

Mourning, Spirituality and Psychic Change

Susan Kavalier-Adler Ph.D., ABPP



Foreword by Joyce McDougall D. Ed.

Mourning, Spirituality and Psychic Change

In her earlier books on well-known writers and artists, Dr Susan Kavalier-Adler (PhD., ABPP) identified healthy mourning for traumas and life changes as an essential aspect of successful analysis. She drew distinctions between a healthy acceptance of mourning as part of development and pathological mourning, which 'fixes' individuals at an unhealthy stage of development.

In *Mourning, Spirituality and Psychic Change* Dr Kavalier-Adler brings such distinctions into the consulting room, exploring how a successful analyst can help patients to utilize mourning for past traumas to move them forward to a lasting change for the better, emotionally, psychically and erotically. She gives an historical perspective on how mourning has been either explicit or implicit in psychoanalytic theory since Freud, and tackles the controversial issue of spirituality in psychoanalysis. Dr Kavalier-Adler explores how psychoanalysis can help people come to terms with difficult issues in a time of great psychic and spiritual disturbance.

Illustrated by richly detailed clinical cases *Mourning, Spirituality and Psychic Change* offers a comprehensive view of psychic transformation, facilitated through psychotherapeutic treatment, which will be of great interest to all psychoanalysts.

Dr Susan Kavalier-Adler, a psychologist-psychoanalyst for twenty-eight years, is the Executive Director of the Object Relations Institute for Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis. She is the author of more than forty articles, and two books, including *The Creative Mystique* (Routledge, 1996).

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Mourning, Spirituality and Psychic Change

A new object relations view of
psychoanalysis

Susan Kavalier-Adler, Ph.D., ABPP

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Dedications

This book is dedicated to:

My analysands who have been generous enough to let me use their treatment processes to illustrate the healing of developmental mourning within an object relations psychoanalysis and psychotherapeutic process.

My analysands who have so inspired me to pursue the in-depth study and practice of “developmental mourning.”

My analysands for speaking so clearly in their own individual voices in the pages of this book, as the mourning process allowed their articulate self-reflection to emerge.

Dr. Joyce McDougall for her offer to do the foreword for the book.

The candidates at the Object Relations Institute who have inspired me with their thoughts, questions, and comments.

My husband, Saul Adler, for his deep love and generous support in all my endeavors.

My father, Solomon Weiss, who first inspired and applauded my creativity and to my mother, Alice Weiss, who supported it.

Preface

The study of mourning as a life long journey of connecting, internalizing, and letting go of external others, while integrating the symbolic meaning of the relationship with these others in the internal world has pervaded my study of psychoanalytic theory and clinical practice. The profound impact of the mourning process has been with me since my early twenties when I began mourning the death of my father, whom I lost when I was ten years old. Although my own mourning process began with a bereavement, I have come to discover the day in and day out impact of object loss upon all our daily lives.

Therefore, I have found mourning related to separation individuation, object disappointment, and to the mourning of existential grief, guilt, and limits to all, to be avenues to psychic growth and to psychic integration and wholeness. Melanie Klein has been my theoretical mother in the pursuit of the journey and discovery as she was the first to intuit how mourning process was a critical clinical and developmental process, following Sigmund Freud's profound paper on mourning, "Mourning and Melancholia," in 1917.

I have seen how the capacity to engage in and practice this critical clinical and developmental mourning process affects us throughout our lives. Those who mourn continue to grow and those who cannot mourn become stuck in repetitive childhood enactments that sabotage and arrest their lives. I now work in many clinical modalities to help people continue their life-long development through the experience and practice of mourning. This book speaks about the in-depth mourning process in psychoanalytic treatment. However, in addition to psychoanalysis, I practice individual psychotherapy, couples therapy, and group therapy in ways that highlight, embrace, and promote the capacity to mourn. I lead an intensive mourning group and a writing group that tune into and support the full evolution of the mourning and life long growth process.

In all of my work, I have pursued themes of mourning as a developmental growth process and specify the developmental and psychodynamic issues that inhibit such mourning. I have written about blocks to mourning and about the state of developmental arrest seen in a pathological mourning state, which for women artists and writers I have described as a "demon lover complex," (Kavaler-Adler, 1993, 1996, 2000). All my teaching at psychoanalytic institutes, including the

continuing teaching and supervision I do at the institute where I am the director, The Object Relations Institute for Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, reflects my understanding of mourning as a developmental process. When I teach about psychoanalysis I teach about the interaction of transference interpretation and mourning process. When I teach about the characterological defenses in the personality disorders I teach about how the gradual relinquishing of such defenses allows for the tolerance of “abandonment depression” (Masterson, 1979, 1981) affect states that can lead to the tolerance of the grief of loss within a developmental mourning process.

Foreword

Dr. Joyce McDougall

Mourning, Spirituality and Psychic Change: A New Object Relations View of Psychoanalysis is an adventure into the intricacies, dialectics, and developmental sequences in critical psychic change, observed in vivo in the clinical situation. We frequently hear the patient's voice, facilitating a much needed integration of the various kinds, modes, and levels of mourning that need to be navigated in order to achieve self-integration and to sustain growth in love and creativity.

The capacity to tolerate loss is an important developmental issue and one that Dr. Susan Kavalier-Adler discusses in terms of object relations in both the internal and the external worlds. She demonstrates, with great sensitivity, the extent to which the capacity to feel the grief of object loss is the key object relations dynamic behind progressive changes in psychic structure – whereas the intolerance of such capacity is a primal cause of developmental arrests and of numerous psychopathological blockages in the personality.

In pursuing this theme, Dr. Kavalier-Adler further demonstrates how the grief of object loss is frequently combined with the grief of regret related to hurting a loved one, as well as to compulsive and tenacious patterns of self-sabotage. She also demonstrates the interaction of transference and the facilitation of the mourning process through both the therapist's capacity to "hold" the patient and through interpretation.

