

MALE PSYCHE CONFERENCE

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DISCLAIMER: These notes were taken during my participation in "The Male Psyche Conference," in Santa Barbara, CA on the dates noted. They represent only a portion of what I saw happening there and are not endorsed by conference leaders Bly, Hillman, Meade, Stokes, or Morrison. The conference members were 120 male psychotherapists, psychologists, and psychiatrists from all over the United States.

April 20, 1990, 8pm

BEGINNING: We six men from Tucson have been eating dinner in a local restaurant, arriving at the conference forty minutes late. When we walk in, Michael Meade abruptly demands, 'who are you,' and 'why are you all arriving together?' One of our group says 'we are from Tucson,' and when Meade aggressively escalates his curiosity, the man denies why we are late and says, 'we just got here.' The men in the audience applaud.

For me it is the beginning of many aggressive or confrontational comments from the group leaders, which will be met with passive-aggressive comments from the participants. Meade returns to his introductory comments about the conference elements:

Meade: Introductory Harangue About Men's Work

The Daily Schedule will include:

6:30 Meditation - movement
7 am Meeting in small groups
8:15 Breakfast
8:45 Meeting - Idea's, Emotions
Lunch Break
Tracking or PHYSICAL THINGS
Drum or Dance
Conflict
Silence
Dinner Break
Community Meeting - talking
"Nightwork" and the "sorrows of remembering"

Some elaboration on a few of those issues:

1. -containment - concerns about intrusions from without - concerns about usually being in a more isolated setting to do this work - using containment, conflict, working with story telling, working with clans, working with drumming - working with idea that no learning can occur outside sacred space - AND, "lower your standards!"
2. men's retreats: what men want - why & why we're out of politics - a discontent/discomfort in the culture that is beyond our capacity to solve

3. working with primitive people - a tracker - Hopi - Santo Domingo -
takes men into the bush
4. "the sacred space" and the dance we do to it
5. Bly - poetry
6. why other men are here
 - ...I'm learning to become a mentor & a warrior
 - ...I'm here re: my father's death
 - ...because I've had a sense of shame re: being a man
 - ...to experience myself...
 - ...because my father died and I was relieved
 - ...I work with men who were abused
 - ...I'm afraid
 - ...I never knew my father smile
 - ...because men lost their voice
 - ...because I despair
 - ...because I don't trust
7. "going toward the beautiful"
 - the Clans - "small groups" - a 3 clan system
 - (a) Red Hawk Clan
 - hot fire up
 - color
 - emotional tone
 - style
 - (b) White (all colors) Trout Clan
 - moisture
 - goes down
 - sorrow
 - grief
 - emptiness
 - (c) Black Moose
 - hot ashes
 - moist
 - elders

There will be five small groups within each clan - for getting into the soul, deep archetypal stuff - each clan has a name, a style, displays something like lots of male animals

Don't flush!
Water Shortage
NO Violence Weapons

Red Hawks - erupt in flight -desire - anger - outrageous - land birds -
impulse

White Trout - (description)

"the men of stealth and misdirection" - this is my small group from the Trout Clan

"the animal totem calls forth some part of the male psyche"

Here is a story about a "blow that fathers"

...about a "blow that fathers," about a father who hits a son who has failed

him when hunting - the son goes to live with a king... Then the father comes to look for the son, who is tested many times & then is offered the choice to kill the father or the king...which do you choose?

We listen to the story, then are offered the choice of killing the father or the king. They have us take a position on one side or another of the room, depending on who we say we will kill. Each side is encouraged to take various postures and embody various gestures, sounds, that describe their killing. Interpretations are offered depending on which side you chose.

Those of us who chose the middle (interestingly, five of the six Tucson men) are dismissed as 'maintaining the John Wayne stereotype, where you can walk off into the sunset, alone, not needing anyone.' This pisses most of us off. (The next morning, this middle zone is being referred to as 'the place of the Mentor.' The contradiction is never addressed.)

-- it is said that the exercise demonstrates: "no change without loss"

April 21, 1990

1. movement exercises - standing - walking - touching - massaging
2. break into clans - wear colors to show things
colored cloth is passed out:
trout - blue, yellow, white
blue = follow her white track
white = carry the stones of their father
yellow = stealth and misdirection
white trout - men of stealth and misdirection
moose - black, gray brown, silver
hawks - red, orange, purple
 - a. wear colors
 - b. meet as a clan
 - c. work on a clan dance
 - d. meet each other/ choose a "leader" who is not "hierarchical"
3. breakfast - spontaneous drumming among 30 or so men
I remember my nickname 'Perk' means "speckled prayer digger"
4. poems
 - a. one about the feminine
-I'm so hip...even my errors are correct
"Ego Tripping" Nicki Giovanni from The Women and The Men
 - b. talk about fathers - James Hillman - The Gold Cell, "Saturn" by Sharon Wells, about a father who is eating his children...heavily asleep and crushing his own children
 - c. about the big Sun Rock in Australia waiting for humans
 - d. ...is the soul solid...or tender?
...the face of the moose is as sad as Jesus
...who has it and who doesn't..? (here there is the continued escalation of the theme of soul in everything - by Mary Oliver

James Hillman: Harangue: 'The Mentor and The Father'

One of the great questions is confusion between father and mentor. The last

line of Homer's Odyssey mentions "an older man" who was Athena in disguise. Telemachus is searching for his father Ulysses, asks "how to do things" in the right way? "Stubborn mentor crazed in your mind" - another description of Mentor. If Athena is inside the mentor, the longing to be seen & recognized is to come not from the father, but from the mentor. The father provides roof and food in many stories, but he doesn't really see the actual person, that son. The mentor sees the soul of the son, but doesn't put a roof over your head. He sees who you are and blesses that who you are; you get your individuality from him, not your father.

It may have been that father and son were on the same tree (passed down a trade, etc), but now people (men) seek this from therapists. Sometimes they try to stick around with the mentor, but it isn't appropriate. The father is here in this world, providing the roof - but the mentor blesses your specialness, whatever that is. "The divine recognize the divine in you." Levinson (cf his book) at Yale researched role of mentor in people's lives.

Mentor (M) and the Apprentice (A) are drawn to each other. (A) is a young adult, has achieved already something. What spoils relationship between (M) and (A) is that (A) desperately wants (M) to be a good father. "Yearning for good father and anxiety re: bad father" makes the relationship untenable - this huge demand, this yearning for a good father and not admitting that there is destruction in fathering as well.

Within fathering is the urge to destroy the son. Good fathers include destructive, negative behavior. (Jesus: "Father, why hast thou forsaken me?") This pain from the father is part of the initiation. It isn't the trauma that does the damage - it is the traumatic remembering that damages us. The traumas - failures - are part of the initiation process. In therapy we have clients remembering traumatically rather than remembering the traumas as initiations (c.f. our obsessions with childhood abuses. The demand for a good father screws up the relationship with the father and with the mentor.

*Remembering traumas - if father was absent, instead of remembering this as a complaint, a wound, one can see this as an initiation into fathering myself. If he suicides & leaves you - it can be imagined as his going into death before you. (Keats: He who would be creative creates himself)

Mentor - is 7-14 years older - the same generation - not a parent - the skills of a teacher in ways important to you - a guide, shows how to handle things. This is practical guiding, not guru wisdom (Sophia - Greek - "the skill" of the helmsman) - lover of Sophia - a lover of skill - he is a welcoming host, an example - gives counsel & support - he has realized your dream ("you can be a writer," etc)

Men also use their mentoring capacities on women, lovers, etc. Everyone has a desire to learn & a desire to teach - this is an erotic connection - men need to do it with other men as well! The demons of homophobia may thwart this process - one can recognize the beauty in the younger men as well. "The mentor is remembered when in trouble" (for guidance - Athena - knowing skills) "He recognizes a meaningful issue in the younger person" (something going on is that fucking up that the young person is doing) "Seen as an accomplisher of what you want to do" "Slows things down" (Sleep on it) and

"offers something small" (a little totem, small horse). He doesn't offer big, guru-like solutions.

:Remembering - when the blow falls, you don't feel it as initiation - what attitude you have does matter, though

:the mentor encourages the apprentice's spirit - not love & support, etc
- The Mentor does see something in you and also helps you see yourself

:"mentor" behavior should NOT be faked in therapy!

*:fathers should also connect you with the ancestors - tell the lore of the families & the tribes - he needs to have ancestral balls

Michael Meade: The Mabinogion Legend of Culhwch and Olwen

Michael - does a lot of work with myths & fairy tales - this story: "The Oldest known Story" in Europe....

Once before time became time as we know it...before time was put up where God used to be, up high on buildings...once when there was a time of the spring...and the son...and the wife...once upon this time there was a King who desired a companion...he made his desire known & he married. His wife became pregnant and she left to roam in the woods...she was wild...until the child was to be born. Then her reason returned...she went to a swineherd & gave birth, to Culhwch ("ka-lutch") son of the sow. The son was then taken back to the King, his mother fell ill...

and she told the King that I'll die & you'll wish to take another wife. But it would be bad for the son. So don't remarry until you see a double briar arise from my grave. He agreed. She then called her tutor & told him to daily keep her grave clean. The King sent the boy to daily watch the grave; nothing grew. The son was put in fosterage. The tutor one day forgot to clean the grave, the King (out hunting) saw it, went to get a wife at the neighboring kingdom, slaying the neighboring King for his wife.

The new queen was on the edge of the forest & asked an old hag, "What is it in my fate to be taken by violence to an impotent and foolish man?" Hag: It is prophesied you will & he has a son. The son was brought to her - she told Culhwch to marry Olwen - he said he was too young - she cursed him: you'll never lie down with any woman or sleep in the same place twice. The son filled with desire for the daughter & he encountered his father. He explained the new Queen's condition placed on him. The King said, "Go get a haircut from your uncle, Arthur.

He rode on a broad-chested horse with gold bridles, holding a silver spear & a golden sword with a cross on it - two greyhounds, one on either side; with apples embroidered on the cape; riding smoothly, with not a hair stirring, at all...

Here Meade summarizes the story thus far: ...the growing of the son...the wildness the mother has in growing the son..when the growing, by digesting the outside world, her reason returns..and he is born with the pigs - All this

says, he is born with ROOTS, from the great sow mother "Culhwch, Son of the Sow." Note that this is like "the virgin birth, born in a stable" - he is coming from the earth - and she gives birth out of fear - PIG-BOAR-SOW is an old, grounded culture in societies, the image of the son being born from here -PIGS Eat Anything! - we put the demon into the pig - we repress the pig-appetite - The Moslems exterminated the pigs in their expansion (wiping out the dark origins of the self)

Ed Muller: our demonizing of the pig is trying to achieve individuation by making a bad guy of someone else

Michael: BIRTHING in the pigs (roots, soil, bones of culture) precedes the riding in resplendent fashion towards Arthur, the Great Bear, the Mentor, Uncle, Cousin, Teacher. The Mentor: "He is the one you go to when a condition of the soul has been laid on you."

Dancing

This is the first dancing of the entire group. Three drummers in the center - stomp with your back straight - group moves in and out - we mime animals with our arms, and the dancing movements, and our faces. Stokes leads us and offers a variety of creatures to mimic. The dancing goes on for some forty-five minutes.

