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Healing the Butterfly:
Reflections on the Relationship between Psychotherapy / Counselling and Christian Spiritual Direction

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Abstract

Spiritual direction, counselling and psychotherapy are all concerned in creating a helping relationship which has at its heart the facilitation of growth and transformation of the client / directee / pilgrim. It is a workout led by the client, while the therapist / counsellor / director interprets or comments upon material that the client brings to the relationship. It is a voluntary involmvement with a sense of trust between the two, creating a 'safe space' in which material is explored in a gentle and generous fashion. Christian spiritual direction presupposes a whole hinterland of faith development, prayer and the *ecclesia* that is not necessary for psychotherapy. Just as Christians need to be cautious in adopting too easily the tropes and forms of psychology, so psychologists too must be cautious about how they tread on the sacred ground of the spiritual.

Introduction

The aim of this article is to give a necessarily brief overview of the broad areas of counselling / psychotherapy (the psychological healing approaches) and their counterparts from the Christian tradition, what is often referred to as spiritual direction, accompaniment, spiritual guidance and so on (what is normally referred to here as 'Spiritual Direction' for convenience). I argue that there are many areas of overlap between these

two areas as well as difference. By surveying them as we do here we aim to show how this reveals our notions and conceptions of the *psyche* and its relationship to *spiritus.*

The Spirituality Revolution

The Australian academic David Tacey suggests that we are in the midst of what he terms a 'spirituality revolution'. He describes it as 'the emergence of the sacred as a leading force in contemporary society' which is not to be confused with 'the rising tide of religious fundamentalism' (Tacey 2003:11). 'Spirituality and fundamentalism are at opposite ends of the cultural spectrum. Spirituality seeks a sensitive, contemplative relationship with the sacred and is able to sustain levels of uncertainty in its quest because respect for mystery is paramount. Fundamentalism seeks certainty, fixed answers and absolutism, as a fearful response to the complexity of the world and to our vulnerability as creatures in a mysterious universe.' At various times in history, he suggests, the stream or hidden river of spirituality rises and falls according to its own mysterious rhythms. We live in one such time when a rising tide of spirituality is emerging on all sides. This affects all of us in society – the churches, politicians, education and our own profession, the pastoral care or 'cure of souls' as the Christian tradition has it. There are numerous responses to this rising tide of spirituality. One such has already been mentioned – fundamentalism – the grasping after illusory (usually religious) certainties as a bulwark against the uncertainities of a faith or 'higher power' that challenges all our strongly held habitual beliefs. Tacey characterizes the choice between fundamentalism and authentic spirituality as that between 'conscious intimacy and unconscious possession.' (2003: 12)

As that motley crew who are charged with the care or mending of souls – the *therapia* of the *psyche* – psychologists too are immersed in this rising tide of spirituality and need to make some response to it.

Psyche

From Freud onwards there has been a mutual suspicion and unease between the psychological and ecclesiastical professions. I referred just now to the psychotherapist as the 'therapist', literally 'healer' of the *psyche.* The original Greek word has a cluster of meanings attached to it including *breath, bright, coloured, iridescent, moving, life, spirit* and even *butterfly.*

'Holding the butterfly', or trying to pin down the mind is a difficult if not impossible process. The mind is indeed 'iridescent, sparkling and constantly changing' yet from Freud (1856 - 1939) onwards Western

culture has sought to 'pin down' the mind into particular categories. In the hundred years or so since Freud published his first papers in Vienna the science and study of psychology has flourished and developed in many different directions. The direction taken by psychology and psychologists has often depended on their attitude to what is called the *mind-body problem*, or, as the contemporary British philosopher Colin McGinn puts it 'how can the water of the physical brain be turned into the wine of consciousness?'[1] Simply put, when we consider the rich storehouses of our mental lives – dreams, fantasies, thoughts, memories, motivations etc and then look at the physical processes of a chunk of grey material the size of a cauliflower we seem to have two different materials – two different substances even – how can the two be related?

Although of great contemporary scientific and medical relevance this question is not new and has troubled philosophers for centuries, beginning with Plato (429 –347 BCE). How we respond to this question will determine our view of psychology, psychotherapy and ultimately of mind / soul. Broadly speaking, since the development of the cognitive sciences and medical approaches from the middle of the twentieth century onwards there have been roughly a branch of psychology that tries to *reduce*, or at least *limit* the functions of the mind to those of physical brain processes (much present day cognitive psychology would fall into this category) and that branch of psychology which attempts to interpret mental function without necessarily relating it to physical function (many psycho-analytic and counselling approaches would tend to fall into this category).