Dr. Kavalier-Adler presents two major studies that highlight the analysis of an erotic transference, one with a homosexual woman, and one with a man. She also demonstrates the developmental use of the idealizing transferences and how it can lead to homoerotic, spiritual, sexual, and aggressive modes of experience. Dialogues with well-known object relations theorists add an ongoing texture and background to the clinical vignettes as Dr. Kavalier-Adler employs and illustrates theoretical concepts from Melanie Klein, Ronald Fairbairn, Donald Winnicott, Michael Balint, James Masterson, and Otto Kernberg, as well as Margaret Mahler, Jeffrey Seinfeld, and John Bowlby.

By taking the theme of mourning as a paradigm for the expanding concepts relative to mental health, as promoted by psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, Dr. Kavalier-Adler is able to interweave clinical phenomena that have formerly been restricted to segregated categories. She links the abandonment and depressive

mourning of separation–individuation trauma with that of narcissistic injury, of the loss of the primal parents through literal death, and the mourning of bisexuality, as well as that of a grief – in relation to existential guilt and regret – and mourning the attachment to narcissistic parents. She also highlights the mourning required to relinquish the internal envious part-object parents and the loss resulting from spoiling due to one’s envious attacks. She then interweaves these various themes and modes of mourning with the grief and guilt of child loss when psychic survival depends on the abandonment of one’s own child. The healing process encompasses the conscious experiencing of both grief and guilt in the transference and in the containing environment of the therapeutic relationship. This involves the reparation of both internal and external object relations, including the reuniting of the abandoning mother and her child. Reparation, in its internal object dimensions, leads to the finding and releasing of formerly untapped creative resources, as well as promoting a new and evolving capacity for the mutuality and intimacy of whole object relations – where formerly part-object relations and modes of enactment through projective identification dominated the personality in relation to the external world.

This thought-provoking research will provide inspiring reading for those who are concerned with mental health science as well as those who are fascinated by the mysteries of creativity.

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I would like to thank Kate Hawes, the Brunner-Routledge editor who selected this book for publication. I thank her also for sending the book for review by objective anonymous readers who were able to comprehend and appreciate the theoretical and clinical contributions of *Mourning, Spirituality and Psychic Change: A New Object Relations View of Psychoanalysis*.

I'd like to thank the entire Brunner-Routledge staff for their efforts in the publication of the book, as well as for their efforts in the publication of my first two books, *The Compulsion to Create: A Psychoanalytic Study of Women Artists* (1993) and *The Creative Mystique: From Red Shows Frenzy to Love and Creativity* (1996).

Finally, I would like to thank all of the people who participated in the April 26, 2003 Object Relations Institute conference where I presented the themes and theory from this book. I especially thank Dr Marvin Hurvich, Dr Albert Brok and Dr Jeffrey Seinfeld.

Introduction

Traditionally, mourning has only been thought of in terms of the grief of bereavement. Even in “Mourning and Melancholia” (Freud 1917), the object lost was mostly thought of as deceased, although Freud did begin to incorporate the experience of disappointment into his vision of painful personal loss. In this study, however, the mourning process is redefined in developmental terms to reveal a full view of mourning as the key to psychic transformation.

Psychoanalysis began as a psychotherapeutic treatment to help people. In that spirit, its practitioners need to look at the most radical (as in root) source of psychic change, whether the critical factor in making way for it is therapeutic action or therapeutic attunement and reception. The attitude called for, on the part of the clinician committed to advance the process of developmental psychic change (as opposed to arbitrary, novel psychic change) with a patient, is what Freud terms “free floating attention” and what Wilfred Bion (1963) calls the absence of “memory and desire.”

Therefore, both therapeutic action and attuned reception are modes of engagement for allowing and promoting the process I call *developmental mourning*. Fully evolved, developmental mourning is the product of affective and cognitive development and the reciprocity between them in the individual. Insight grows through separation-individuation combined with self-reflection. Self-agency and interiority grow through self-integration. These unfolding developmental challenges are intrinsic to the therapeutic process; they advance to its front and center when a patient articulates his experience of the process itself.

Patients’ voices can be heard in the pages that follow; they resonate in the clinical narratives – as does the crucial engagement between analyst and analysands. As an object relations theorist committed to a spiral of connection and reconnection as the route to developmental progress, I believe that just such resonance in the rendering of critical dynamics in the clinical situation is vital to psychoanalytic literature. Specifically in the context of this book, it is vital to making theory rich and experience near enough to be accessible and amenable to processing.

Whenever I think of psychotherapeutic work or psychic change, I think of developmental mourning (Kavaler-Adler 1993, 1996). Looking through that lens

and addressing the defense, including transference resistances that inhibit the process, clarifies my working vision. For instance, I see character disorders as related to arrests in mourning or as pathological mourning states – states that can manifest in a demon lover complex whereby the bad object predominates, causing developmental arrest – and, although different character disorders feature their own distinct psychic structures, all share the phenomenon of addiction to a bad object, and, by extension, the arrest of psychic connection and the parallel arrest of normal modes of mourning due to cumulative trauma. Trauma related to the disruption of primal bonding and primary internalization in turn disrupts self-integration and separation-individuation; the byproduct is splitting and disassociation circling a bad object constellation.

Illustrative clinical material comprises the bulk of the book. But to construct a scaffold for its assimilation, Chapter 2 articulates a phenomenological theory of developmental mourning. The succeeding chapters examine the roles of mourning in the history of psychoanalytic theory from Sigmund Freud through D.W. Winnicott. Uniting the explicit – as in Freud’s “Mourning and Melancholia” (1917) and Melanie Klein’s article on ‘Mourning and Its Relation to Manic Depressive States’ – with the implicit, which is characteristic of object relations thinking about psychic transformation. This sheds a new light on both, and also on the profound need to catapult developmental mourning to the center of the analytic stage.

The extended cases of June, Phillip, and Laura demonstrate that healing along a developmental continuum is possible when the analyst sustains connection long enough for an “abandonment depression” mourning process to take place (Masterson 1981). The method invites readers into the treatment room – to share, for example, June’s discovery of a new identity when she comes to terms with her loss of early mother and father objects and with the attendant guilt, rage, and regret.

