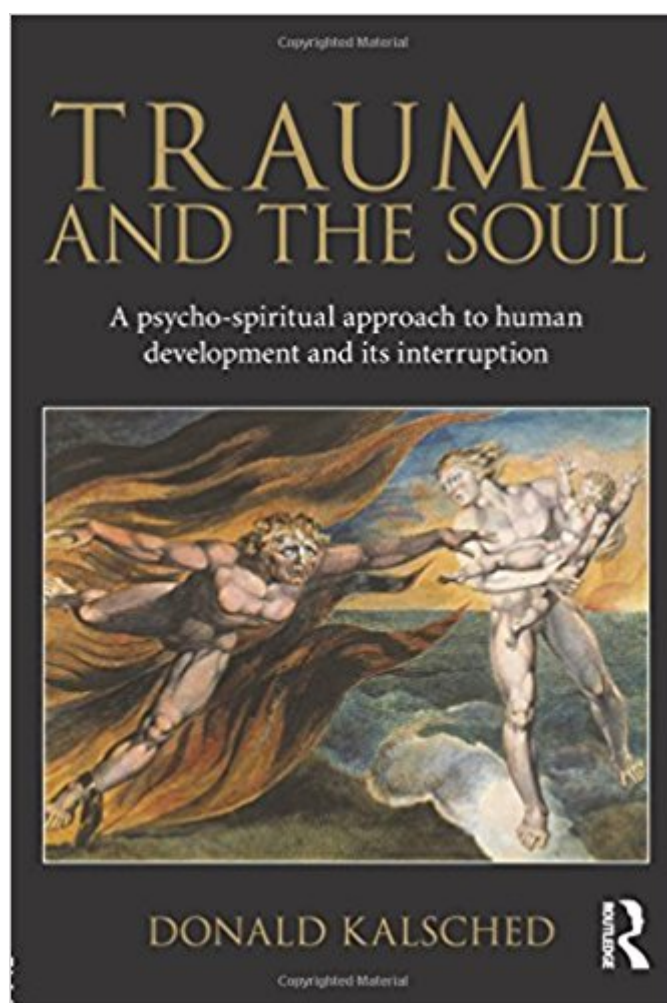


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Trauma And The Soul: A Psycho-spiritual Approach To Human Development And Its Interruption



Synopsis

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 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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Customer Reviews

"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*

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The Inner World of Trauma is one of my favorite books, for it captures the nuances and depths of the psyche's attempt to find a place to belong in the context of interpersonal trauma. With *Trauma and the Soul*, Kalsched expands the discussion to include the transformational and spiritual nature of the psychotherapeutic relationship and how healing and integration come about through a shared journey. There are many beautiful passages in this book that will bring tears of recognition for those who know trauma deeply and who have entered a portal to the sacred as a consequence.

Using recent scientific research and his own experience as an analyst, Dr. Kalsched paints a compelling new way of looking at human development that includes both our inward experiences of the divine and outward experiences of trauma. Every word is a treasure.

Intelligent, insightful read into the psycho-spirituality of trauma and how it affects the soul. Dr. Kalsched gives a practical look into clinical studies of trauma patients and how these can open doors to the Jungian other world of spiritual dimension. A caring person who is healing trauma victims.

I loved his first book, *The Inner World of Trauma*. This one is more poetically written, using case material and examples to demonstrate the way working with a trauma survivor, or being a trauma survivor, can evoke the sacred. Even though I am in the field, I get bored with reading a lot of theoretical psychology texts. Kalsched is such an exceptional writer and comes at this topic in a way that is riveting.

Kalsched has affected me personally and professionally more than any other neo Jungian writer. It is a professional book but some analysts in Jungian therapy or analysis will find it valuable.

A well written book with an excellent introduction that provides insight into the author's theory of trauma and a mythological world that supports people as they struggle to survive and, if lucky to find a healing relationship, to thrive.

Kalsched, who is a Jungian therapist, has been devising his own clinical approach regarding helping folks who have been emotionally damaged or traumatized by early childhood experiences. These childhood experiences expressed in a psychoanalytic settings can be difficult to describe, but what I especially enjoyed is that you can tell that Kalsched has put considerable effort into clearly explaining his interpretation of what is going on. I think he succeeds in this effort. Thus I think several chapters of this book could be useful for someone looking for a better background "framing" explanation of what he or she may be experiencing in their relations and dreams. Another type of information he provides is comparisons of his approach and the words he uses to describe dynamics of the psyche with interpretations published by other therapists from different theoretical backgrounds, say, for instance, object relations. He makes the case that in many instances these therapists are describing essentially similar experiences and dynamics though they use different descriptive phrases. I really enjoyed this book because I could sense his command and enthusiasm for the topics and the fact that he made the material relatively easy to absorb. Sometimes, for instance, after reading his explanation of the childhood experiences Jung communicated in his famous autobiography, I thought Kalsched's explanation and description the most lucid I had ever

read. In that sense, several chapters of this book reminded me of Nancy McWilliams classic modern textbook "Psychoanalytic Diagnosis", a tour de force for its clarity of expression and friendliness.

This is a beautiful book, about the journey of a traumatized child's soul, a soul that searches for safety and finally thru love finds fulfillment and healing.

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