The 'Father of Psychology' Sigmund Freud fell into both categories. Trained originally to investigate cognitive processes through physiological means under the influence of the then fashionable ideas of Hermann von Helmholtz (1821 -1894), he later became interested in the functioning of psychic processes *qua* psychic processes. His middle to later work shows the influence of both approaches and he seems to have lived in uneasy tension between the two.

One of his earliest collaborators and original psychological thinker in his own right, Carl Gustav Jung (1875 –1961) tended to move away from reductionist views of the mind and saw mental processes as part of a larger, or in his terms, *archetypal* psyche out of which much of human civilization, development and indeed religion derives.

Following on the insights of Freud and Jung later psychologists have concentrated on key aspects of psychological development, the processes

of intellectual thought and the development of human emotion and feeling.

Many of the developments and ideas of psychology over the past hundred years seem so self-evident to us and are taken for granted that we do not realize how relatively modern they are in terms of human cultural development. We speak easily and knowingly of someone being 'extrovert' or 'introvert' and we use phrases such as 'the unconscious' or 'I unconsciously did it' without really considering what we mean by these terms. In fact, all of these terms, as used today, are relatively modern in their development[2]. Coupled with these developments of our understanding of personality we have also largely increased our understanding of the physiological functioning of the brain and how this relates to psychological functioning. The upshot of this is that we now have a vastly differing view of mind than held at any time throughout the 2,000 years of Christian history.

Spirit

As I said at the beginning, we are now living in a 'spirituality revolution'. The 'rising tide of spirituality' affects us all, especially those of us in the healing professions. We are faced with literally revolutionary views of what the mind is, how it operates and how it can be cared for. The older Helmholzian views are now being challenged in a new and radical way. The butterfly is fluttering in a full panoply of colours and our reductionist views of the mind are being challenged as never before. In this brave new world the art and teaching of the 'spiritual director' is needed as never before.

What is this 'spiritual direction' and what role does it have in today's society?

The Greek Orthodox Bishop, Kallistos Ware, puts it like this:

> There are in a sense two forms of apostolic succession within the life of the Church. First there is the visible succession of the hierarchy, the unbroken series of bishops in different cities, to which Saint Irenaeus appealed at the end of the Second Century. Alongside this, largely hidden, existing on a 'charismatic' rather than an official level , there is secondly the apostolic succession of the spiritual fathers and mothers in each generation of the Church – the succession of saints, stretching from the apostolic age to our own day, which Saint Symeon the New Theologian termed 'the golden chain.'(Hausherr 1990:vii)

Both types of succession, he argues, are essential for the true functioning of the Mystical Body of Christ (ie 'the church'). St Paul, Clement and Origen can be seen as precursors of the *pneumatikos pater* or *mater* – that word again – 'the father or mother of the butterfly'. 'So far as possible' says St Anthony, the first and greatest of the so-called 'Desert Fathers and Mothers' of the post-apostolic age: 'the monk should in full trust ask the elders how many steps to take and how many drops of water to drink in his cell, in case he is making some mistake in these matters.' The Spiritual Elder is not a rabbi who explains or applies the Torah, nor a specialist in legal advice, a mufti or imam, nor a canonist who resolves a canonical problem but rather a spiritual parent, a *mother or father* (see Hausherr1990:9). Now we can immediately see how this will bring problems to the (over-) regulated state sponsored psychologist / psychotherapist / counsellor of the present day. The 'spiritual father or mother' as understood by the early church fathers and mothers is *pneumatikos* in the Pauline sense of having their life directed to and centred around Christ in the manifestation of his Mystical Body in the Church (not in the sense of 'spiritual' as opposed to 'material' see McIntosh 1994). Here we immediately see a difference with contemporary reductionist views of 'mind' *pace* Freud. Accordingly, all the early descriptions of the spiritual father or mother do not so much emphasise what the elder *does* as who they *are.*

For Origen the *pneuma* is present through practical action (*praxis*), above all in *diakresis, discernio* or the discernment of spirits. The monk without *discernio* (Conference 2), says Cassian, is like a person wandering in a desert at night, they may fall down a precipice themselves and take others with them. Paul mentions the discernment of spirits in 1 Cor 12 and in Athanasius's 'Life of Anthony' it primarily describes the discernment of demonic activity. However, for Cassian it is a wider gift that can help the distinction between general trends of virtue or vice. For Cassian it is a 'discernment of passions'. It is not an attribute of 'grey hairs' or 'many years' but rather a gift or charism that can be imparted to anyone (See Conference 2 .8).