June’s developmental journey continues along a *spiritual* dimension (decisively, in fact, for her ultimate transformation), which introduces spirituality as an emerging axis for the fruition of developmental mourning. That mode of psychic connection is consistently underrepresented (if not, in fact, evaded by professionals in our field, except for Jungian analysts). Accordingly, it is barely touched on in psychoanalytic literature, as was reported by a psychoanalysis panel during the 2000 American Psychological Association Division meeting, which called for a revisioning of psychoanalytic thought to encompass spiritual dynamics.

I have become fascinated by the power of spiritual themes as they surface over the course of treatment. Listening to my patients has taught me that some of them live in the archetypal realms of spiritual energies and entities for quite some time. Moreover, they do so while negotiating the transformations associated first with bringing to consciousness and then with consciously leaving behind a universe of part-object and bad-object relationships. As artists and writers may enter their inspirational domains through relationship with an identifiable muse, analysands may enter theirs through connection with the analyst and the holding environment. The spiritual becomes explicit in the psychoanalytic dialogue, as is seen in the cases of June and Phillip.

Indeed, June's experiences of psychic merger with the analyst catalyze her spiritual odyssey toward a future in which she is free from her past pathological object ties and traumas. She can heal and separate from the analytic object on whom she is at first so dependent, as her natural developmental urge to merge with the object at the beginning of treatment leads to the birth of a new self with the eventual release of aspects of the old and traumatically vulnerable one. It is June's yearning for the idealized object, which she experiences as a direct transmission to God, that engenders her awareness of a potential separate self and its "idiom" (Bollas 1989).

The psychoanalytic object relations approach, unlike a purely spiritual outlook, provides an avenue for the conscious reliving of trauma along with insight into psychic conflict. I invite readers to join me in discovering an integrated vision from a new object relations perspective incorporating spiritual experiences among the connections arising out of the developmental mourning process. Significantly, those connections encompass those of the heart, which, like spirituality, are neglected in the literature, but together with it, are capable of extraordinary synergy. That vision, as elucidated in the theoretical and clinical material that unfolds in these pages, offers the promise of an enriched and particularly hopeful take on the psychoanalytic journey for us all.

A new metapsychology for clinical phenomenology and psychic health

Where is the human heart in psychoanalysis? Rarely do theorists deal with the heart as a psychic juncture of human experience. Perhaps two exceptions are D.W. Winnicott (1974), when he speaks of the true self, and Harry Guntrip (1976), when he speaks of split off core parts of the self, which he calls hearts. The most recent exception is Michael Eigen, who in *Psychic Deadness* (1996) frequently refers to the hearts of his patients. Indeed, the wounds to the heart that his patients ward off, he suggests, represent a central locus of their psychic identity. As if to underscore the central role of the heart in his book, Eigen offers the following dedication in the book: “To all who strive to make this world a place the heart can live in” (1996: dedication page).

Despite the omission of the heart in psychoanalytic thought, I have found that speaking to analysands in psychoanalysis or to psychotherapy patients, using the language of the heart tends to be immediately communicative, often evoking a resonant response. There is generally a palpable impact when invoking the heart’s needs, longings, and its wounds that we all ward off. It is certainly a more direct route to the contact involved in emotional touch than speaking of an id, ego, or superego, or even a libidinal ego or antilibidinal ego personified as an internal saboteur.

Another palpable force that opens patient–therapist communications is the therapist’s introduction of the heart’s nemesis: the internal bad object constellation, which in the patient is often personified in the form of a demon lover figure. The demon lover figure, when appearing in literary form, is characterized by possessing, attacking, raping, and abandoning anyone dependent on him (Kavaler-Adler 1993, 1996). The demon lover parent, perpetuated in the internal world, generally betrays all trust in love, need, and desire, when reported in fantasies or dreams by psychoanalytic patients. Typically, an individual unconsciously relates to the demon lover personification within through projecting it onto an external other – the demon lover outside.

What distinguishes this demon lover personification and phenomenon? One characteristic is the split off motivational life that the person experiences as compulsion or as possession. Another characteristic of the demon lover personification is its erotic and aggressive instinctual dimensions. Possibly the most

significant characteristic, however, in identifying the demon lover is that it functions to obliquely block the heart's functions in channeling love, emotional touch, tenderness and object relations connection. The demon lover lives in those dead and dark places where the heart's sensations and spiritual and emotional longings are frozen out of existence or nullified. He exists as a plug inserted in the black holes and voids of the traumatized psyche (Grotstein 1993). He lives, therefore, in dark and cold occlusions, where the wounds of the heart remain sealed off, foreclosing psychic and potential space – the life of the heart and the energy of love. That is why, when the demon lover is portrayed as a figure of literary myth, as evoked, for example in the poetry and prose of Emily Brontë and Emily Dickinson, he is shown entering the realm of the female cosmos only in the dark hours of the night. For Emily Brontë, he is simply "The Nightwind" (Brontë 1941). For Emily Dickinson, he appears wishing to "peep in parlors shut by day" (Dickinson 1960). The poet searches for the aggressive dark erotic dimensions of the father-god, "the metallic god who drills his welcome in" (Sewall 1974).

A woman may also imagine her demon lover to be the source of secrets about symbolic knowledge. If so, she may then project her own symbolic capacities onto him as an internal object and also onto an external male representative. For example, Emily Dickinson could only write poetry after she had dreamt during the previous night of a phallic king figure arising within her (Cody 1971). Without inspiration from this dark muse, who readily turned to a demon in the harsh light of day, Dickinson felt fallow – sterile of the poetic gifts she so compulsively and readily employed in her relative isolation and seclusion. Armed with her dream muse's phallic power, she could "scan a ghost" and then "grapple" with it for supremacy (Dickinson 1960). For Dickinson, to be possessed by the demon side of the muse—as by the metallic god – also meant being inspired by a phallic form to penetrate the mystery of things, those unnamed things that required symbolic definition. But such nighttime phallic inspiration did not allow Dickinson, nor many other similarly possessed artists, to yield to the feminine part of herself that could potentially suffer the wounds of the heart. By "wounds of the heart" I mean the wounds of love and connection with real objects, the most profound wounds relating back to preoedipal loss and deprivation. For Dickinson, the wounds of preoedipal loss and deprivation disrupted primal bonding and were therefore traumatic. They were wounds of object connection disruption, stemming back to a detached, schizoid mother, who was in a pathological mourning state when her daughter Emily was born. There were also later wounds of negative oedipal disillusionment that stamped her heart with unrequited love, as in Dickinson's unrequited homoerotic infatuation with her school chum, Susan, who was to become Susan Dickinson, her brother's wife (Cody 1971). During her lifetime, Dickinson was unable to heal within the internal world of her psychic structure, those areas of deprivation, which she experienced as psychic wounds. This inability made her extraordinarily vulnerable to narcissistic injury. Stuck in a depressive position of self-protection, she found it impossible to break out of her secluded state. This failure in turn meant the defeat of Dickinson's object relations

