



## Trauma and the Soul: A psycho-spiritual approach to human development and its interruption

By Donald Kalsched

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### **Trauma and the Soul: A psycho-spiritual approach to human development and its interruption** By Donald Kalsched

In *Trauma and the Soul*, Donald Kalsched continues the exploration he began in his first book, *The Inner World of Trauma* (1996)—this time going further into the mystical or spiritual moments that often occur around the intimacies of psychoanalytic work. Through extended clinical vignettes, including therapeutic dialogue and dreams, he shows how depth psychotherapy with trauma's survivors can open both analytic partners to "another world" of non-ordinary reality in which daimonic powers reside, both light and dark. This mytho-poetic world, he suggests, is not simply a defensive product of our struggle with the harsh realities of living as Freud suggested, but is an everlasting fact of human experience—a mystery that is often at the very center of the healing process, and yet at other times, strangely resists it.

With these "two worlds" in focus, Kalsched explores a variety of themes as he builds, chapter by chapter, an integrated psycho-spiritual approach to trauma and its treatment including:

- images of the lost soul-child in dreams and how this "child" represents an essential core of aliveness that is both protected and persecuted by the psyche's defenses;
- Dante's guided descent into the Inferno of Hell as a paradigm for the psychotherapy process and its inevitable struggle with self-destructive energies;
- childhood innocence and its central role in a person's spiritual life seen through the story of St. Exupéry's *The Little Prince*;
- how clinical attention to implicit processes in the relational field, as well as discoveries in body-based affective neuroscience are making trauma treatment more effective;
- the life of C.G. Jung as it portrays his early trauma, his soul's retreat into an inner sanctuary, and his gradual recovery of wholeness through the integration of his divided self.

This is a book that restores the mystery to psychoanalytic work. It tells stories of ordinary patients and ordinary psychotherapists who, through working together, glimpse the reality of the human soul and the depth of the spirit, and are changed by the experience. *Trauma and the Soul* will be of particular interest to practicing psychotherapists, psychoanalysts, analytical psychologists, and expressive arts therapists, including those with a "spiritual" orientation.

**Donald Kalsched** is a Jungian analyst in private practice in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and a training analyst with the Inter-Regional Society of Jungian Analysts. He is the author of numerous articles in analytical psychology, and lectures widely on the subject of early trauma and its treatment. His books include *The Inner World of Trauma* (1996).

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### Editorial Review

Review

*"Kalsched's invaluable work shows that our psychopathology has a spiritual core, and demonstrates that dealing with such material is a spiritual practice. I believe his work is a form of the redemption of evil; the therapist visits the patient's hell with her, becomes a compassionate witness, and faces or even exorcises the devil in the patient's soul." - Lionel Corbett, Journal of Analytical Psychology*

About the Author

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