John Stokes: The Tracker

This is a lecture about "the inside and the outside." He talks about being a 'survival trainer,' and teaching people to become their own mentor, and to listen to their own inner man.

The Tracking Project has a firm belief in remembering your ancestors, the dead that brought us here. When you are initiated, your umbilical to your family is cut and your father gives you up and the old men reattach your umbilical to the Earth. My mentor, Jose Toledo - asks me questions - "make me a shell that will make the room vibrate" -then he says, "go shape this gourd," etc. Why is it so difficult to understand native religion? Because it affirms life - appreciates how beautiful life is - thank you, fire - they open to the spirit Fire and it comes to help them. So it is a dialogue with nature. "Don't let the sun catch you napping!" There is a blessing every moment - that PhD isn't the end of learning - a man of high degree keeps learning - so are you watching nature and asking simple questions. Dream-time: creation-time = insuring the future by doing what was done in the beginning. Native people go slowly because of the generations in the future. They promote dissent in the council; they bless the Earth with prayers - "prayer is like a spear thrown"; quiet the self down

"Huna" - pre-Hawaiian way of thinking empowers the people out of their despair.

"Gurdjieff" - wars can't be controlled because we've forgotten the earth needs to be fed: wars feed the earth (?)

Stokes: TRACKING TIPS OF THE DAY: from Tom Brown/The Tracker

Thomas Carlyle: "The tragedy in life is not what they suffer but what they miss"

"Awareness = Relaxation"

"Accepting the state of affairs"

1. The Tracker's Question: "What Happened Here???" The beginning of the tracker's thinking; a way of looking at the world
2. "Good observation," not magic, anyone can do it
3. "Everything leaves a track" - my uncle was a good tracker - a stone rolled over, a heron's footprint
4. "Concentric rings" - something happens and influences things around it - so the tracker quiets his "rings" and waits for the "rings to come to him" - he hears the jay squawk and knows it means a dog is coming

Hillman needs to speak here:

Peace: Our notion of peace is not passive-aggressive - it is the hawk eating the rabbit - this is the natural way of the world - this is peace - the natural order and disorder of things

Prayer: Remember we are human - that is when we are praying - remember we are mortal - thanking the earth helps us remember we are human; the animal is immortal - in the generational progression - if you kill them in the proper way, they'll come back; this dancing comes from honoring the immortalized animals

Michael Meade on Three Ways of Perceiving

Consider that there is more than one way of perceiving; there are concrete - psychological - mythological ways.

- (a) Concrete - "the world of the singular" - measuring the world. "How many people are going to lunch?" This is perception of the world as matter-body-sensation. The experience of things initially; skills here are practical skills, with realistic images; art that is photographic in imagery. The eye is the primary organ; there is a minimal amount of tension in this way of seeing. Time is exact rather than elastic. [Time, hours, were unequalled before 1330 AD ?][Before that was local.] Predictability & precision are valued. "Let's get to the bottom line." "The Bible. God. Read my lips." Also, "always, never, only." No humor, no play; abuse makes the world concrete, people take on the identity of a victim. thoughts and facts
- (b) Psychological - "the world of the two" - this adds the inner to the outer, concrete. Sight becomes insight; relationship; united things become separate. Separate things become united. Focus shifts from the eye (reaching out into the world) to the ear (the world comes in). "My voice speaking moves the bones in your ear." Contradictions - dialogue - negotiation - relationship; tension doubles; humor increases.
feeling simile (likes & dislikes)
- (c) mythological - "the world of the three" - what is added is mystery,

synchronicity; ritual, metaphor; no proof, no dogma, no belief, true by way of compelling mystery. tension becomes unbearable & can unhinge the whole psychological reality. This is where the healing happens. Humor becomes rapid, sparks from one to another, everything has humor. The organ is imagination -

Summarizing: the issue moves from identity (concrete) to separation/unity (psychological) to fate (myth)

:[concrete = fact; psychological = dialogue; myth = story]

- the concrete is the symptom, the psychological is the treatment, the mystery is the cure
- the art - fantasy - is the mythology
- concrete is based in motion
- psychological is based in emotion
- mythological is based in fantasy-imagination-art-ritual

Three poems

(a) A concrete poem - "I stand here...do you understand?" - Olaf Plama

(b) A psychological poem - "No joy in life"- no joy until you ask for lightening instead of love!" - D. H. Lawrence

(c) A mythological poem - "The Kings of the world are growing old...their sons died while still boys..."

"the mob breaks the crown into gold"

"melts it into machines"

"the one feels homesick and wants to go back into the mountain - Robert Bly, "Roca's Poem," The King of the World

LUNCH

TROUT MEETING after lunch

-aphorisms about trout:

- "the behavior of the fish that is hooked is not understood by the fish that are free"

-actions by men of stealth and misdirection:

-filling one-another's plates at meal line

-doing things differently

-being trout-like (a loner; colorful; suffering in hiding; sustained by consciousness

-dropping stones on people's plates without notice

-a piano player in a bar - guys discussing how they are like a trout

-being stealthy - not able to be seen - elusive --

TRACKING - John Stokes

...so the visual is only part of it...what you see is not what you get...magic happens...a deer turns into a tree..."a crow told me my granny was gonna die."

You can read the woods like a journal. It's like trusting your own inner feelings & not letting others talk you out of it. (Tells a story of his

meeting native peoples)(study with Tom Brown & tracking)

Tracking- close your eyes and let the pictures come inside - learn to switch your vision - from the ground to the tree to far away. The birds-animals-fish being reliable (animals) sources of pending earth changes and shifts. (While talking, he is whittling with a willow stick - demonstrates making fire - willow, cottonwood, straight stalks. Making fire with friction, using dry plants - bark - dried grass - like a bird's nest

The Steps in Making Fire:

1. bird's nest-like mess of tinder
2. dry bent stick as long as your arm
3. get fire making wood off a tree (not the ground)
(if it's cool on your lip, it's moist)
4. cut a piece as long as thumb to pinky - sharpen each end
5. use a shoe lace - nylon cord
6. burn a hole on the wood
7. cut an edge on the hole
8. put nose oil on one end of the short stick
9. use the bow you made to turn the stick in the wood hole: it creates cinders which will light the 'bird's nest'

Stalking

- back straight, ball of foot slowly down, stop
- the way the different animals walk

Stalking - bears - do everything the bear does

- FORESIGHT (knowledge, awareness, psychic abilities) is the main tool - use your mind to let her know you mean no harm -say it in your mind
- make noise - site out a good tree - run
- if the bear growls = ready to attack
- use your mind
- establish a rapport with rattlesnake energy - and I don't know what that means! Honor them & let them know you're there
- you all have allies--identify your totem animals - They'll help you in those times--build your own inner mythology & rely on them

James Hillman - Conflict Hour

- "we want to allow conflict to emerge"
- conflict = issues you don't like
- whining = complaining
- ritualized conflict - anger

(A) The first conflict from the group: why if we have pledged non-violence in this workshop, why do we use metaphors about killing? (Kill the king) - dialogue - either we should contain it or it will hurt someone - acting out a myth of violence is different than acting out violence

- Hillman: to imagine violence is already violence (Christian traditions)
- violence and force are not the same thing
- **what makes it ritual is that it is a sacred space, done for a purpose, tied to a story-myth, done in a community**
- how do we know that acting out violence decreases it from happening?
- acknowledge that our whole culture is based on violence - we fear violence because we fear losing the safety we have from that violence

DINNER

- lots of individual feedback about the conflict hour - lacking synergy; needs more interchange among the participants; maybe seated in a circle? facilitated by others than the leaders of the conference?

Random writing about how I am like a trout:

- wounded - speckled
- defiant - digger
- meditating - prayer

- I was sneaky
- Koshare clowns
- colors - all there
- under the water of consciousness
- scared, hooked
- fast and spawning
- slow, docile, asleep
- jumping wildly
- stupid, a sucker, hooked, caught again
- swimming mostly up stream
- being often alone
- "going unprotected" i.e. feeling vulnerable often

pretending I am not a trout:

- imagine I'm a hook instead of a trout
- pretend I'll be discovered and sent to fancy fish school
- hiding from it all - under a rock
- fearing the fisherman and darting away

Evening Meeting:

Initiation

About killing the King or the father - it is a dilemma story;
in the area between the father and the king is where the Mentor lives.

Hillman: in our culture we believe we're not being initiated, as if it is a literal, one time blow/ritual after which you are never the same. Consider it instead psychologically - events that reveal your soul and connect you to something beyond yourself (are initiatory events). War-accident-teachers-etc.

- you know something has moved permanently. A wound, a broken love, a death - where you are connected to something larger. Hillman's own "initiation" story: living on a ward with wounded WWII soldiers, took them to get drunk & dancing, over-identified with the wounded, identified with the hurt and in rebellion against the system.

"Wound" "revelation of character" and "fate," your nature our nature revealed...I am a rebellious caretaker of the oppressed...and this is initiation...the soul is being initiated...

The Elders

Hillman says to use your middle and last names (so as to not dishonor the past). Now he brings up men who are older than age 55, puts them in front row, people applaud. They are deemed "the elders" and asked to describe events that are initiatory in their lives:

(a) A man's father has an affair & father leaves at his age 10 - gone until age 19 - and his mother's effort to not allow him to go to his father...but speaking up against that mother...

(b) A man goes blind about age 5; doctor tells him "I can't fix this and no one will want to say that to you...but it's a long time [if you live to be 80] to feel sorry for yourself."

(c) A man's mother dies... aunts and uncles gather and share family stories... it was an alcoholic family with broken men and crazy women who led it... and his remaining members voted him head of the family... the first male in 4 generations to be in that position.

(d) a man describes moments of the bus trip when he left home at age 15

(e) a man is shocked into the reality of warfare

(f) a man tells a story about the incident of death, and wonders how it applies still to this day

(g) -with a professor- "my whole being was excited!!"

Hillman: as an overt, shared ritual, initiation has been lost. But there are aspects of it we can see:

(1) there is a scar...a wound that changes as & is irreversible, others can see it

(2) something dies - something else begins...maybe a literal brush with death

(3) when something happens, we might re-experience the wound, the scar - therefore respect your own wounds - they are sources of spontaneity (rather than seeing the wounds as "when I was victimized")

(4) there is a name given at the initiation (the old way is to go to the wilderness and fast - praying for a name)

(5) you are given responsibility to care for the land

(6) what about initiation as a religious experience? as you age the stories you learn become more deep and more complicated - aging fills out the cosmology - you keep being initiated...into various roles...progressive development...

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Hillman: secular thinking is that myth is dead - what we need is to move out of that "passive-aggressive" style ('gee, what can I do, anyway?) and back into the world as sacred

*initiation = death - separation - loss - wondering - ordeals - terrors - suffering - finding one's self in a larger context - then finding your way back into the community as someone else - initiation means no return - going back to community as a new self - AND WHAT ABOUT THE ISOLATION??