capacity for love, a capacity that she experienced subjectively as emanating through the spiritual flow and current from the heart. One aftermath of this defeat was that the demon lover within became her predominant love, compelling her to refuse the external other who proposed love and marriage to her, a man she had actually been in love with. I am referring here to her rejection of Judge Otis T. Lord's proposal of marriage. Upon hearing the proposal, Dickinson declared "No" is the most exciting word in the English language!" and "renunciation is a piercing virtue" (Kavaler-Adler 1990). This piercing virtue was as hard, phallic, and metallic as her demon lover god within. His presence squelched Dickinson's capacity to love a man both real and available, and to receive his love in return, by denying her the opportunity to open her heart to him. The effect of this denial is visible in her poetry, which after her rejection of Judge Lord, whom she adored and was adored by, became overly masculine as her disconnected state was reflected in poetry about a part object god/demon. Such a god/demon – also characteristic of the demon lover theme and character – is psychologically reflective of an internal world with a split off primary object, an object that had been incorporated within her psyche rather than assimilated. This results in an internal world object that is part mother and part father. The persona inside the world of a split off self-part is that of the caricatured masculine object representation it is attached to (related to identifications with the father). However, its psychic structure is that of a primal and maternal figure that has never been integrated into the form of a whole object. It is a part object mother/father that is masculinized, rather than truly masculine. The attachment needs directed at it are characterized by oral hunger and impulse. There is an insatiable craving for maternal supplies and maternal merger.

Simultaneous with Emily Dickinson's obsession with this masculinized primal object we see the devaluation of Dickinson's feminine side in her poetry. Her core true and feminine self became increasingly sealed off and denied. In her poetry she formed a passive reactive view of it as, for example, in the image of a hunted and helpless "doe" (Kavaler-Adler 1993: 236, 239). Her mother's pathological mourning state, brought on by a multitude of unmourned object losses when Emily was an infant, caused Dickinson's feminine potential to become a vestige of an aborted feminine self (Cody 1971). This explains why Dickinson lacked the power of vaginal core receptivity (Kavaler-Adler 1993). Without this feminine power, she failed to develop an adequate sense of agency, and ended up possessed, her moments of transcendence vanishing into the night (Kavaler-Adler 1993). Imprisoned in her unbalanced and caricatured femininity, Dickinson wrote: "I have the power to kill, but not the power to die" (Dickinson 1960). Her own words indicate how the poet had lost touch with her spiritual experience of a primary state of being. Her own words speak of how she had merged with a phallic muse of envisioned inspiration, when she encountered the blocked areas in herself that defended against the reconnecting with her original infant self and its unresolved traumas.

DIALECTIC OF HEART AND DEMON LOVER

Within the context of the dialectic between the heart and the internal demon, how can we approach the phenomenology of mourning? I am defining the heart as a psychophysical locus for the basic human capacity for love, the human capacity for love having a spiritual form of energy experienced through yearnings for another. The “internal demon” I define as a conglomeration of the incorporated bad objects whose dynamic is derived from a combination of split off instinctual aspects of the self and primitive object representations, as Thomas Ogden defines internal objects (1986). These bad objects have not been refined and differentiated at the symbolic level.

Given this view of pathology, I would like to propose a somewhat new metapsychology of psychic health, in which it is seen as an avenue that opens up through the mourning process. By metapsychology I refer to basic organizing theoretical assumptions regarding mental functioning at different levels of abstraction, with some more clinical-experiential and others more abstract and conceptual. As in my earlier work on developmental mourning, I expand on Melanie Klein’s phenomenology of the mourning process, envisioning an open system of psychic health capacity.

One way that I have described this open psychic system is in terms of a capacity for multiple forms of psychic dialectic, including what I’ve defined as “love–creativity dialectic” (Kavaler-Adler 1996). Such dialectic involves a capacity to have a back and forth flow between the internal object relations that transform into creative process and the love connections of interpersonal relations. This organic flow consists of the interaction of psychic motivation and psychic agency with the two spheres of object relations experience – internal and external.

I would also like to propose a phenomenology of the mourning of love objects, in which we do not have to rely on the metapsychology of the death instinct as defined by Klein to locate the origin of the pain of object loss. I am responding here to Klein’s suggestion that the death instinct is the source of all anxiety and defense: in as much as there is a force within each of us that not only counteracts mourning but opposes reparation of object relations within the self and its internal world. I believe in negative internal object constellations imbued with instinctual aggression, not in a death instinct. I distinguish such internal constellations from a death force, because it can be modified by mourning that unblocks healthy developmental processes. I employ the theory of Ronald Fairbairn to refute Klein’s conception of an ever active death instinct or death drive. I also employ my own theory of “developmental mourning” as a resolution to trauma to counter the idea of a death instinct. The idea of a death instinct opposes an understanding of aggressive and erotic drives that are always experienced through object connections and their internalized forms, and which become malignant in compulsive repetition only when mourning is prohibited by psychic defense structures following early trauma. Klein herself never spoke of an instinct without an object constellation attached to it, as represented in the psychic fantasies discovered in her clinical

work. However, when she went into flights of metapsychology, she betrayed such vivid understanding.

