic dreamer, the other the practical fixer. These two qualities could have worked together, but in his case the dreamer would screw up the practical, while the practical would undermine every dream.

It turned out that the two souls had made an ‘arrangement’ in the womb so that Sam would stay and not depart. At conception George’s soul was the dreaming soul, Sam’s the practical. George offered to do everything for Sam to keep him around. The outcome in later life was that Sam would step back to let George attempt the practical things and then feel annoyed when he did, while George felt impelled to solve problems when his nature was urging him to just relax and fantasize. Both boys were filled with a resentment that they could not define. After the process George found that these two sides of his ‘soul-nature’ worked in greater harmony, without the uncomfortableness that had lain between them, and gradually his life changed in tune with that.

The very night after the process Sam, who had not been in contact for the past six years, telephoned George from the United States. He just had to make contact through the subtle telephone of the Field.

If any of this seems far-fetched, consider that George had two women in his life. The first was a practical down-to-earth person, while the second was dreamy and impractical. The first longed to help people while the second needed to be helped. Are these not core aspects of the two souls that were so confounded in the womb?

### **The manner of our birth changes soul**

*We need to recognize we are in prison, if we are to use what is available to escape.*

—Georges Gurdjieff

The birth adds further issues to those of soul, as does any powerful external action.<sup>370</sup> Much has been written on this as its

importance is gradually being recognized, especially at a time when a large number of children are being born by cesarean surgery.<sup>371</sup> It will be interesting to follow the next generation of young people born this way, for one of the imprints from early birth through surgery is to remove a sense that life needs to be worked for or that the mystic oneness experienced in the womb need ever evaporate — a sense that receives a rude jolt when faced with the maelstrom of the ambitious world we live in.

And there are further themes around the manner of presentation, whether the baby was strangled by its own umbilical chord, was it slapped on arrival, and so on. The issues are extremely complex, but of the greatest importance in affecting the soul-essence of the child. Imprinting from this time is forever.

Sue had a twin called Sally. She had become a therapist had undertaken considerable personal development. She had gone out of her way to investigate whom she was and how people 'worked.' Sally, in contrast, was in the army and was quite uninterested in any self-questioning. The two were like chalk and cheese.

In therapy Sue had reconnected with her time in the womb and believed that she had pushed Sally out of the way so she could be the firstborn. Though this seemed inconsistent with the receptive nature that had made her an effective therapist, she had come to believe it. The growing guilt had become a dominant influence in her life. It turned out that the belief was wrong, but in a most surprising way. She had been working on an irrelevant issue for a long time, which had not been to her benefit.

In a rebirth process as she was emerging from a 'womb' that had been carefully made from pillows, I made the 'mistake' of calling her Sally rather than Sue. At that moment of heightened awareness she suddenly realized that she was not the first to be born, but that it had been Sally who was first and that she had, by error, been given the name her mother had decided to give the first. Where in fact she should have had the name of Sally, she became Sue and thereafter the family had saddled her with their belief that she had been first. It was a family misconception, rather than a mistake made in the hospital, but had huge consequences.

The session changed her relationship with her twin. It also removed her block to writing essays. Before that session Sue's writing had been labored and confused. No matter how hard she tried, language and thoughts struggled out in knots as if the confused order in the naming at birth was being reflected in the ordering of her adult ideas and grammar. From the moment of this realization she wrote clearly argued and substantive essays, in perfect grammatical English.

Here is an event of the utmost importance for life that occurred at the moment of birth, when mother and nurse attached the wrong label onto Sue's wrist. This, and others like it, shows that we receive a high impact from the events during and just after birth.<sup>372</sup> Until I understood this I had always wondered why astrology chose the very minute of the birth, and no other, for their calculations. You would think that the moment of conception or of soul-connection would be the most important, but it is the second of the birth that matters, the child's emergence into the world.

Based on LSD experiments made in the 1950s, Stanislav Grof argued that the time in the womb is usually one of cosmic oneness most like our dreams of paradise, but that in the process of birth the baby is suddenly threatened in the most dramatic way.<sup>373</sup> Enormous inter-uterine pressures are suddenly applied to the unsuspecting fetus, while the road of escape may be blocked for hours or even days. He showed that this leads to the creation of powerful psychic structures that can have a profound influence on our views of the world.

For example, too much pressure may lead to the belief that we have to push to succeed, or that we have to surrender to events in case the outer pressure gets too much. A long hard birth that Grof called a 'no-exit' birth, may imprint the belief that it does not matter how much we try, we can't by the nature of things succeed. A cesarean that brings the child out before its time without having to make any effort can create the belief either that no effort is needed to achieve a goal, or that if an effort is made someone else will screw it up. Inducted and forceps deliveries often leave the child confused, not knowing when or how they should act.<sup>374</sup>



These early events usually come as rude shocks, in complete contrast to the easy wonder of their nurturing and companionship in the womb.

The waters broke some days early for one client, and she was dying in the womb, clutching and pulling at the umbilical cord for more sustenance to keep her going. In therapy her hands were grasping in the air, and when asked what she wanted to hold said, "it felt like a rope or cable." By the time she was born her terror was so deeply imprinted that even in her thirties when we first worked with her, her baby-like features dominated her looks. Even with a forthright personality the imprint pushed her into just those relationships that would exclusively provide her with nurturing and demand little in return. An infant part of her, like the inner child in Bradshaw's sense,<sup>375</sup> remained a baby trying to claw her way back into the womb to find the sustenance she had lost while being born.