John Stokes - in nature, the separation and the isolation are illusions; also - our initiations may be tougher than the aborigines - we may be using a blunt knife; - our cultural mythology talks about "a lonely road" of the initiatory path - denial of the world doesn't let us smell-eat-walk; - the myths create the isolations and the separateness we say we feel - it is in the contact with our world, our self - our experiencing

Thinking about my own wounds:

- born a month early, with a hernia, strabismus, and asthma
- sobbing about leaving mother on the first day of school
- getting punched off my bike by the local bully
- long difficult hikes as a kid
- feeling humiliated about my body
- losing in love
- being busted by the army for speaking against the war
- not taking that big job
- rejecting law school
- the death of my father
- a derealization experience
- ending a major job
- climbing a 14,000 ft. peak and failing
- hemorrhoidectomy

April 22, 1990

45 min. run with Ed Muller!! We Got Lost in the Land of the Leisure Class

Michael Meade talks to the Trout Clan:

(1) Would you have chosen to be a trout? "No, I wouldn't have chosen to be down" A lot of men do chose to be down.

(2) The trout clan - "breaking out" is like a hawk, angry...the other side is "breaking down," initiation in the waters of the soul...often happens quite individually, looks like pathology...trout or salmon is in the water, moving down with the water. Trout-salmon is often considered "the oldest animal" in primitive stories: he holds and remembers the inescapable grief of being born, of being a man, of the well of sorrow in the world. The well doesn't need fixing, just to be dealt with. Earth Day is relevant here. The Old Man in many stories weeps the waters back into the world. If we remember our sorrow,

we can keep the violence in balance. This is about the basic grief of being here--

*The Trout can help this group GO WITH IT, stay with what is being said and felt and then to go with it

Ed Muller: when you are with your grief, you are with yourself in a very integrated way - the hyperactive mind slows down

Mike: it's centered but it's not--water keeps going down and makes new centers as it goes down

-your group should share its sorrows with itself

"you can build a fire but you can't make water"

grief

- being born early, weak, and damaged
- leaving mom for school
- getting hit at school
- losing elections at school
- losing girlfriends
- death of my father
- entering the military

Names of the small groups in the trout clan:

- "the blue men" - the blues - Shiva is blue - sorrow and other worldly
- "the men of stealth and misdirection" - lying - stealing - trip'em up
- charming to contact the other - stealing and getting good at it
- "the men of the cry of sorrow" - the singing together in sorrow - the lament - remembering
- "the men who follow the white track" - a Celtic image - 'the white track of the moon across the water when the moon is full' - the flowers that grow in the footsteps of the most beautiful woman in the world
- "the men who hold the stones of their fathers" - the testicles - stones in the waters of grief - stones that are placed at the base of a fallacy

More about Initiation: M Meade

Mike: "fire is dearer to us than love or food" "The Fire" by D.H. Lawrence -- a poem for the hawks: "the feelings I don't have, I don't have" from "To Women as Far as I'm Concerned" from D.H. Lawrence's Poems (Penguin Books); or "to therapists..."

:initiation--where something has gone into my life and never goes out...even now the loss is still a scar tissue that weeps

Stages of Initiation

1. Bonding...with parents...with community
2. Separation...(which activates the archetype "initiation")
3. Tests, etc. ordeals; living on the threshold, in the wound
4. Re-entry...integration...the great way back into the tribe...it is in the details of all this, the specific story itself. [Remember: one sees oneself - in a larger context]

When we tell "personal story" here in this assembly, we don't mean "unload" -

we mean to tell your story as an instrument of learning - so that it bears weight for someone else - teaching others, not merely bending their ears

:Rumi - "Don't trust ways...they change..." poem

:Gary Snyder - "Billingham Alaska" "all the new songs in the working bars"

EARTH DAY

:Ethridge Nite - "Feeling Fucked Up" - "she's left me...the world is bear... Fuck Marx, Fuck Nixon, Fuck Coletrain, Fuck dope & pot... Fuck the whole mothafucking thing - all I want now is my woman back, so I can let my soul sing..."

:E. Dickenson: "I measure every grief I meet"

:a poem for the moose - by T. Rifkin "The Waking"

: "Lost" - "the trees ahead are not lost..." by David Wagner

TRACKING TIPS: John Stokes

#5. Macro-micro vision...vary your vision...look down on a track...then stand back and look at where it is...think about its location & the larger context...what gait are the tracks in? (diagonal walking or bounding)...and then the micro look (the grains of sand, how old) and also the middle look...the antidote to tunnel vision...give everything intermittent attention...don't get fixed on one thing...

#6. "Wide angle vision" open your eyes up to the periphery - the rods and cones on the outside of your eyes are more receptive to the levels of light & that's where you'll catch the flash of a hawk's wing..."where the hand goes the eye goes and where the eye goes the mind goes"

#7. "Always put the track between you and the source of light" - don't let your shadow fall on the track

#8. "Avoid Ruts"...try doing things differently...the ruts get so deep you can't see over the sides anymore... Indians sit and watch the patterns...if you don't want to be tricked, avoid ruts

#9. "The same old..." what'd you see? "the same old shit" - you'll miss it if you pretend it's that way, missing out on the uniqueness...this is dreamtime, the world is being created every day

#10. "What we don't speak to, we don't understand..."

What we don't understand, we fear...

What we fear...we destroy"

So speak to the trees, the raven, the night...initiating that dialogue is the beginning of breaking down the fear...

#11. "Everything is a teacher..."

(and thus)

"You cannot be alone."

Thus you can be informed by everything, you can build a repertoire of moves... Navajo - Night Wave Poem..."In Beauty May I Walk..."

Culhwch and Olwen - con't: Meade

The youth arrives at Arthur's Court. The gate keeper says "Go away." And Culhwch said why can I not enter? "You have come too late...none can enter here but the rightful son of a king..." "I will satirize your king to the horizons..." if you don't let me enter... and that sound will cause (miscarriages)...Wait a minute! I'll speak to Arthur...There is a man in a moment of nobility...Arthur said it is a worthy thing to be sought out...Culhwch rides all the way to the meeting hall... He offers them a greeting "for you all, as much as each of you wants..." Culhwch asks "to have my hair trimmed by Arthur," and he puts his head in Arthur's hands, and he takes the gold scissors & trims his hair. "Who are you?" says Arthur. "I am Culhwch, son of a sow..." Arthur says, "We are cousins," name your desire. Culhwch requests that you find me "a woman, white track of the moon." They agree to search for her...and Culhwch threatens to satirize (if they fail) or sing the praises of the King if they succeed. "And I request it of (naming now each & every knight and his qualities!!) (a knight) of Devon, who never smiles...and each of their wives and daughters And Arthur said, "OK." A year passed - Culhwch returned to the hall. Arthur was giving out boons again. Culhwch said I remind you that I haven't gotten what I sought. Arthur said we haven't found her. But a group now went forth with Culhwch seeking White Track of the Moon...

Commentary on the story: Notice how weird each of the characters (the companions) are!! The company of men! - The scene of the gatekeeper is in the Myth of Initiation - if a younger man doesn't get what he wants, he will call the older men names, slander the older men - he is bringing his pig nature and threatens to satire Arthur - who is more than responsible: he is "sponsible!" ("Responsibility" sounds like moral obligation, super-ego - it isn't that - it's that it comes out of his capacity to do - it comes from the heart - from his potency. Note that Culhwch has a pedigree (ascending from the earth) and also the power (to ruin the childbirth of the women) and that he is requesting to submit, to put his head down. So you need enough fire to get to the gate - and through the gate - then there is submission....

Submission - entering sacred space requires submission to a process, to a ritual, to an imagined elder, and to God. It is accompanied by humiliation always...it de-structures the ego... (the men around the table sometimes pick him apart...submission = disorganization & submission to authority...possibility of submission increases the feeling of danger and causes resistance. the specter of chaos appears... risk is increased... it means dropping down into the shadow... which leads to fear that what is repressed will return...when submission starts, fear rises, because it appears deep change is possible...excessive tricksterism rises up to stop the process (ambivalence, irrational, excuses, etc.)

Characteristics of sacred space and ritual elders:

...it occurs when it chooses

1. Ritual elders can hold it when it occurs
2. Ritual elder stir the fire & the pot...try to heat it up...
(The cenex calms & cools...the ritual elder keeps it -

3. Ritual elder accepts **projection** so that the ego can distract (Arthur sits in the chair & accepts the projections)
4. Ritual elder keeps the boundaries clear and tight - the heat goes as high as the boundaries permit
5. Ritual elder either pushes the limits or sets the limits of the individual - he allows "appropriate suffering" to occur, so that the old wounds re-open and can be healed

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DANCE - with conga drums as accompaniment, we all dance a variety of animal movements

Hillman: "The Asshole Lecture" - opening this up, one feels stupid...the asshole...quickly, counter phobic jokes happen...

1. shame lives there, in the asshole... also control, ugliness. Norman Brown... "civilization begins at the asshole"... controlling our shit is civilized...the first act of love is the child giving its shit to its mother...the anxiety of shitting in your pants... cover your ass
2. humor lies there... farts... jokes on toilet walls. "Freud and Jung are at a conference; Freud says to Jung, "Did you just fart?" Jung: "Of course! You don't think I always smell like this!" The Romans had toilet jokes. Turds...Rabelais, French writer Gargantua... anal humor...calling someone an asshole is to put them down. BUT our own assholes are sad, hemorrhoids
3. rage lies there...anal sadism...cutting off, holding back, holding in... anal explosives: "She-eet!" an expletive, a violent word. Anger lies here...it itches, burns & is painful..."a raging asshole." In older classifications, they attributed different kinds of events to different gods. Peppery, sharp, stinging things were in the world of Mars...so the asshole is where the Mars is...
4. depression lies there...constipation...take the lead out... Saturn: privies, outhouses, soiled linens, money
:the controlling asshole doesn't work when you are in Mexico...it's a change in the Gods that live there
:the privy...alone with your own shit...isolated, watching the images go by... Gary Snyder: "...you learn how interesting your mind is..." It is a slowing down of all processes...but one holds back one's shit...it is not to be given to the world...
5. reception lives there..."getting screwed in a deal." The homophobic control is not to ever let another man in; concrete = sexual or business;

psychological keeping out the other men. D.H. Lawrence raped by the Turks... it ended his white knight period and his solitary behavior. To be bugged in prison is the horror...of being lowered into that...no longer a self-identified individual, in control...getting shafted...this is defensive language. Gay men are outside this asshole-forbidding behavior. That's why we fear them.

*(Freud, "Analysis Terminable..." analysis ends with submission to another man without the feeling (fear) of castration. Homophobia is partly the fear of letting another man in...our aversion to shit is enormous...our toilets are white and clean and contrasts with the shit...

6. erotica lives there...an erogenous zone...art begins in the smearing of shit... it has very sensitive skin...a deeply animal part...it has a display part, there are unique markings there as well as on the face [head & tail] an aesthetic display. Pants used to be cut to not display the buttocks. Blume in Ulysses "takes a very long shit," the gentle opening of his bowels, his openness to "the wide world." -see Lady Chatterly's Lover

[Perk's comment: realization during recover from a very painful hemorrhoidectomy: "My asshole is connected to the whole world"]

:remember: coyote can detach his asshole & send it away to someone as a present

:therapists are like the standard toilet porcelain bowl

:hemorrhoids

:how far the out-house was from the in-house

:if you voted for Reagan, you can't shit here - your asshole is in the White House

-----ASSSOUL-----

Lunch

Dancing with Ricardo

-moving upright slowly

-lots of rolling - tumbling

CONFLICT HOUR:

Men in the conference say to one another:

-clean up your stuff, trash

-respect the drums - no rings, no harm

-asking them to repeat things drives me nuts

-make the tapes available

-beginning at 7 am is oppressive--going late is oppressive (forget it! work it out on your own)

-we need more didactic talks--more on male psyche - mentoring & initiation in therapy

-I want to know how to be like you - to work with men -

-on-going back and forth more therapy ideas - less therapy ideas

-what is the state of the men's movement??