When mourning is blocked, reenactment of early pathological character syndromes results along with internal states of emptiness. Typically, analysts speak about mourning in the context of whether it occurs or not. They therefore rarely view mourning as a phenomenology of psychic process and psychic health, although Klein did clinical and theoretical work that began to outline this direction of thought. I would like to attempt to define the phenomenology of mourning and see if it can be depicted separately from Klein's "death instinct" metapsychology, while retaining Klein's clinical understanding of grief. Grief, when spoken of in the developmental and clinical context to which I refer, does not only pertain to object loss in relation to death, separation, and disappointment. It also refers to the pain involved in the mourning that expresses itself in the pain of regrets over our own hostile aggression towards loved objects, a mourning process that causes its own form of object loss. The mourning of regrets also involves the mourning of self-loss due to self-sabotage, and the development of compassion and concern for the self, as opposed to being compulsively driven towards self-blame and self-betrayal. I wish to emphasize that this notion represents my own extension of Kleinian theory, since Klein would probably too rigidly compartmentalize the concern about the self, viewing it as existing within the psychic state of the paranoid-schizoid position. Indeed, Klein schematically draws a contrast between an obsessive protection of the self in the paranoid-schizoid position and concern for the love object in the depressive position. Such a schema does not deal with concern and compassion for the self. I add to Klein's protection of the self or concern for the object the qualitative distinction between self-compassion in a depressive position mentality, and a paranoid mode of self-protection. Concern for the self within a depressive position state of mind involves a compassionate empathy for the self, not just a defensive attitude of self-protection against others seen as hostile threats. The paranoid mode, as opposed to the capacity for concern in the depressive mode, involves an internal persecutory object, which, because it is projected outward, is then perceived as emanating from an external enemy.

Guilt itself may contain developmental forms, including a persecutory self-attack in the paranoid-schizoid position and a sorrowful pain of regret in the depressive position. We may add to this phenomenology the metapsychological hypothesis that hostile aggression can also represent an attempt to ward off consciousness of persecutory aggression within. This internal, protosymbolic aggression is defensively reacted to. It is not conceptualized. It creates a dissociated state of guilt (experienced first as self-hate), which differs from the pain of regret experienced as grief by someone in the depressive position. Although object loss can be the result of warded off guilt, manifesting as persecutory aggression, I would say that object loss, which is not yet felt consciously and mourned, can also create a sense of pathological guilt (in contrast to depressive position guilt or existential guilt). This was noted by Fairbairn (1952), in speaking of the moral defense of the child, who masochistically blames himself rather than hold the

parent accountable for behavior that is harmful, so as to protect the image of the parent and thus to protect the child's own sense of safety. Nevertheless, neither persecutory guilt, which in the paranoid position described by Klein is experienced as an attack from without, nor pathological guilt, experienced, according to Klein, as an attack from within in that same position, nor the potentially compassionate state experience in what Klein described as the depressive position of pining for the object in a mode of empathic regret, need be attributed to an abstract force comprised of "death instinct" energy. The redundancy of the death instinct theory can be maintained even if a split off aggression is involved in the dynamics of the paranoid position.

Redefining Klein's view of developmental and clinical dynamics without the death instinct, I would summarize the essential human anguish in Klein's phenomenology as the pain and conflict related to the depressive position experience of concern for the other. I refer to the other outside the self, as well as to the other experienced through memory and desire as existing within the self. This core human anguish affects both self and object representations because in the depressive position it is subjectively felt. On a pure visceral level it can feel like a wound or block in the flow of love to and from the human heart. Stripping away all of the multitudinous defenses and dynamics of Klein's internal world, we are left with one primary psychic stance that both paranoid and manic strategies are defending against (in the depressive position, manic defenses ward off guilt and loss). That position is being vulnerably open to loving and needing. It is only in this position that we can love – and in Klein, only our love continually modifies hate. It is also only in this position that undifferentiated and split off objects become assimilated into the central part of the psyche (Bion's psychic digestion from beta to alpha) through new symbolic forms. Such symbolic forms have representation in the cognitive and conceptual sphere of secondary process thought or in an internal world comprised of differentiated images.

The symbolic level achieved through object digestion involves the internalizing and representing of a true other as an object in the internal world or secondary process of the psyche. An external object must be symbolized in order to be assimilated into this internal world of representational images and verbal and conceptual forms, such as in the verbal conceptualization or imagination of our parents. In Bion's (1963) terms, psychic object digestion transforms beta elements into alpha, with alpha elements being constructed in symbolic and representational terms. Undigested beta elements remain unassimilated visceral intrusions, promoting the interpersonal pressures of projective identification, as opposed to intrapsychic projection, and tending to be personified at the border of psychic and somatic reality.

Thus a demon lover personification, which establishes a possessive hold on the woman's psyche, in the form of a split off part of the self merged with an object representation, can be transformed into a more pure symbolic representational form. Ogden (1986) and Fairbairn (1952) refer to the "bad object" as a dynamic presence that can be transformed into symbolic representations and then be

integrated into a central self-structure. Such a transformation requires the experiencing of that which was formerly visceral, sensory, somatic or behavioral in a new symbolic form. For this experience to occur, openness to mourning within a position of psychic vulnerability and interpersonal dependence is necessary.

Then the symbolic representation, now an introject rather than an internal object, can be integrated within a central self-structure (Fairbairn 1952). This central self-area would be the resource for secondary process thought and internal world representations that are neither split off and dissociated, nor repressed. I would view preconscious modes of operation mentioned by Lawrence Kubie (1958) as being psychically housed in this central self-area. The preconscious becomes the area of linking free associations, parts of self, as well as self and object connections in the internal world and affect-laden cognitive connections. Bion's notion of linking areas of the mind and self and other coordinates within the mind seems relevant here. Integration of formerly split off self-parts (protosymbolic rather than symbolic) requires the conscious experiencing of that which was formerly visceral, sensory, somatic, or behavioral in form. For integration to occur, an open acceptance of a position of psychic vulnerability and interpersonal dependence is necessary. This stands in psychic contrast to a state of narcissistic self-sufficiency, whether enacted through manic defense or grandiose delusion. In this position of need and love, of psychic vulnerability and interpersonal dependence, a mourning process can transpire, in which experience is transformed into representation through the grieving of loss and regret. If the person experiences the sadness of object longing, loss, and regret, this creates an open avenue for new modes of object contact with current others in his or her life. This in turn allows for the creation of more mature, intimate, spontaneous and sustained forms of interpersonal connection.