In the present re-emergence of the sacred in world affairs this *discernio* is probably the most important gift the Christian tradition can bring to the feast of contemporary spiritual seeking.

The art of spiritual discernment is particularly associated with St Ignatius of Loyola (1491 – 1556) in the Western Christian tradition who in the Appendix to his 'Spiritual Exercises' gave his 'Guidelines for the Discernment of Spirits' memorably condensing over a thousand years of

Christian teaching on the theme. Ignatius divides his Rules for Discernment into two categories: those for beginners (simply put, to discern the good from the bad) and those for seekers with more experience (simply put, to discern the difference between the good and the better). Simple rules of thumb from the Rules are equally valid in pastoral care, spiritual direction and even psychotherapy / counselling.

Ignatius bases his rules for discernment on the 'disposition of the soul'. Is the disposition of the soul directed towards that which is life-giving, up-building and creative or is it directed towards that which is life-denying, destructive and ultimately futile. The 'rules' which follow help the individual to assess if a particular course of action or way of life leads to a building up of the self or to greater disintegration and fragmentation.

In my own work as a therapist I often have to work with these sorts of choices in people's lives. Someone may be pursuing a way of life that they find exciting and fun but ultimately it is becoming destructive. Ignatius cautions us to look at the *effects* of any action or decision and this is the basis of much discernment. Similarly, Teresa of Avila (1980, see also Tyler 1997:90) in the 'sixth mansion' of her *Interior Castle* stresses that we should not so much pay attention to the spiritual experiences that we have as the *after-effects* that they have upon us. Are they bringing us a greater sense of peace and fulfilment or are they leading to more unhappiness and dissatisfaction?

In these periods of dissatisfaction there is often a desire to go back on decisions made when all was going well, the sun was shining and the birds were singing. Now, as the rain pours down and the skies are gloomy (metaphorically speaking) we go back on the decision made 'in consolation'. Ignatius cautions against this and gives one of his 'rules' as follows:

> (318) 'When we find ourselves weighed down by a certain desolation, we should not try to change a previous decision or come to a new decision… At a time of desolation, we hold fast to the decision which guided us during the time before the desolation came on us.' (Ignatius of Loyola 1980:118)

However:

> 'Although we should not try to make new decisions at a time of desolation, we should not just sit back and do nothing. We are meant to fight off whatever is making us less than we should be... The important attitude to nourish at a time of desolation is patience.'

Likewise, when all is going well, when we experience a certain spiritual peace and 'can see the bottom of the well' we should use this time wisely to make plans as a bulwark against possible future times of 'desolation':

> (323) 'When we are enjoying a consolation period, we should use foresight and savour the strength of such a period against the time when we may no longer find ourselves in consolation.' (Ignatius of Loyola 1980:119)

Such 'periods of consolation' should be distinguished from the technical working out of plans that follow them:

> (336) When the consolation experience in our life comes directly from God, there can be no deception in it… A spiritual person should be careful to distinguish between the actual moment of this consolation-in-God-himself from the afterglow which may be exhilarating and joyful for some period of time.. it is often in this second period of time that we begin to reason out plans of action or to make resolutions which cannot be attributed so directly to God as the initial experience which is non-conceptual in nature.'

Ignatius spoke and wrote in the language of late medieval theology, his psychic world is populated with angels, demons, good spirits and bad spirits. At first sight this may seem to put him beyond use to contemporary seekers. Yet, it is possible to distil the psychological wisdom and good common-sense advice that he gives from his work, a wisdom drawn not only from long personal experience of directing individuals but distilled from over a thousand years of Christian thought and reflection on this area. Time and again when working with clients in psychotherapy and pastoral counselling sessions I find myself returning to these simple rules which are especially helpful when people are making difficult decisions in their lives. In such cases I advise people to ponder on the different outcomes and observe *the effects on their feelings*. In many cases we have this intuitive awareness, but we have been taught not to trust our intuition. Such exercises can help us embrace the spiritual wisdom that each of us holds as our birthright.