-two sides - didactic - conceptual
experience - emotional

Meade keeps looking for "the roots of the conflict," to seek "who's asking for that, who wants it, who wants what" - he tries to polarize the two sides, refine them

- what do you want?
- I want the fucking head stuff!
- I want to talk about (working re: men's issues)
- I want experience!!
- I want to learn this language...
- the conflict may be between clinical psychological language and mythic language
- how to heal the wounded males
- I want "models" of how to work with men
- I want to deepen my imagination...their bodies are hard...they don't know what this is about...I want more of that
- I want to talk about working with men - I'd like to watch other clinicians work with men...
- "I came here to influence a bunch of men who are gonna influence a bunch of men" said John Stokes

Evening Community Meeting: Robert Bly joins us

"the door has opened for anything that anyone wants to bring up" says Bly

- set aside an hour for us to network
- Mike reviews the day, encouraging more dialogue
- James Hillman on The Wound: you carry the wound with you - you don't just give it up and move on - a wound re-opens & re-opens & re-opens - the wound is progressively here for less time and it hurts less - the pain isn't as deep and it subsides - don't let a wound be right over an artery! Remember the scar tissue is harder and more sensitive.

Therapy can keep you in the wound by returning you to your childhood - you need to know that the "child" is not the only god - to say it has to be revisited may be dogma - unless I am with a person who has no idea why they are in pain then I'll do it with them. I'm not sure I believe in the developmental model - history needn't be casual - it may be a pre-figuration rather than a cause.

We are born with a destiny which we will repeat - I need to go into this suffering NOW, what does it mean here, now, this suffering. ("The problem isn't the old trauma. The problem is remembering traumatically") We are perpetuating as unconscious dogma, which takes us away from the present, where the issues should be. "How am I dying here/now," (not what was my childhood like). Aristotle said we had a political, "of the community" nature. This (focus on childhood) removes us from the political world - countertransference, self-examination - our reflecting on what we are feeling & experiencing - that is not what we need now! This old idea of individual identity, self as "god within," maybe it needs to be redefined as the interiorization of community.

Our theory of the psyche isolates us. Bly: he's saying. "the god inside the self doesn't vote!" Look: there is an argument - people have to begin with the individual - start within to make the world better - but the people (have done that), are more sensitive and the world still goes downhill. Consider that object-libido (which goes out to the world) is damned up & needs to go out - it's not narcissistic. Consider that the therapy room may be a cell in which revolution is taught!

Hillman:

-codependency - narcissism - addiction

We know from deconstruction & literary criticism that we interpret texts - it's all addiction language - these may all be descriptions of therapy - it is narcissistic to reflect on every little feeling we have in the therapy.

"If you don't exaggerate, you may as well remain silent."

- Ortega

"I take what they give me." - Johnny Unitas on how to read a defense.

Bly: This is too simple for me - you have to do a lot of thinking - he comments on Hillman's inference that countertransference issues are narcissistic, disagreeing; other comments, supporting "community" ideas -

Michael Meade: "communitas" in Latin means that with luck and practice, "something drops in" and allow everyone to be common with each other, despite all those differences - all gone - this seems like the healing place - Winnicott: that safe space between the two is "community" communitas - communion

Hillman - Your client is a citizen! not an adult child of this or that blah blah - there is the same old ego with this making the self into something!

John Stokes - Story about a psychotherapist who uses his skill for physicians for social responsibility

Hillman - consider that pathology is a response of social protest - we need to be more socially responsible -

Bly - James is saying it's easy to get caught in the small things - I tend to be more pro-trauma than he is - remember the story...of the man who pinches his finger on the wild man's cage...if you are trapped in a narrow place & if therapy is in that place - what is so great about that?

Think about two kinds of poetry: pay attention to your feelings, without mentioning objects, OR pay attention to objects - this (latter) is the fruitful way-you need a larger mythology than your own particular one when you get in the counseling room.

A psychiatrist in the audience speaks up, says his own moral dilemmas are so great he can barely tolerate "community" issues.

Perk, overhearing Bly re: "we danced for four hours!" It sounds good to me, "I said, thinking he means at a men's conference. "It was a great blues band," he says.

Robert Bly: "Night Work"

We begin in seated postures on the floor, neck rolling - chanting. He asks for comments - why are you here (men describe their current grief) Then we begin -dancing - circle within a circle - looking in the other's eyes - letting them see your sadness - chanting. Then -dancing - move forward & back in two rows - look at the eyes (e-yes) of the other. "See a woman there, the

essence of woman -see God there in those eyes..."

April 23, 1990

Hillman: Comments to the Trout Clan early morning:

You guys are breaking down the regular patterns - not sleeping so much - not getting to "fall back" - there is also an overload of information here. In a bottom line culture, money is God...talking about it sets up paranoid thinking... it is the ultimate place of being got...the great criminals in the USA were busted by the IRS...the police that work for money are the most feared...as the immigration service. We do have a tradition against submission - but surrender - we don't have a mode of surrender. In WWII we kept demanding "unconditional surrender." But "service, submission" is tied up with slavery. It's hard to work with yielding. As the trout, you are brief...not standing for macho virtues - surrender, yielding, submission without collapsing. To set up a "winning fantasy" is to create more and more losing.

Perk: There is great power in yielding.

James: (agreeing) but you need ritual to keep from feeling humiliated about the yielding. The story of the son, banging at the gate...we need to hear the young man's anger as an asking to get "their hair cut" - kicking and screaming to come in. To let the kid in, you have to see the "king" in him - this is their attempt at dignity - the dress, the punk outfits, etc.

Perk: is not expressing my fear when I encounter that man a form of "letting the young man in?"

Here is an example: my saying to the homeless man "I am afraid"
James - how you are in your body when you say you are afraid makes a lot of difference - you are the king of your house...close to your mortality -there are appropriate and inappropriate times to offer this fear -the king has a whole bunch of storage and crazy resources - the king is aware of his own resources - his own crazy homeless man on the porch - "the more pathological parts that become conscious, the healthier the person." Not through ego development, etc. "The Dirty Dozen," the Magnificent Seven, and old fantasy - these strange little pieces are the strength of the king - in our story, these kingly companions are all pathologies! not heroic! This is like giving a blessing to the patriot's pathologies - there can be a lot of joy in the recognizing these figures - not changing or fixing or curing.

Therapy has a ritual container - the ego is a janitor that keeps the building going - it isn't Arthur as an ego that cuts the hair. If you use "ego" to meet life, you will feel incompetent; your pathologies will work for you. You begin to feel helpless with every client, then you surrender to the fact that "I can't do it" - then SOMETHING HAPPENS - this is how it is a ritual situation.

What about the corporate life? when a man has to produce?
-you have to talk with him about the companions, about what is your mode of

working. In fairy tales it comes up again and again - incredible challenges - the hero ("the ego") gives up, cries - the figures appear - the maiden, the fox, the companions.

Trout surrender to their instincts. Recognize that you are in the psyche (not that the psyche is in you) - it's not so much going with the flow as it is sensing the currents.

Small Groups

We talk about money, and how the drive for accumulation generates pathological behavior.

*How about dancing all night, really?

Breakfast

Bly - plays a lyre & reads poetry

- "the other [leaders] guys must be out jackin' off somewhere"

he says, when Meade and Hillman don't arrive

- poems by Antonio Machado -

1. "close to the road we sat down one day..."

- when you get divorced, or lose your job, some men go into despair

Meade - 1. "the gods"...

"people were bathing and posturing themselves on the beach..."

D.H. Lawrence

John Stokes - 1. Lew Welch: "First you must love your body..." in Ring of Bone

Hillman - 1. Robinson Jeffers: "The extraordinary patience of things..."

Bly - Machado from Time Alone

"My childhood is memories of a patio in Seville..." a fully grown (man) is almost naked, like the children of the sea

THE STORY: Culhwch, etc... Meade drums as he tells it...

...Culhwch and (many of the King's companions) set out looking for Olwen, White Track of the Moon...they came to a great plain, saw a high castle, set their wills, traveled all daylong - the castle was just as far away as when they started...same the 2nd day...same the 3rd day, but with greater intention and better technique; same thing. They slept uneasily, arose angrily...and came to the middle of the plain where there was a great dark man with sheep all around...and a mastiff dog with 3 eyes and sharp teeth. One cast a spell on the dog, they approached the great dark man - he advised them to turn back. Culhwch stepped forward and handed a ring to the big dark man. They rested there among the sheep.

...and the large man went home to his wife, said, "I've been to the sea and saw a corpse and found this ring." She said, it is not like the sea to carry a corpse for long; she asked the name of the corpse & heard the name of her own nephew - she dropped into sorrow, knowing no man had gone to that castle and returned. In the morning the men arose and went to the home of the woman - who tried to hug Culhwch - but Culhwch stuffed a log in her arms and she crushed it. She opened a cupboard and out of it stepped a beautiful young man - kept there "because the other 23 have been consumed in that castle." Culhwch said, "He'll come with me." Culhwch told her they came seeking Olwen, White Track of the Moon - alas, she said, you'll never come back. "How can I meet her," Culhwch said. "She comes here on Saturdays, to wash her hair, and

she takes off all her rings & leaves them here. "That night was spent in the way a night is spent in the house of a woman who, etc." Olwen came the next day, wearing a flame colored cloak - with the sharpest eyes - the brightest yellow hair - the fairest of cheeks - the softest of breasts - her bearing more noble than anything. Culhwch invited her to sit - expressed his love for her & said leave with me. Impossible she said, I promised my father I would never leave - on the day of my marriage he will die. But you can go to him to seek my hand - and do whatever he asks of you without hesitation. She returned to the castle...

Commentary: When something like a deep issue of the soul (arises)... you get push-pull, attraction and terror arise... "effort" won't help us get any closer - don't trust ways - dropping into confusion gets us closer - going further down into more primitive levels

Bly: "the part of you that wants to be right can't survive these stories"

Think about the details: Culhwch gives a ring - she leaves her rings - he is paying to go through this gate -

-why does she lie? And, "a corpse" -hair - the trimming of his hair...the washing of her hair...it's about initiation

*Whatever detail struck you - hold on to that - that is a key for you in the story

-the 24th son - 24 hours, the last hour - the end of it, last shot
-the most beautiful women: notice the animal and native attachments to describe her

The Male Psyche: Robert Bly

...if you enter therapy with an open mind, without preconceived ideas, we have a movement to trying to understand this. In the 60's, the patriarchy methods ended -- and men began to be initiated by women - but it belongs more to the women's world - and so we don't want women's version of what the male psyche is -the women refuse to look at the dark side of the goddess.