The position of loving and needing is not a position that we can perpetually maintain. People can approach it to the degree that they are open to suffering the wounding of the heart. This involves both tolerating the pain of narcissistic injury (paranoid-schizoid position), and the hurt of sabotaging potential love relations. Loss of love due to sabotage of self or other creates consequences of object loss, which can be subjectively felt as the poignant and differentiated pain of regret. The capacity to suffer consequent regret is not a masochistic mode of suffering – based on clinging incessantly to an idealized object – nor is it the suffering of a Victorian superego morality. It is a form of organic suffering that consists of the deep grief of sadness, which engenders a capacity to relinquish and let go. It is mournful suffering, or the enduring of what is, rather than the cherishing of suffering for its own sake.¹ Such real suffering is expressed through tears of grief, which can never find an outlet through an hysterical tantrum exorcism or masochistic ventilation of complaint, as both are controlled by the ego and represent enactments or reenactments. When the self is sealed off by splitting or closed off by repression, it is impossible for such authentic grief to evolve. Margaret Mahler (1975) locates the early source of authentic grief in the “low-keyedness” shown by the 2-year-old toddler, who is exposed to the developmental vicissitudes of separation.

To re-establish a position of loving and needing we must be able to surrender, not just to the overtures of love, but to the rupturing of our boundaries (Miller 1986). One can choose to let in an “other” who might ravish, but not rape. An example of someone who succumbed to such ravishment is the dancer Suzanne Farrell, who experienced choreographer George Balanchine as her masculine muse, not her demon lover (Kavaler-Adler 1996). She never turned Balanchine into a demon in her mind, unlike Camille Claudel with Auguste Rodin. Farrell didn’t have the psychic imprint of early maternal trauma that Claudel had.

Farrell merged with Balanchine’s creativity, employing him as her male muse, as he used her as his female muse. But when Balanchine wished to possess her through marrying her, even when he was twice her age, with a terrible track record of marrying and divorcing a string of prima ballerinas, Farrell was able to say “no.” Subsequently she survived the consequences of separating from her muse. When she married another man, a dancer in the same company, closer to her own age, she was forced to leave Balanchine’s company. Even though she was acclaimed as one of the finest dancers of her time, American dance companies blacklisted her. It took her a year of poverty to find a job with a well-known Belgian dance company. Despite this treatment, Farrell never turned her muse into a demon, as opposed to the sculptress Camille Claudel.

Immediately after Claudel and Rodin broke up their personal liaison, Claudel demonized him. For the rest of her life, she refused to accept any gestures of help or concern from him. Rather, Claudel displaced her hatred for her mother onto her former lover, reenacting within her unconscious the cycle of possession and abandonment enlisted in the fantasy of her demon lover as perpetual perpetrator and persecutor. After alcoholism, suicide attempts, and continual murderous assaults on her own artistic products via the ritualistic smashing of her sculptures, Claudel spent her last thirty years confined in a mental asylum, where she refused to sculpt. Although Claudel blamed Rodin for all her misfortunes, and hallucinated that his protégés were stealing her sculptures, it was not he, but her mother who prevented her from leaving the mental asylum.

In contrast, Suzanne Farrell preserved her love and admiration for George Balanchine and for his creative work, despite their personal and professional rift. She even returned to work with him once reparations appeared possible. Ravished (penetrated) and not raped by his mental creations, she remained in love with dancing in Balanchine’s ballets, and after her retirement from dancing following hip replacement surgery, she has continued to teach his dances to a new generation of dancers. As this example shows, in contrast to the demon lover who in the woman’s internal world emerges as a rapist, a male muse both ravishes and empowers the woman in her internal world, as he inspires her. Consequently, the woman is inspired in her external achievements.

Taking in the muse and surrendering to the muse within involves being open to the existential awareness of how it is possible to hurt a loved one. Jerome Miller (1989) speaks of the capacity to surrender to suffering as necessary if we are to gain entry into the moral order. This capacity, he sees, in broad lifelong terms, not

merely occurring only in a specific stage of life. He believes in lifelong growth through a positive and spiritual form of suffering. He speaks of an existential morality. I see this as similar to Melanie Klein, who believed one could automatically enter a state of grief upon gaining the conscious knowledge of our own self-agency in hurting the one we love (Klein 1957). This capacity, I believe, is what Winnicott also meant by “the capacity for concern,” which was seen as developing out of an external psychic holding environment that is made internal through internalization. Once the holding environment is internal a psyche can “hold” grief (Winnicott 1974).

Given the very human horror at facing what we have up to now avoided (Miller 1989), our many modes of evading knowledge of our secret transgressions are more than understandable. This makes it quite painful when we attempt to face our acts of omission as well as commission in hurting a love object (or love “other”). Klein’s paranoid system, as well as her manic defense, describes the mechanisms of avoidance. However, when Klein postulates a death instinct, she conjures up an abstract force that negates the moral nature of the subjective pain in human beings, even as she approaches that pain with the phenomenology of the depressive position. Consequently, she undermines, in my view, the power of her own theory by adding a heavy theoretical overlay that can be redundant, if not nullifying, of the human anguish involved in the consciousness of our own agency in the anxiety we experience.

When she invokes the death instinct, Klein takes the “I” out of human consciousness and leaves us with the “It.” We become objectified even by ourselves, losing our subjectivity and with it our sense of agency and choice. Klein’s metapsychology of the death instinct, in contrast to her clinical theory of mourning and the psychic journey from the paranoid to the depressive position of mind, returns the human psyche to the possessive demon lover.

What does the demon lover personify? He may personify split off sadomasochistic modes of aggression, which are highly eroticized and exciting in terms of intensity. A demon lover obsession or complex often relates to a person who is avoiding self-confrontation or self-awareness. Such a person operates through splitting and dissociation, or through repression – resulting in simultaneous obsession and avoidance in relation to highly charged aspects of the self. In this masculine personification (comprised of split off self-parts and an object representation), a protosymbolic visceral form may be the impinging force within the person. Klein fails to account for the demon personification as a repository of the “unthought known” traumas of the past. The term “unthought known,” which was coined by D.W. Winnicott, has been used by Christopher Bollas (1989). In using this term, Winnicott is referring to a traumatic experience that has been split off from consciousness due to its overwhelming nature, so that it is known, but not consciously thought. That is, he is not referring to a drive instinct that is repressed, but to a real trauma the person experiences as too overwhelming to bear to repress. So the entire trauma is dissociated and split off. Only when individuals have enough support from a “holding environment” in treatment can they tolerate

consciously reliving and reexperiencing the trauma, thereby bringing the experience to a symbolic level of thought.