This article began by considering some notions we may have of *psyche* from the psychological 'tradition' of the past 100 years. We then considered how *spirit*, in particular in the role of the 'spiritual elder' has been considered in the early Christian tradition. It is now time to juxtapose these two and see how far these two traditions can interact or remain distinct in our own practice.

Spiritual Direction and Psychological Models - Similarities

Before talking about the role of the 'spiritual director' it is worth pointing out that I use the label of 'spiritual director' largely out of convenience – we could equally refer to the *pneumatikos pater / mater,* the accompanier, the *Anam Cara* (literally 'Soul Friend', see Leech 2001: 2), the spiritual guide and so on. Kenneth Leech sums it up as 'the name given to a personal relationship between two people in which one assists the other to grow in the spiritual life'. When we consider spiritual direction as it is practiced in the West today it is important to recognise that despite its independent origins it has often adopted the forms, practices and methods of the psychological 'talking cures' created after Freud. Before talking about any differences it is important to remember similarities (I am indebted to the work of David Lonsdale in this section, see in particular his *Dance to the Music of the Spirit*, DLT 1992). Spiritual direction, counselling and psychotherapy are all concerned in creating a helping relationship which has at its heart the facilitation of growth and transformation of the client / directee / pilgrim. It would seem odd to embark on any of these relationships, with all their time and money commitments, without expecting some sort of transformative process to occur. In all these interactions one person is putting certain knowledge and skills at the service of another, this is largely through one to one meetings although group discernment / direction / therapy may also be used. Words, the *logos*, is of fundamental importance to the process. Yet, as we saw above, there is a choreography between words and silence. The Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, a contemporary of Freud, wrote that 'what can be said, cannot be shown and what cannot be said can be shown' (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*). He suggested that the meaning of language and human communication derived from the choreography of what is spoken and what is unspoken. In both spiritual direction and counselling / therapy we pay as much attention to what is *not* said as to what is said.

All forms of work are client led in that the therapist / counsellor / director interprets or comments upon material that the client brings to the relationship. The involvement is voluntary and not coerced and there must be a sense of trust between the two to create a 'safe space' in which material can be explored in a gentle and generous fashion. The relationship is not value free and there will be an unequal power relation in the interaction which needs to be acknowledged for a healthy and fruitful relationship to develop. Certain boundaries have to be observed and common norms of good practice are assumed. To a certain extent the therapist / counsellor / director should have already travelled some of the road upon which the other person is embarking, or should at least have

some experience of the areas under discussion. Success in all cases depends upon the ability of the therapist/counsellor/director to reflect experientially upon material as well as having intellectual knowledge of the subjects raised. As the medievals said, the *affectus* is as important as the *intellectus.*

Accordingly, then, we can see many similarities between the different healing relationships. However, it is possible to cite differences as well between the two approaches.

Spiritual Direction

As we have seen there is a 'golden thread' of spiritual direction that stretches from apostolic times to the present day. In Christian terms it takes place within a *faith context* and this cannot be overstressed enough. It *assumes a shared faith context* between the two people involved. It also takes place against the background of the larger 'mystical Body of Christ', the church. It is a charism given to certain people and the ministry itself is not intended for all people at all times. It may be appropriate for certain people at certain times in their lives, especially times of increased or rapid spiritual change such as middle age or old age. The revelation of God in the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is essential to understanding spiritual direction in the Christian context and it employs knowledge of that life through use of scripture, reference to liturgy and so on. Spiritual direction in the Christian tradition has an important *catechetical* role as well as a therapeutic role (we can add 'teacher' to the 5 roles mentioned above). Traditionally three persons are involved in the Christian relationship of spiritual direction – the director, the directee and the Holy Spirit. Of the three relationships involved, that between the Holy Spirit and the directee is considered the most important. This holds the key dynamic of the relationship and drives a lot of what happens in the meetings (ie the meetings reflect upon the material that has arisen in that relationship). We could say that the Holy Spirit is the true director in Christian spiritual direction. Central to this process, as we have seen, is *diakresis* or discernment.