The male psyche: right now, the upper 50 feet of the ocean is disturbed - lots is unsettled - who pays on dates? opens doors? But at the very bottom of the male psyche, there is a very interlocked structure. Many beings: the king; the wild man (see "Iron John," found at the bottom of the pond); the trickster (conning; American culture); the lover (Shakespeare: diving down to find & develop the lover); (the university, graduate school, Alma Mater is death to these!) The shaman (to go into spiritual areas and fighting invisible beings - Jesus getting devils to come out, he tells them not to say his name - he has already met them in his travels to the underworld) Therapists work with the shaman tradition. The warrior - was wonderful relationship with the King, protecting and serving the king - a warrior alone [Oliver North] is dangerous. The grief man, the grief of nature, guides us down into grief...(now, scream that grief)!! (loud wailing from the audience)

Our job is to support you and rub nettles on you.

-people fear going into that grief re: getting caught there - that's

depression, that's not grief -

-you cannot be "a king" unless you sit down with a queen and not undermine her power or undermine your own - to do this, you have to grieve your own wounds - the king has felt the wounds and absorbed them (Lincoln was a king, not a prince)- Lame Deer: "scars are important...after you die, you meet the old hag in the otherworld and eat your scars - and if you have no scars, she'll eat your eyes & you'll be blind in the next world."

-so we talk about a structure of the male psyche

-women may have some similar structure - they have a warrior: it gets stronger when the man's warrior gets weaker - women may be pushing men out of the Christian church; the hearth goddess

-if you are a therapist, notice what is missing there (in your client)? New age man is missing the dark trickster, etc.

-more about little things in this: both dark and light sides - the king has a dark side (Stalin; Herod) as do they all. Look, all of us want the feminine in the beautiful form - but she is the daughter of the Thorn Bush Cock Giant! Listen to the structure of the psyche: "let's run off" it says to the woman - but no, no, that's not hard enough for you! And this is also sensible - you can't escape your frightening mother, because the ecstatic mother's father can crush you! There is no way out! So what do we do with this woman, Olwen? We have to deal with three layers of consciousness - high-middle-low (?) - the Gold Woman is in the high layer - we see her reflection in the faces of admiring women and forget that they are not She - Marilyn Monroe accepted the longing for the Golden Haired Woman, and she died. John Cheever: The Chase Clarissa": we are hooked "up there," we can't see her as is - the unconscious young man longing for The Woman (but she is in fact unconscious & longing for the King in him) - keep these layers distinct! When you "fall in love" like that, instead of trying to get her alone from her husband - go be alone yourself.

"...they were deliciously confused!" Dante: he wrote this to a savvy woman
(poem)

DANCING - Ricardo Morrison leads us in more dancing

Culhwch and Olwen - con't

Meade: "not community...not brothers...but COMPANIONS..."

A Play (Bly arrives with ugly mask - fur hat)

-the men and Culhwch went to the castle, slew 9 hounds, 9 dwarfs without a sound...the dark king heaped abuse on the men...they said they seek a boon, of Olwen...he said to come back tomorrow. And he threw a stone spear which the man caught & it turned into an iron spear & threw it into his left knee. And the men came back with fine dress the next day. The King said I have to talk with her 4 grandfathers, etc. [spear incident, through the chest] And on the 3rd morning they went again...and asked again. The King said, many men have died...not until you have done the tasks that are necessary [spear - stabbed him in the eye] [4th day, request again, threatening King's death]. Bring on your tasks, they said. (then they have to look for the tasks)...King reads about "woods be cleared, etc." before tomorrow. Then get honey, with no

scum...get a tusk from the great boar (taken from his head alive) - and go into the valley of grief
...and the men lost not a minute... and turned in no direction but those tasks

Comments:

-so all these tasks...they go on & on...the whole mess of tasks...these are deep old stories: "It will be easy for me, though you think it is difficult." (You imagine that what you said will shame me, it will not.)
-the weird companions - they take the spears - it's not the singular hero
-to develop your own king, you have to deal with the task master too - there is a destructive side of the father
-the psyche doesn't know the parts of himself - Culhwch is just the ego part of the psyche: the animal parts have to do the dance - "he has become more and more aware of his pathology - all the weird parts are more aware and awake
-in "men's work," we get to be companions for one-another - to carry and refine our weirdness (like when you are 13-16, boys, funny crazy zany things and behaviors)

John Stokes: In 1975 - an editor at Beacon Press - met Bly... I started travels to Australia... The aborigines blew his mind.

*Read this story: The White Roots of Peace by Paul Wallace - story of winning over people's minds to right thinking. (He went to biggest baddest warriors first) To get to the new mind, you have to forgive, make peace with people you hurt.

TRACKING TIPS:

#12. Don't step on the tracks you've found (you might need to backtrack) walk parallel to the track - keep the sun in your face

#13. Avoid Encapsulation - don't get encapsulated - don't stay in your cell, all protected - the part of us that wants to address the natural world can't get out and feels lonely

#14. Dead Air Space - enter a room, you look with a cursory way - trackers watch and see where other people don't look - that is where you can hide - so trackers look in all parts of the room [in the psyche, we call these blind spots]. This comes from automatic vision, not really scanning the room, spotting the dead air space (which looks like dark spots).

#15. Safe + Secure + Comfortable = Death (to the spirit & the senses) - in the bush, it can lead to death

#16. Don't think a feeling! Really feel it!

#17. Move without time or destination - a tracker (not on the track) moves more as a gentle wanderer, without an expectation

#18. Draw Strength from Who You Are - draw strength from your sadness - don't be crippled from it

#19. When It's Cold I'm Cold; When It's Hot I'm Hot - the old guy, same

clothes in different weather

#20. Natural Rapture - watch someone touch water as if never before - maintain a child-like quality, not "childish" quality - "it's cold today"

#21. Avoid Naming - names are killers - go touch and feel the bark, look at the location, the leaves, the spaces between the leaves - avoid naming especially with kids

#22. The moment vs. the goal - live in the moment - the trip is the good part - not the goal -

...tracking is a way of seeing life

Drumming

B.D. Drums
2106 Karen Frazier Rd.
Olympia, WA 98501
206-943-0417

CONFLICT - Bly: "are there any conflicts that are part of this day?" (The audience is silent) "James, Michael and I think about a seminar on passive-aggression." The audience responds with anger for Bly re: confronting a young man in a way that seemed to many that Bly was shaming the man. Bly says, defensively, "I'd do it again," and recounts the conversation, justifying himself - but says, "I grieve for him" because he won't come and talk to me. (Other men do a lot a rescuing Bly, describing how they were "trashed" by him but grew from it.)

- one man "thanks" Bly for attacking the young man, saying, 'I wish my father would have given me some of that.'

-other man points out how Bly shamed the man, told him to sit down & had other men express their rage-grief

- "you leaders act like kings, sometimes asshole kings"

-some equates aggressive behavior with authenticity

-Bly - "young American men will not speak their anger - we get this a lot - I'm sick of expressing other people's anger"

Perk: if I draw passive-aggressive behavior, I'm part of the dance

Bly: that is stiletto number three

-various men - defending Bly: "that worked for me," I felt the grief; Meade to Bly: you told him what and when to feel - I thought that was crazy.

Finally they play back the tape recording of their interactions... it seems that Bly softens his position about it.

Later: Tim Wilson, Toronto Canadian Broadcasting Public Radio describes this to me as "the mytho-poetic" branch of the "men's movement" - I ask why the leaders don't seem to reflect on their own behavior. He says they may not due to the inherent preferences they seem to have as leaders. He asks if this betrays what is previously in the men's movement - I say it might be such a betrayal.

Evening Meeting: some Love Poems

Bly: Loving a Woman in Two Worlds - "Letter to Her"

"Conversations with the Holy Woman Not Seen for Many Years"

John: plays the didgeridoo - like a Tibetan Lama's horn

:honoring John Stokes with a gift of white sage

:Felix Polloch, "The Dream" - U of Wisconsin

:Keith Janett & Robert Bly in concert in Indianapolis - poetry of Rumi; anger against children, father poems - with Janett improvising

Hillman (on whether some of his writing relates to other parts of his writing, "how do you relate "the puere" to "assholes?"): "I'm like a composer... I write a piece of music and then I write another piece of music - I don't think much like "systems" or "connections" - more like distinct pieces."

April 24, 1990

Robert Bly in Morning meeting with the Trout

-if you like being trout...stay here for 3-4 years...then be hawks (emotional body action) for a while...then be the elk... we're not giving initiation from our own state of ignorance...you guys are doing descent...

When Iron John goes with the wild man, he has hurt his finger (it stands for all your wounds) (and how those effect your way of dealing with the world) while trying to let the Wild man out of the cage... It appears you can get an initiatory wound every time you let the Wild man out. The old men are just sadistic, say the anthropologists - but this wound is to remind him that he has a link with the first initiated man.

Another initiation mystery all over the world: ...they say meet us in the woods at 3 pm but they don't show up - then when the boys show up again they laugh at them. It may be modeling "the world isn't your mother," (she'd meet them at the right time!)

Passive aggression - unconscious - a sense of superiority - forgetting - really not getting it - fearing the other - holding on to the other - "not quite understanding it" -

Therefore - (Iron John) the boy has been told to "not put anything in the pond." He puts the tip of his finger (where the wound was) turned to gold - this is where your gift comes - where the wound is!! (Bly...ignored own alcoholic family) The initiator tells you that your wound is where your gifts are (This is the opposite of capitalists & communists) - you have many gifts in your soul. So the boy is taught about his gold fingers, his gold hair, etc.

Next the Wild man says, you know about gold but not poverty - sends him into the world - "on unbeaten paths, but having no craft" - eventually took a job as a cook, (going down into the castle basement). You trout are being asked to descend - there are many ways...

1. "the way down and out" - this is from Orwell's book, Down and Out in Paris and London, his time in Burma, who went underneath his middle class - happens after age 35 - (story about a man who dropped way out after extremely successful career, became suicidal; a fall in the social scale - you have to make this descent by not staying on too high a level - someone/thing makes this decision - like a politician, fired & canned (DeGaulle goes home and

reads history) - you see a reason for this and stay there

2. "the way of ashes" - happens to Cinderella - you get to sit by the hearth - you look at how many parts of your life have turned to ashes - how many of your dreams in high school have turned to ashes? There is a turn inside - this is like therapy - you don't have a fall in your social status. Think of the metaphor of ashes building up in a stove - they have to be taken out - there are rituals with ashes - about being born a second time - cover the boy with ashes - as his mother's son he is dead. (Ash Wednesday: The carnal man, "The mother's boy is to die"). This involves ritual, not psychology - the women are in favor of this - they leave the mother. "Men's groups" are about being born again.

WHAT IS A MOTHER'S BOY?: (1) The passive-aggressive one; (2) comfort loving one; (3) feeling you are protected in your inner place; fearing and not taking part of the world (marijuana, hippy life is mother shit: "you are clean, the world is dirty." More story about the Theosophists & Joe Campbell - Joe said popular culture will not get above the 3rd chakra - never will get up to the heart - if you want to get to the heart, you have to do it yourself - if you can't say yes to a lion eating a gazelle, you are with your mother! That is the way the myths say - things eat other things! (4) the disappointed boy; (5) the angry boy; (6) the shamed boy. If there is enough influence of Arthur, these boys can be transformed into companions. Robert Moore: "You cannot ever heal the inner child - the inner child has to be killed!!" Bly began quoting poems about knowing the inner child. Moore meant it's the ego child that needs to be killed, not the holy one. The initiators have to kill that child - we can't distinguish between our own holy and the other ones - the older men need to do this.