Indeed, if they were to become known, this could permit a symbolic muse demon form to exist as a symbolic container (manifested in the transference in psychoanalytic treatment).

This “unthought known” could be trauma related to parental abuse, which has been too intolerable in childhood, and which thus becomes dissociated and sealed off from emotional connection. However, defensive and retaliatory aggression needs to be experienced consciously to move beyond the position of victim. Once the trauma is accessible in symbolic form the person’s own aggression can be faced in relation to the internalized demonic parent object, which in its displaced forms is often fantasized as a demon lover. Once the demon lover constellation, which consists of a part self and part object, can be symbolized the subject can become a full human being, by facing one’s own personal aggression as well as in erotic desire. This involves facing the demon lover personification within so as to symbolize it, rather than being possessed by it. Specifically, anyone, woman or man, must own how she/he may have become the traumatizing object through primitive incorporative (oral) identifications within the internal world. Through commission or omission, the internal world self and other fused psychic structure enacts its compulsion in the manifest interpersonal world. We continue to repeat the unthought known traumas of our past. When we confront this repetition through insight into omission and commission in love relationships, our self-confrontation can open us all to personal meaning. Such self-confrontation can open us to feeling the links between past trauma and the compulsive repetitions, which impose past attachment tragedies on current strivings to love and be loved. We discover our betrayals towards and from the one(s) we love through feeling it on a grief-stricken affect level. Thus, through experiencing the pain of regret, based on disillusionment with oneself, and the pain of loss related to disillusionment with the other, we open the door to consciousness.

This is the mourning process. Our lives can take shape through the poignant absence of love as it punctuates love experience, and as it punctuates the flow or arrest in her own capacity to love. As former child victims, we must own how we may have a part in repeating our trauma through identification with our abusers. We must face our compulsive commission or omission of repeating the “unthought known” traumas of the past, often in sadomasochistic enactments. Such self-confrontation opens anyone, woman or man, to personal meaning. Grief stricken affect serves to highlight both the trauma and the reactive betrayals of the victim towards the new objects with whom she reenacts her drama. Thus the door to consciousness opens through experiencing the pain of regret.

THE PAIN OF REGRET

The pain of regret is an emotion that is subjectively experienced as an emotion either emanating from the heart or expressing a connection to another through one's heart! The pain itself can feel like a wound in the heart to the degree that it is experienced somatically. Mourning is of the heart. That is, it comes from love connections in the heart that bring self-realization along with object loss. Grief experience in mourning allows us to reconnect, on a spiritual level, with those who we want and need to love, but who have been lost to us because of too much unconscious or dissociated hate (in addition to actual literal loss of contact). Klein's subjective theory of the yearning for the capacity for reparation is all related to self and other connection. Repairing connection transforms us at times through viscerally alive, heartfelt feeling. Through the heart connection we consolidate the central self, developing a true self that is connected to the world that is capable of emotional connection. If such heart connection were not profound and essential, the kind of repeated visualizations I practice in my monthly mourning regrets group would not bring the acutely felt responses that are voiced in those groups. Those able to locate their hearts through feeling connections, as opposed to through mere physiological awareness, can speak of their conflicts with those they love quite articulately. They employ descriptions of the heart as the congealing point of love, which when blocked in feeling signifies blocks in love for others. The stomach is often felt as anger raging, wanting to throw up the other as one throws up food. The visceral locale of the heart provides an active metaphorical and figurative language for discussing problems in both loving and creating.

However, wounds to the heart can come from narcissistic injury as well as from object loss. When this occurs, we may retreat from object relations and object attachment in general. Distrust and fear can become prominent, especially when we interpret loss and injury as rejection. When we do we can create a fear of humiliation in addition to the fear of loss.

PSYCHIC STRUCTURE

If we approach these phenomena through the lens of psychic structure we can view Fairbairn's theory, which is so focused on psychic structure, as a reinforcement of Klein's phenomenology, without resorting to her metapsychology of death instinct. Yet it is also possible to go beyond Fairbairn's profound emphasis on trauma and real object relations incorporations to the realm of intrapsychic fantasy, as explicated by Melanie Klein and the Kleinians with such fervor. Then we can see motivational dynamics in objects differing from the passive Freudian object of hallucinated desire. Objects of motivational force and yearning may click in with an innate grammar of the mind (Ogden 1986), as well as with an instinctual base of eroticism and aggression. Jungian archetypes might be proposed as one aspect of

the mind's innate predisposition to certain psychic fantasy forms. Past lives, as intuited and remembered psychic phenomena, might also be proposed.

PSYCHIC FUNCTIONING, PSYCHIC MOTIVATION, AND PSYCHIC CHANGE

Our real experience is never enough to make up our psychic reality. That is, this outward experience does not fully correspond to our psychic fantasies. In the process of creating these fantasies, we somehow color our original external experience. But the terror we feel upon facing our internal combinations of psychic fantasy and actual internalized experiential imprints² can be a major source for coloring the internal domain. This is manifested in protosymbolic forms that can transform into psychic fantasy only through mourning and self-integration. By "protosymbolic" I mean visceral or sensory presymbolic experiences that act on the organism, but have no represented form in the secondary process (Freud) or the internal world (Klein). No death instinct energy need be proposed for metapsychology, when Klein's treatise on guilt and Freud's treatise on frustration can account for all forms of hostile or destructive aggression.