### **From the Void to emptiness: soul is replaced by ego**

*The 'I am' consciousness is responsible for the creation of the organs through which our sense of individuality is enjoyed.*

—Patanjali Sutra

No matter how born, most babies retain a sense of the cosmic spaciousness that was theirs in the womb. Events pass into awareness, are experienced and then pass out again like the droplets of a stationary cloud. We can see it in the way events and feelings are absorbed, reacted to, and pass away in the moment. Infants will be laughing passionately in one instant, and will cry their hearts out in the next. Nothing is held onto.

The very young permanently function in alpha mode rather than the beta mode of adult consciousness. This mode is the state of altered consciousness that comes in deep meditation. Children are far more intimately connected with the Field and their souls than adults. They receive more information, see auras and devas, and readily respond to the true, if hidden, feelings of others. At times children have picked up experiences that adults may interpret as

past-life, but which may have been simply what they encounter while trawling the Field.<sup>376</sup>

During the first months baby remains partly merged with mother. But gradually baby recognizes that mother is not always there, the breast is not in his mouth when needed, and that missing a warm touch joins a thousand other denials that become his lot. Crying for food and love is received in a number of ways by the parents. The way baby is treated here will have the most profound impact. If mother insists on obedience and times breast-feeding by the clock, and leaves baby to cry alone in his room, the infant gradually recognizes a choice between the instinctual need to be fed and the obedience needed to obtain mother's love. From this comes a perceptible movement away from wholeness with soul in the full spaciousness of the Void to a withdrawal into isolation. The separation between us and the whole has begun.

The natural completeness of the Void is no longer perceived as a fullness, but as a hollowness. We redefine the fullness of the Void as emptiness. This is uncomfortable, and needs to be filled. Emptiness tints the joys of life with an unpleasant feeling of lack and even meaninglessness. As we begin to separate from the Field it becomes not the *experience* of space, but the *feeling* of emptiness.

In the process we are losing ourselves, but this time not from the cosmic all (as did the soul-field) nor from the mother-womb (as did the newborn) but from our own essence. We deny our true nature in order to buy acceptance. This produces a deep well of sadness, an existential grief that lies within us all, a sorrow for what we have lost.

The child fears this place. It is too sad to be recalled, too riddled with the feeling of what we were once really like. It feels like an ineradicable sorrow for which there is no solace. Emptiness, not fullness, becomes the ground of being. Here lies the origin of desire, and with it the most common source of human suffering. We become afraid of nothingness, and redefine sensations of desire as needs, and will is directed toward its satisfaction. Hence the popularity of magazines that support dreams of eternal love and the perfect marriage, of home and family.

Bit by bit the neural paths in the brain will deepen their tracks along whatever tracks the baby is using to compensate for the loss of wholeness, and of soul. This is how habitual behavior commences, and with it attachment to that behavior, to the point that in years to come the adult will tell you that these behaviors define him. Therapeutically, the huge loss the shift from fullness to emptiness brought about in life is a defining moment.

One defining moment was when Charlie felt constantly attacked, without understanding the sources, and was therefore overcautious in his life. Sandplay showed that grandmother's criticism of his mother, both verbal and energetic, was taken on by the little infant as a direct abuse of him. As the baby was still merged with mother, when mother was under attack, so was baby. Abuse was passed on instantly to the baby as if it had been directed at him. This was shown in his sandplay.

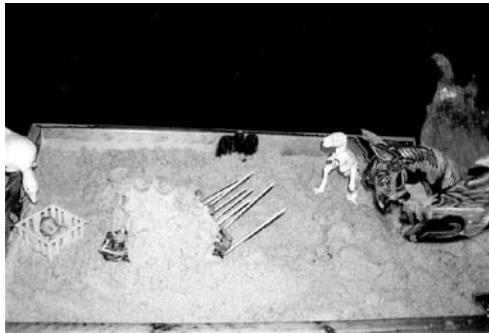


Fig. 42—Sandplay of the baby on the left taking on an attack aimed at mummy. Mummy is both the little frog hiding behind the barricade, and the goose softly looking down at her baby. Granny is, of course, all the terrifying creatures on the right.

The fearsome creatures on the right were recognized as being grandmother, and the little baby sitting on the rocks on the left was, of course, Charlie. His mother was tucked in behind the rocks, dancing in some irrelevant manner out of sight. Being merged with mother, he believed he was under attack. As mother was too scared to protect him, little Charlie was drawn to protect her himself. Over time this desire grew into the courage to stand up against others, but underneath lay the little baby who was scared of all confrontation. From the sandplay Charlie then realized that the conflict between

fear and love (fear of granny's wrath and love of mother) had made him feel empty. He felt as if his soul had abandoned him.

From a myriad of these experiences we build defenses against being hurt. The ego, that we believe defines us — but is in fact a fabrication, an illusion — then develops into the behavior we call personality. We take on political issues, or addictions or we behave as superheroes. We stop looking within and seek a solution from without. It seems necessary for survival, but we come to lose something very precious, and often spend the rest of our lives in an unconscious search for what has been lost. This means we become surveyors or environmentalists or opera singers or criminals, or whatever role best fits the distorted response. A shorthand description of the process under the development of personality is set out in Appendix 2.

The outcome is the egoic energetic formations that from then on determine and define the behavior we call personality. We take on political issues, or addictions or we behave as superheroes. Actions are directed outside. We stop looking within and seek a solution from without. This means we become surveyors or environmentalists or opera singers or criminals, or whatever role best fits the distorted response. A shorthand description of how personality develops is set out in Appendix 2.

We have found in therapy that as clients explore deeper into themselves, the feeling of emptiness and soullessness hides underneath most of the surface issues. When examined, we find that the sensation of soul and that of the fullness of the Void are actually *one and the same feeling*. This is the feeling of what one really is beyond the pressing demands of the personal ego.