(More about ways to descend)

3. "learning to shutter" - from the Vietnam movie - "Casualties of War" - four men raped then killed a girl - they were unable to shutter - macho's are trapped in the mother's child - the character played by M. Fox knew how to shutter, was able to react by shuttering, in horror

[yesterday: Bly was attending the "comfortable child" in the man who left]

The adult male can shutter with a male feeling - Vietnam vets and protestors have this in common [Grim Tale: "The Man Who Could Not Shutter"] [The macho man refuses to descend]

4. "going from the mother's world to the father's world" - Hamlet - he is in his mother's world - Hamlet's father tries to move his son to do something about it all - if you have no help from older men to make this move, you'll need the dark side of the trickster to do it - this dark side is about

"letting go of those who betray you"

-the therapist - acting as a mother - is not helping them move to the father's world - he can be a mother-mother or a male-mother [who contains the nourishing qualities of the mother but add the demands of the father] [the father doesn't see you, but keeps you nearby - the mentor sees you, but he will kick you out]

-blame and shame happens in the mother's world - in the father's world - you didn't sign any contracts; you have to find a man who carries the archetypal material (like Abe Lincoln)

-you cannot initiate your sons - they have to find their own mentors - if you

reveal to them who you are, what you love, what your faults are - this makes it clear, I'm hopeless as their mentor - the boys think of you as an appendage of their mother BUT IT'S NOT SO!! If they see a bunch of us men together, they see we are wild & crazy -

-a daughter needs to be seen by father as a sexual being to know she has power, but also that she is a spiritual being - you give her a book of Plato - let her know that you have a spiritual life

These 4 ways of descent - the feeling of this -depth-sadness-grief - a giving up of so much - you teach the critic to not put you down - not let yourself be bullied by hawks; -this is a holy place - not a bad thing

What Bly says he loves: "meditation, 14th century poetry"

After breakfast

Tony Wilson tells me that: "Hillman says he does this because "these men want to learn and I want to teach - it's a real charge."

Mike Meade - a poem - Healing - I am ill because of deep emotional wounds to the soul - patience...and repentance...helps heal a wound to the soul...and free oneself...from the endless repetition of that mistake...a mistake that mankind at large has chosen to sanctify. D.H. Lawrence Collected D.H. Lawrence

Hillman - a poem "On Greed and Aggression" by Sharon Olds

Bly - "I called the man who left - we had a good talk - he's coming back"; then reads -"Son of Orion (Iron)"

-Father Poems: "Two Men Swimming"

There's a certain time in your life - and the dreamer knows - that you can do it [not be passive - now instead, rage about] NOW!

Hillman - poem: "Balls" Ann McNaughton. Best Poems of 1988 - anthology of American poetry

EMOTIONS - Hillman - a harangue

Here's a story...I'm going to my therapist, driving my little car - next to me on the freeway is a gigantic 18 wheeler - by the time I get to therapy, I arrive shaking, afraid, angry. The therapist & I talk about it. We learn I want power - (like a big tractor) - I work about my father who used to brutalize us - I work about my big and little things - my fear, my anxiety, my rage - connected to my childhood. But it never goes back to the truck.

This is a story about introverting feelings in therapy. Also, the fear (object-related) becomes anxiety (an internal state), and the outrage (about trucks) becomes rage (internal). But with fear, we cross the street safely - with outrage, we can reach out to the world.

So this moving only into the interior life in therapy, rather than understanding how the soul of the world is being effected by the transportation of lettuce out of season to Boston... this is the tendency of therapy; and depression - our lives show manic tendencies, moving very fast.

So this manic behavior is counter-phobic to depression - but depression can also be about grieving over losses, architecture, cities, ritual - losses

of beauty, of memory, losses of the soul of the world. The world carries memories - which are lost. Recall the film, "My Dinner with Andre," when a man remembers the neighborhood he had with his father & how the loss of that neighborhood breaks the continuity between the generations (his son will never see that building). So if depression were renamed, we'd call it loss - loss of the ancestors, etc. - the ancestors pulling us down -

*if we outraged more we might rage less

*if we mourned more we might be less depressed

*if we feared more we might be less anxious

About 3% of the adult male population is in the criminal justice system - we fear the criminals: we should fear a society that imprisons men at such an intense rate. Therapy could be a call of revolution - we can see emotions as reactions to the world - my spirit wants to be more radical & peculiar. I think this is the job of therapy.

-desire: Michael Meade & Robert Bly emphasize desire a lot - in therapy, we turn desires into needs - there's a cartoon of a parrot being analyzed - therapist says, "Are you sure you don't need a cracker?" A want is between a need and a desire - we a missing desire: fiery, holy, a flame - by reducing it to needs -the talons of the hawks.

So these needs and feelings all get internalized - they should be externalized - needs are on the level of the concrete - desire is mythological - the conversion of desires into needs makes us lose the capacity to stretch toward the Beyond and be inspired! Therapy begins and ends with emotions - what we do with them is the most crucial step - we need to allow them to be connected to the world (Remember: these are words from a man over 60's - "toga senilis" they used to say, in Greece!)

-appetite & eating: "tricksters" in the world are driven by their appetites - they have exaggerated appetites - inordinate appetites - the trickster's intelligence works with appetite rather than destroy it - where culture fails to satisfy desire, the trickster appears - the therapist needs to encourage inordinate desire - where culture oppresses us the appetites arise. Krishna - hunger and lust, not their restraint, reveal the trickster.

[The great thing about Alzheimer's is you can hide your own Easter eggs!]

-Appetite - our fingers, our reach, is part of how we fly - if the "puere" is shot down, the vision goes. If desire isn't fulfilled, you are trapped in concrete over-eating - the oral phase is a permanent structure, belonging to the god of appetite - appearing all through life, not just in the infant (sucking, oral, breast) phase. Ambition, fantasies (to extend your ambition) are very important. We can reduce ambition to grandiosity, and this needn't be the case.

Robert Moore said most schools of therapy suggest you "adapt yourself out of it" if you see yourself as a great person - we don't mean, "does the poem work." This doesn't allow for greatness!! Robert Frost on the day Yeats died: "Now I am King of the castle." Painters studied with the most extraordinary ones. Therapists should read the biographies of the great generals, artists, composers. You are bored with your work because it is conceived of as adaptive, rather than as of supporting desire & ambition!! Desire will get you past "does it work?"

We repress BEAUTY in our culture - But it's dangerous. Remember: where PSYCHE is, EROS is also.

Hillman - "I expected you to be using usual psychological language - that is killer language - the words of the average - or "the mean," the statistics.

Culhwch and Olwen:

Michael Meade: Remember, everything talks about doubles: Culhwch has two mothers; two haircuts; many doublings - this is a basic statement about the psyche-

So the Great Cock Giant said, go ahead, try the tasks - but you have no responsibility for food or drink or protection of Olwen. Going back to Arthur's castle, they met another giant - cut his head off. So they told Arthur about all the tasks (and they began to do them. They are looking for the oldest animal on the earth, looking for "one who has been lost, never been seen" -- finally finding him and breaking him free....

Mike: This is one of the tasks...look at what detail in the story speaks to you...the talons, the eagles struggle to let go...the age of everything older than old...the only way to get out is a battle...the king goes to get the one in pain, he comes down to do it...

Notes about drum: MEINEL: Germany - beautiful sounding conga drum

...the persistence, in spite of all the problems...sneaking around the back of it...permission to complete the task without any other responsibilities... the greatest grief being taken away at an early age, and being imprisoned - there is a prison of choice, and a prison of no choice. (Hillman: you do not choose the lower prison, you choose the upper prison) - (It's like we have to trick our psyches to find what we need - doing therapy with men, you have to intrigue the prisoner above (this is your head) to help the client then go down below, beneath: it takes the king, ruler of the world & connected to God, to lead us out of our HEAD TRAPS (not head trips). We don't want to encourage the "slandering of the head;" rather a better therapeutic image is of your holding the client's head gently in your hands. [Getting a young man to come out of being trapped in his head by honoring his head - his ideas - knowledge] -a participant points out that we are doing a lot of father-bashing here -Meade sees the Culhwch and Olwen story as "every man's story" - part of male danger - seeking by young men, the testosterone surge in adolescents - the surge can go up (risk-taking), or go down (depression, suicide)

(At the break, I talk with Bly about my comment that he is drawing passive-aggressive behavior, and his retort that it was 'a stiletto')

Me: I didn't mean to hurt you...

Bly: That's a naive way to see it

Me: So it could be anger with my own father for ignoring our dyad

Bly: Did you become more passive-aggressive?

Me: By being a hippy

: But what about your interest in Sufism

Bly: a 79 year old teacher in London, head of an order since age 26, I work with it lightly, not calling it the spirit because you don't know what spirit will come. I work with the heart - .

Robert Bly: The Male Mode of Feeling

- "feeling" has been given to women - therapist talk about problems of relationship; Eros = relationship = feminine side = women. But on the other hand, there is linearity, rational, = masculine = men = pentagon.

This is an unequal division of the goodies!

- they say "feminine side" instead of saying "feeling"

- the shallow masculine we all have - in the deep masculine, there is plenty of feeling

So women also perpetuate this by saying it also about men; so, what else have we given away to women? In Wild man, when the young man's wounded finger turns to gold, Iron John tells him that where your wound is where your gifts are - so we have also given earth & water away to women. (Jungians: "the unconscious is female," "the earth mother"). The Father, Arthur Coleman. The Egyptians had a sky mother and a sky father - an earth father & an earth mother. This is a full compliment of form - but defective mythology gives away one part to another gender - "when people say the earth is female, men have no right to live - and if God is male, women have no right to pray."

Yes, women have been in enforced passivity for centuries. They are going out of it now, when men are going back into passivity - the 60's meant men being loved for being passive.

So there is also a male mode of feeling. Jung & Freud were both mother's men - Bettelheim on symbolic wounds - yes, there was terrible tension re: father and son in Vienna! But in lots of cultures, there is plenty of fathering. Freudianism trashes the father! This is not "wrong," that men in America can be weak - but the soft male is not the final step. Hillman says women have colonized us, taken a lot of our turf - "being sensitive" is not the only way to feel. Many English departments talk about Milton's Shakespeare as Dead European White Males (DEWM's) - women are behind this. Here are some male modes of feeling - I'm just winging this:

1. Grief...it can be the door to feeling for men... a poem of feeling people remember - a poem of excitement won't be remembered. Women often feel pain., because they've been devastated - but men feel grief, grief of the animals we've killed, grief of separation from the father

2. Mythology...men need mythology...it's part of the male mode of feeling...women's world is filled by relatives & delicate perceptions - but man's imagination is not satisfied by that - it is more vivid and wild and needs stories and salmon and shit like that. Without myth we lose support for our wild imaginations.

3. FUCK THE FLOW...females go with the flow - we can learn there is a flow, but we can also see it has gone enough in a certain direction and then REVERSE the flow. Sitting Bull was hawk - an oppositional one...the trickster - women get nervous about this.

4. Acceptance of suffering as opposed to moving forward & fix it; women have a genius for moving toward it - we can not do that - it's not repressing the

pain - it's saying, yes, this hurts so what are you gonna do now? It's a tough mode.