Guilt, as defined phenomenologically by Klein, along with the motive of frustration, as propounded by Freud, can account for much psychic conflict and psychic pathology, whereas shame, self-loss, and traumatic psychic voids can account for much in developmental arrest. The idea of something as abstract as death instinct energy does not seem to add to our understanding of these phenomena. Klein (1957) implies that we experience guilt subjectively, through psychic fantasy, both consciously and unconsciously. The pain of regret that accompanies guilt at the depressive level of concern can be traumatic in dimension – that is, experienced as existential pain. We may see such pain simply in terms of learned superego rule systems that cause suffering by internal repression and retaliation for instinctual wishes and for object longings. The pain of regret, however, can be seen to extend further into an existential awareness of hurting another, which may also be applicable to the hurting of one's self, or to the pain of regret due to self-sabotage. This hurting of the other or of the represented self within our own internal world is as instinctual as love itself, for Klein. For example, Klein speaks of the baby yearning and pining for the mother, while simultaneously feeling concern for the mother, upon the psychic entrance into the depressive position. Such an intuitive capacity for concern has, moreover, its own erotic and sexual dimensions. This can be seen in analogy with unconscious gratification felt from an abusive assault, an assault that Fairbairn would probably define as an antilibidinal phenomenon, when it is derived from early parenting and is rearticulated in an internal split off world. I prefer to refer to a libidinal attack on a vulnerable or dependent self that exists within the psyche, which has its unconscious form of both masochistic and sadistic gratification, due to the drive discharge in submission and the identification with the aggressor. Once entering the psychic capacity

for the depressive position, the issue for all of us is no longer self-attack and unconscious gratification, but is rather the existential pain of regret, which refers to the intense grief of hurting the other whom we love.

Klein would view the parents' role in child development as that of receiving offers of reparation from the child. If they can do this, the child can then develop a capacity to consciously face regret, and thus to develop concern, as the acute pain of regret can lead to concern. However, as Winnicott (1965) suggests, the primary parent must not only receive reparation from the child, but also, through this, the parent models the experience of concern. This contrasts with Klein's emphasis on innate phenomena rather the internalizations. According to Winnicott it is the role of the mother that is critical. If she is not "good enough" the child's development is severely affected. Without a "good enough" mother, and the internalization of her care and responsiveness to the child's true self, the child's potential capacity for concern can convert into a regressed state of persecutory guilt. The child can grow up with a paranoid-schizoid position masochism, in which any potential sense of responsibility or self-agency is defensively turned into a sense of being "bad." Klein would emphasize the gravity of the subjective anguish involved in the depressive pain that leads to concern through the experience of conscious loss of the love object and the loss of the object's love. However, for the person to tolerate such psychically transforming anguish, my clinical experience leads me to agree with Winnicott that with the holding environment of an object relations psychoanalytic treatment is critical to allow the pain of regret to become a tolerable grief experience.

But is it not still necessary for an original holding environment to be well established between infant and mother, and later between toddler and mother, and then child and mother, for the child to develop the capacity for concern at all? Is not such development as instinctually based as Klein's view of a six-month-old infant entering a depressive position mentality suggests? Even if I were to accept this six-month timetable, which I don't, I would certainly be skeptical about Klein's belief that we instinctively develop concern for an "other," without our differentiating the nature of that other, or the capacity for concern of the original other—the mother. I don't agree with the six-month timetable because virtually all reported clinical experience points to the 2-year-old separation era as the stage of the depressive position affects and of the depressive position conscious need state. It may be more that we must first experience our capacities in the presence of a good enough benign other if we are to realize these capacities, which are partly instinctual and partly object related, as is suggested by Winnicott (1965). Once experienced with the other both interpersonal relations and internal self-relations are effected. A compassionate mother provides a model for us to realize any innate potential for concern. One development of such a capacity is based on our internalizing her being in the position of receiving concern, an identification with the mother showing concern, and her mode of demonstrating it. An analyst can provide this model at a later stage of development and throughout adulthood.

REGRET, CONCERN, AND GUILT WITHOUT A DEATH INSTINCT

The pain of regret is a subjective and conscious phenomenon combined with the capacity for concern. It can define psychic health as evolving through a metapsychology based on the phenomenal experience of mourning.

Klein's death instinct, in contrast, is an abstract force. This abstract force exists as an axiom within her metapsychology. Even though it is without a conclusive phenomenological and clinical base, Klein nevertheless sees the death instinct as the motivation behind hostile aggression. Her death instinct differs from other instincts, such as Freud's erotic and aggressive instincts, in that we may define them in visceral and body-based terms. Klein's death instinct is too abstract. She has it appear at our birth – and then we are supposed project it out, causing us inevitably to fear that it will bounce back at us in retaliation.

Such an abstract force is not necessary to explain the spoiling process in the paranoid-schizoid position, nor the manic defense consisting of loss and guilt in the depressive position. In fact, it merely confuses the issue. When we evade a poignant guilt, whether it involves hurting the one we love, or wounding ourselves, the anguish we suffer to avoid conscious responsibility is enough to explain unconscious depressive position despair, when we feel all love and love objects are lost. Envy, whether due to developmental arrest and its sense of lack, or due to aggressive drive impulse, or both, is enough to explain any paranoid-schizoid position spoiling and devaluation defense operation. Envy, like anguish, is not an abstract force. Comprised of organic (oral and oedipal erotic) need elements, envy is body based. It is a psychic form of voracious hunger (Kavaler-Adler 1998). When the body's somatic hunger is dissociated, hunger is insatiable. Only body-based hunger is limited by the body's organic needs. Envy, a psychic conversion of somatic hunger has no limits, and its insatiability is a profound part of its malignancy, especially when unconscious.

LIMITATIONS OF MELANIE KLEIN'S METAPSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY OF THE DEATH INSTINCT

Why did Klein emphasize the death instinct? The explanation could be fairly simple. Perhaps, wanting Freud's approval, Klein adopted the term "death instinct," while actually implying something different from Freud's use of the term. Freud's meaning of the "death instinct" related to a movement towards a conflict-free, nirvana-like state, or tensionless state. Rather, the theory as she states it reflects a belief in a hostile aggression that has murderous violence within it, and whose violent impulse generates terror of retaliation from an omnipotent and envied enemy.

Unlike Freud also, Klein does not deal with the erotic part of this aggression as such, assigning eroticism in the abstract to the loving impulse of the child towards an all-good-breast-mother. I believe this omission reflects a shortcoming in Klein's