5. Development of boundaries - weak boundaries are the disintegration of the warrior in us. If you are abused as a child, your warrior dies...but later, you are no longer 4 years old. You are an adult now - "I have boundaries now" - you have to feed and honor them because people will try to humiliate you - your warrior is out there to know when people are about to shame you. (Story re: his own development, moving from "taking criticism" to rejecting it because it's coming from one who is trying to shame him.)("You can have a right to your rage, but I can not TAKE anymore!!")

Thousands of Shirley MacLaines are channeling the rage from years of dead women who had no voice of anger. Women's idea of relationship is about merging - this is fantastic - stay there with her, merge with her after you make love - female-merging, male-boundaries - men are horny in the cock, women are horny in the head - the man's pussy in his chest tends to be closed: he receives in the heart chakra. The woman receives in her 1st chakra, and gives in her 4th chakra. Boundary is not a wall. Men can love from inside a boundary: it is transparent & flexible.

NOT ALLOWING YOURSELF TO BE SHAMED BY OTHERS

An audience member tells a joke entitled Rodeo Sex: You are making love to your wife 'dog-style,' and when you about to come, you lean over and whisper in her ear: 'last night I fucked your sister!' Then you try to hold on for eight seconds!

6. Zaniness - a precious quality in men...as we're together more we get more zany... keep your zaniness going; when women get together they get lewd, this may be a compliment

7. Abundance of desires - of wants - the myths fill this well - for women, for something else...fantastic, way out there...if you take this extravagance and prune it out then it's like guys in Russia: they've got 6 thoughts & they've had them for 25 years.

"The Will to Believe" William James: "...the exuberant excess of man's propensities..." "a quest for the superfluous" "His wants are to be trusted"

8. Shoulder-to-shoulder intimacy - two kinds of intimacy: women's kind is beautiful, eye-to-eye; man's kind is to walk with his father quietly, walking shoulder-to-shoulder

9. Quality of risk - being utterly at sea, combating the enemy - we have an impulse for risk

10. Impulse for growth - an impulse for growth & going on - to free yourself from the mother and to keep going onward - this is precious - if you don't use it, the Great Mother will eat it and become fatter. Alcoholism is a part of this, drug addiction.

David Tacey - read the intro on Patrick White's novels: -a South American story about a woman who had teeth in her vagina - the men danced her teeth out

11. Lethargy - this thing about being a time of ashes - you don't want to do anything - in some cultures this is permitted - no longer in ours - we want this lethargy - the old men should defend it.

In therapy: don't merely teach the female mode of feeling...

LUNCH: small group discussion

A psychiatrist tells a story: he has two sons. The second one's penis was circumcised in a ritual (we gave him a name, rabbi was there, we had wine) = child ok. But the first ones circumcised penis we did with a doctor & hysterical mother = child cried for 30 hours straight. [perhaps this is a story about the power of containment in ritual]

Robert Bly on SHAME

There is thought to be a difference between emotion and affect - affect of surprise or astonishment; affect of fear, of terror - there are body responses to these experiences; different cultures name different affects - anger to rage - body expands, face flushes, etc. Shame is one of these: the eyes fall & lose contact, the head drops. Read SHAME by Kauffman, Gershin

When I did I knew I wasn't an angry or a joyous person - I was a shame person - read Kauffman's book - shame is my predominate emotion. (Two stories of shame - by an audience member - shaming by a mother toward a small son. In the 19th century, Dickens, Dostoevski wrote about it: Dostoevski wrote about a visit to a whorehouse & how the whores shamed him - but in the 20th century the novelists must have given up on it - it must be very deep.

The difference between shame & guilt: in guilt, you've done one thing wrong & you can atone for it; with shame, you feel utterly inadequate as a human being - but you try to do various things to keep it from being pointed out to you.

Several ways people get shamed:

Failure to mirror - we are easily shamed as a child...your peers & teachers shame you and your "shame tanks" get really filled up, fast. For instance, if parents fail to register (to mirror) an emotion... then the child loses that feeling and feels ashamed for having that feeling. We depend on the grown-ups to re-affirm that our feeling exist.

Verbally - the adult contradicts the perceptions of the child who feels ashamed of his perception - "I'm bored" says the child

*A. Miller: Drama of the Gifted Child - when you were young, you needed something you didn't receive. You'll never get it. The proper attitude isn't rage or whining - it is mourning.

When doubling up your fist is labeled "love," then you are set as a batterer. Every act of cruelty, that the parent takes, the child interprets them as acts of love (because it is inconceivable to conceive of parents who don't love)

[Here he models his "warrior" style, "willing to kill LIKE THAT (snapping his fingers)," to defend himself against those who try to shame him. This is the warrior that defends, not the warrior that goes out aggressively and hurts

others.]

When you ask for a response and do not receive it - we think, "if I were an adequate person, I wouldn't have to ask for help, which is not coming;" a bridge falls between the two of you and the child is isolated on the other side of the river - and the adult has to repair that bridge: "You asked me for something and I didn't give it - I'm ready to give it now." This repairs that bridge. The anger of the child rises dramatically to the degree the child has been separated from you.

More sources of shame:

- * by ingesting a shame-bound parent
- * by enclosing previous shames in silence
- * a shame cycle of some period of days: you drank, you feel shamed, then you clamp down with the vows, then you bust out from below - people may not be addicted to alcohol, but to shame
- Read Facing Shame: Fossum & Mason
- so this is about how shame becomes a habit

Strategies we use to deal with SHAME:

1. internal withdrawal - Bly as a child dropped milk, ran & hid, was shaming his parents by staying gone.

So what to do with this unatoneable feeling of being inadequate? Sometimes they think you are ok, but you don't & you don't want to tell them - you don't reveal much.

Now that we have separate bedrooms in homes, you can withdraw with your shame; used to it was done all in one room & someone would take you out of it

2. anger - pushes others away - tries to decrease likelihood of more shame

3. contempt - you become superior to the one who shames you - contempt is connected with the class system - England - but it doesn't work so well. As long as one despises the other person... one doesn't mourn that love doesn't come from the other...and loneliness continues... A. Miller. (Consider that) It is your own "child" that can usually fit into the place of the one that you are contemptuous of.

4. perfection - when your shame tanks are too full, you aim for perfection, trying to make your life perfect; same in art: minimalists try to do this - shame culture produces abstract paintings. "Susanna & the Elders" by Rembrandt is a beautiful shame painting. See Addiction to Perfection: Marion Whitman on anorexia. In Tibet, you don't look for the perfect teacher - you just wait for "teacherness" to come by, like a merry-go-round - you can throw away the other 11 characters in him. We are castrating ourselves with our shame! In the Senate, look at what's happening - Wright, all those guys hounded out. Everyone has those things!

5. arrogance - passing the shame on to others - conceit = shaming a child is a way to keep the child from being demanding; here he cites his own transitions from shaming his children to being more open with them

6. power/respect - get in a position of power or respect, this is a strategy

also - if you work hard at a craft, you receive respect from people. (Bly: shamed by father and brothers - feels healed by praise from men)

7. devotion - it can be a strategy to cover shame

8. comparison - to compare myself to the great painters is to try to deal with my shame

-oh, one detail - shame can be considered as "enchantment," as by a witch - one way to deal with this to keep your eyes up - look directly in the other's eyes

Clinical Q & A with James Hillman:

On the question, "should we refer men to "men's work," still keeps it in the therapy world; support groups can keep one weak - how they are used is critical - look - there is an innate drive to leave the mother - this needs not "support" (which is mother's work), it needs inspiration or kindling for that move - we need to imagine the framework differently. The movement is the hero myth - in fairy tale - in initiation ritual. My friend Zeigler in Switzerland writes about therapy as sticky - viscous.

:about desire - yes, we do have conflicts between our desires and our responsibilities - I was an absent father - believing it's better to be true to your love than to fake it. Robert Bly has a good point about children being present while he does things, in his physical world - maybe the father's role is to provide and protect and maybe provide other fathers for the children and provide a gateway to the ancestors & also containing/protecting the children from the mother. [Laughing! I'm such a fuck-up about all this - it's amazing I'm talking about this - I wish my kids could hear it]

:about initiation - you don't do one more thing to kids - it's got to be something beautiful - try starting a drumming group, do it well - read some poetry - work a story - get a drumming teacher

:finding & kindling desires in clients - it has something to do with letting need get stronger and stronger - to express what it really wants - to feel the desire more and more fully - we have to encourage the desire AND deal with the wife's anxiety about her fear that he'll leave her to follow his desire - what does she really want? What is her desire? Sometimes we need to trust marriage as an archetypal form, rather than put so much weight into the personal relationship and working it out-

:I stopped doing therapy with people - got so much going on in my own "opus" to work with that the patient becomes an interruption - others can do it better - (right now I) feel more moved about the problems of the world-

:how to take psychotherapist & make therapists out of them?

1. do men's work
2. learn some other art form - psychology is a bastard field - as medicine,

theology, etc. disconnected from people, therapy rose up to try to take the place of "soul caring" that these other things used to do

3. learn about myth, ritual, the arts, biography, literature - build the imagination, take a pivot point from outside the place - this is the stuff John Stokes give us are great!! Tracking! These are therapist tips! oh, yes: work your language.

:dreamwork? The Jungian tradition takes everything in the dreams as part of yourself - I want to relate it more to the real world, a truck can signify a truck. Look at the dreams in terms of present desires & fears - look at what the others want in the dream - not what you in the dream want - this moves out of the egocentricity of our culture.

:keep a salty, acid eye on the models you are using - my ideas are de-structuring - I do take things apart - you may feel that personally, but I don't mean it

:the strong puere - has big ups & then collapses - don't try to ground him - teach him how to fly - help him get dedicated & loyal to his vision - these are cenex-following visions - support those - he can become a father to his own puere - the main thing is to be loyal to it, rather than ground it. The grounding happens in the dedication to what he wants.

:the weak puere - help him see he needs to separate from the mother

:the mother's son - encourage his desire

:with gang kids? - they wanna fly! - what is your countertransference? (they need a King!) What happens to you? (I feel excited to be with them.) So how to protect them so they learn how to survive - maybe in the aesthetic, in art/dancing - the beauty is needed - (maybe this could reach them)

Carnival: this night, all the clans did various dances, accompanied by drummers. The dances were various embodiments, celebrations, and grief-stricken portrayals of the men of that clan.

April 25, 1990: Early morning

Michael Meade talking to the Trout:

(Discussing men mentoring - I saw an old woman on the path here last night - she looked so blissful - I said, did you see the dancing? She said, I didn't think you'd want me to, but I loved the drumming)

Talk about the moose dancing! They were lost in their dance - going beyond themselves.

What is "sacred" in this culture? Look for the taboos...the phallus (a penis)... tells a story of a child in Seattle castrated by a crazy man, the community outraged - outraged! - a deep violation of the taboo.

taboo = infused with the sacred - too much sacred in one place - so sacred space is a place that can be set-up by ritual, but it can't be "made" - and in a sacred space taboos can be broken...

- "just keep playing - they'll never knife you while you are drumming"

anthropological word: "liminal"

- the loss-of-awareness of self in these rituals - like in sports - you can "lose yourself" [TV watching is a remnant of sacred ritual - sports figures - have lost themselves] - "liminal" - "doorway" - what the Irish called "the other world" - but you can't stay in that space. Athletes, musicians have experienced a sacred event, but they try to get it back by taking drugs - "the athlete who gets injured, that injury is God's way of closing him up again - in the Northwest - they make those in that place go into water or drink saltwater to bring them down. So we are working on closing this conference - the clan - the morning session - the groups. Eat junk food on the way home. - after a strong feeling, like staying in with your grief, the opposite will emerge - strong laughter, joy.

- one man mentions how important it is re: drumming & touching our ancestral place

- the importance of elaborating on the clan

- the hierarchical structure is the container we use - as things like remoteness, the cooking, etc. I came to the conference a few days early because things were screwed up, and I remembered what Rumi said: "Some people work hard & become wealthy
Other people work hard and become poor..." I was afraid we'd work hard and become poor!

Breakfast

Morning Meeting:

Bly requests comments re: shame and the male mode of feeling

Now they begin reading poetry:

Poem for the Trout - by Machado - "Mankind knows four things good at sea: the rudder, the anchor, the oar, and the fear of going down."

Bly on his own poem: "...it isn't published - if they're good enough, I don't publish it. You publish it to send your kids to college. Fuck it. There are enough kids in college!"

"...the moose's job is to fuck well..."

"...let the lover be... absent minded. Someone else will worry about these events going badly..." Rumi: via Ricardo Morrison

Write something when you go home about these stories - give something back to

them.

:various men read their own recent poems or those of others

Bly on poetry: your job is to go out, find an outer image, that you can bring inside...

I have lived is the lip of insanity wanting to know reasons!
I have been knocking on the door!
And it opens from the inside! -Rumi

Hillman: Jung's words near death: I am astonished-pleased-rapturous -
incapable of determining ultimate worth...There is nothing I am sure about.

The alienation process is working on all us.

Lao-tusk - all are clear - I alone am clouded. Yet there is so much that
fills me...kinships from all things...I am filled with plants, animals,
clouds, day & night...

Meade: Culhwch and Olwen

So they had just gotten Madlin out of prison. They proceeded on the
unbelievable tasks, all so interconnected, to do what they had to do. They
set out to find that Great White Boar. It and its piglets were in Ireland,
leaving a voracious track on the earth. laying waste, in a rage. The Boar &
piglets rested in a lair; Arthur sent the interpreter of tongues to ask, "Why
is it that you act in this manner?" The Boar said, "This is painful enough,
leave me be... it is well known that I was a King and that this was done to me
for my offense." And the Boar & piglets set off to destroy the center of
Arthur's realm. Arthur and the men drove the Boars near the sea - they got
the Great Boar in the water - they turned the Boar and grabbed the scissors &
comb from the great beast

The son of Arthur and many other men were lost, never seen again. When
they finished grieving that battle, and held the shears that would trim the
beard of Ysbaddaden and release Olwen to Culhwch. The last task was to get
warm blood from the Dark Witch. Arthur was going into her cave, but other men
volunteered, and came back all tangled together...as did two others. So
Arthur went himself. There was the Old Hag - she threw him into a mass of
shit and piss - he pulled her in as well - and he split her with his knife.
The dwarf took in white bottles, her blood. What remained of the men returned
to the Great Giant Ysbaddaden. They went to shave him well...to take off his
hair, his skin, his bones from the marrow itself. And they did, took off his
head...and feasted...and Olwen was brought, beautiful and sharp-eyed and soft
and rosy... Poems were said, music was made and Culhwch and Olwen were
married. And the men of Arthur dispersed, and went their own ways, to the
part of the forest that looked darkest to them.....

Poem with the line: "whoever is not killed for love is dead meat..."

Commentary on the story:

Meade: -the Old Hag - Yeats: "The raving slut that keeps the till..." She is the other side of Olwen - like Culhwch's own raving mother - the old hag has the design of the world: she would draw half the design on the ground & you have to draw the other half - if you do, you live: if you don't, you die. "taking of the hood of the hag of the world"

Bly: notice the statements the Boar makes about his rebellion against his own god - I see more hostility from 27 year old male journalists, sneering (at me) all the way - they are like this Boar, moving towards Arthur's court - wanting to destroy it, going for the very center.

Hillman: this Boar, this dark king - establishes his authority by being destructive -

Meade: this is what women are angry about - the Boar, ravishing king

Bly: (Moore) Look at the head of your department - does he admire you or does he want to be admired? A real king admires younger men...Remember also, I warn you: "There is (such a thing as) ruined human material: no matter how long you talk with them, they'll go toward the center & try to destroy it."

Hillman: "to draw "blood from the wind" suggests it can be drawn from the heights - maybe that's what Yeats did..."

STAY WITH THESE IMAGES - DON'T TRANSFER THEM INTO ONES THAT YOU ALREADY KNOW!!!

Hillman: The psyche will produce fantasies, absorb images back into a vessel that has been around for a long time - Christianity is a ghost that tried to live on the blood of one's past -

Bly: The men who went to Oregon & became chicken farmers... they are into mother

Why this is not a men's movement -

-you go your own way: don't go establish a movement or a men's center & develop a doctoral program - just meet with some men if you want to (example: small group - every six weeks renewed or ended) - don't create an institution! This is how the Moose Lodge was created!!

Hillman: "...about going into the darkest place..." these darkest places are connected...this is a similar place for everyone...you are not going off into isolation...

Meade: Look...of you read the Charter of the Elks or Moose Club, you do hear all the important parts - ritual, ceremony - but when the blood drains out, it's gone

Hillman: -CBS, the media, these are the dying ghosts that are sucking the blood out of this whole damn thing...

Meade: these things are intended to be caught in the psyche-

Bly: don't say what happened in night work - it is our job to maintain boundaries - if you want to, choose one or two events to describe that make you look like a fool - that's what they want to hear anyway - don't give it away to the witch

Meade: we don't mean don't tell your close loved ones - bring some gifts home - that will show them something happened

Break

Hillman to Perk: "You almost ruined my evening last night." (we embrace - he'd sat next to me 2X - I was cranking up his Trickster Bad Boy in Church stuff and we laughed during the sacred parts of the dance-) "we've met before, haven't we?" No, people say that to me often. "Me, too." I love you James, I told him.

*INNER CITY

Hillman: Michael, Robert Moore, Stokes, Bly I have been talking about us being successful white males - we want to do these meetings with men in inner cities - we need teachers like these men in these inner cities - we are appealing for money for scholarships for this. We have an Inner City Fund and are seeking contributions, help.

Meade: we want to prepare it more - researching - asking cross-cultural men for help - and seeking out those kinds of men - so in these inner cities, men are attacking other men and the vulnerable ones there - and we have to reach past all that

*NEXT APRIL 1991: a multi-racial men's conference: poetry-dance-drums-beauty-psychology-in Washington D.C.

:recognizing the Pacifica Institute men who hosted the conference

:recognizing the Elders...

:recognizing the Younger Men...

Men leave early - We as a group say their names back to them three times.

"Your Name Is Michael Speeth Johnson!"

Bly: We have been in mythological space (here at the conference) ...in our own half-assed way - and your reflexes will not be as good... so go tell stupid jokes, eat some junk food... we have stimulated your ancient mythological man - you can start working with your journal. Let him tell you what has touched you here - the men - the place - do it within the next 48 hours

:So, memorize some stories - go to some grade schools and tell some stories - they are drowning in female energy - Grimm Brothers, Russian Fairy Tales - notice which ones stick to you: these describe your own wounds, usually - memorize these ones - by telling these, I hear things that are true of me, when I hear them coming out of my own mouth

Tim - Don't tip over the vessel - hold this story - if you are inflated when you tell these stories, you'll get bumped -it'll take you out-

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Robert Bly/El Weirido
Mooselake, MN 55767
:tapes for this conference
:references

Sanctifying mistakes is the idea -

:a poem by Alexander Pushkin: "How I love thee..."
:a Russian joke
:the complete version of Culhwch: "Mabinogion" collection of Welsh myths, one of the oldest collections; Lady Charlotte Guest author of one collection; another by Patrick Ford - his rough & sexual parts are better; Celtic Quest by John Layard summarizes the story - with psychological implications in the Spring Pubs. catalogue
:Healing Shame by Bradshaw; a bit superficial - note other two
:Grimm Brothers: Manheim, author: Grimm's Household Tales for Young and Old
:Russian, Italian fairy tales - try to get stories that come from your own background-
 *stay away from Hans Christian Anderson - go for the older myth versions, the nasty stuff
:Broodmales by Norhall - men and pseudo-pregnancies - the male mystery of giving birth in other cultures
:Fathers & Mothers from Spring Publishers
:Hermes - very good Trickster stories - in Spring Publishers
:Homeric Hymns - first descriptions of the Greek myths - Boer, Charles, translator
:The Cult of Childhood - how we have been worshipping the child in the consulting room (by G. Boarz)
-besides reading the Greek plays - do this and see what happens to you when you read them: Pagan Meditations & Pagan Grace - by Jeanette Paris
:Hillman - Puere Papers -on the puere, essays
 -Pan & the Nightmare - re: vitality of Pan, the dancing phallic energy
 -Loose Ends - why stories are important and other essays
 -A Blue Fire - an anthology of Hillman's writings
Bly recommends - The Dream & the Underworld - your dreams & the Greek underworld
Bly: Betwixt & Between: Louise Mahdi - ritual space, essay by Turner - fine book - introduction to men & women initiation
Phallus: Eugene Monick - the genitals are part of the heavenly aphrodite - connection between male sexuality and the spiritual aspect of the phallus - it has the spirit of erection in it, like the Pantheons

Bly: On the Human Shadow
 News of the Universe - boy seeing his own eyes in the pond seeing into the intelligence of Nature
 A Man in the Black Coat Turns
Rumi Translations by Coleman Barks * Allied Press
 Unseen Rain - Rumi
 We Are Three - Rumi

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Society without the Father - the greatest book on men so far, published in 1950, Alexander Mitscherlich - this is what we have (here in this country)
D. H. Lawrence - poems by Penguin

"Performance Art is the greatest risk and the least supported of all the arts
- it needs our support" -Hillman

Ricardo: "dance studios are disappearing - go see a dance."

Saying Goodbye: the leaders each read a final poem:

Michael Meade - an increase of passion, excitement movement arises here - "do not seek too much fame or obscurity...BE PROUD, but do not remind the world of your deeds...excel when you must -but do not excel the world...to be alive & her this song: that is the victory..."

Robert Bly - "think you are a lion - you are always most beautiful when looking for food."

James Hillman - look at a mountain as it is - not as a comment on my life

Ricardo Morrison - you woke empty & frightened - take down a musical instrument, there are thousand of ways to kneel and kiss the ground
We go outdoors for the ending: we circle around the big tree stump, 30 or so feet tall, with flowers and vines growing on it. We then turn around so we are facing the outside; the leaders, then everyone else around the circle looking in eyes of each man and silently shaking hands. Many of us are crying.

Some of my own thoughts from deep in a trout pool:

-they might put the less experienced men together?
-some attention to group process might increase functioning, deepen conflict, etc.
-make it safer for the participants
-I liked the "marketplace," not having the container of the woods: - this puts us up against implementation issues when we return
-more focus on implementation in the world...

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