In summary then, spiritual direction in the traditional Christian sense assumes the following:

- That the process takes place within the context of a shared and mutual faith relationship.
- Importance is given to the faith relationship between the directee and the 'higher power' of the Holy Spirit. This is seen as the source of all that happens in the process.

- The direction takes place within the theological context of the life, ministry, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ
- And within the context of the community of His believers – the church.
- It relies on specific processes and techniques, especially the discernment of spirits.
- It is a 'charism', a 'golden thread' or gift of the Spirit that extends from apostolic times to our own times.
- It is an activity that relies upon and presupposes engagement in prayer and contemplation from both the participants, it holds *contemplatio* at its centre (See Tyler 2007).

Finally, we can add that spiritual direction within the Christian tradition spiritual direction is not seen as something that necessarily only benefits the people taken part. As part of a wider community or ecclesial context the activity may allow discernment on what 'the Spirit is saying to the churches' and allow the whole church to discern 'the signs of the times'. All who engage in Christian spiritual direction do so not only for themselves but for the whole ecclsesial community. It therefore has an important *prophetic* dimension (See Brueggemann 2001)

Psychotherapy / Counselling

Again, I am lumping together various disciplines here for the sake of convenience. However what we are basically talking about here are the psychological healing schools that develop in the post-Freudian context. As we saw above the form these take, and especially the language they adopt in how they talk about *psyche*, will often depend on their attitude to the mind-body problem we mentioned earlier.

Donald Winnicott, the eminent British Object Relations theorist of the 20th century responded to the question 'What do we do in psycho-analytic treatment?' in a talk to the British Psycho-Analytical Society in 1962 with the following:

> In doing psycho-analysis I aim at:
>
> Keeping alive
>
> Keeping well
>
> Keeping awake.
>
> I aim at being myself and behaving myself. Having begun an analysis I expect to continue with it, to survive it and to enjoy it. I enjoy

> myself doing analysis and I always look forward to the end of each analysis. Analysis for analysis's sake has no meaning for me. (Winnicott 1979:166)

Despite his somewhat flippant response his answer contains many truths of psychotherapeutic treatment. First and foremost that it is a *clinical* intervention. To embark on therapy 'for therapy's sake' would be slightly perverse. It arises out of specific, often very painful situations that need treatment or alleviation. It would be an odd person who embarked on the huge time and cost of therapy because they just wanted to see what would happen. Most people who arrive for therapy with me are reluctant or come as a last resort having tried other ways of alleviating their problem and failed. Likewise, as Winnicott states, there comes a point where therapy ends – unlike spiritual direction which can proceed for many years. In therapy there ought to be a clear cut off point, a point where we say 'therapy comes to an end' once its clinical work is done.

The second distinctive characteristic of counselling / therapy is the range of 'tools' that it uses to achieve its ends. As we saw above spiritual direction uses speech, silence, prayer and methods such as discernment. Both therapy and spiritual direction are based on *logos* – speech, word and communication – that Wittgensteinian choreography of saying and showing that we mentioned earlier. Carl Rogers (1902 -1989) the founder of 'humanistic' or 'person centred' therapy, after much observation of the communication process isolated what he called three basic 'facilitating conditions' for good listening: empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence. Much therapy / counselling training places emphasis on developing these core conditions. Now of course these are found in spiritual direction, but in therapy sometimes the form overrides the content. We may need to concentrate on the basic processes of listening before we attend to the transcendental or transpersonal aspects of the communication. Therapy / counselling does not begin with the Holy Spirit, or indeed presuppose any specific theological framework. Its 'dark materials' are the stuff of human interaction and relationship. Thus the therapist will work on their 'core facilitating conditions' by concentrating on reflecting back, paraphrasing, making connections, open questions and so on.

In this act of concentrating on 'process' as much as 'content' the early pioneers of counselling / therapy, starting with Freud, noticed a key phenomenon that took place during the interaction. What Freud in the ' Intoductory Lectures on Psychonalysis' (Freud 1991) termed the *Transferenz.* Here he describes it as 'the transference of feelings on to the

person of the doctor, since we do not believe that the situation in treatment could justify the development of such feelings. We suspect, on the contrary, that the whole readiness for these feelings is derived from elsewhere, that they were already prepared in the patient and, upon the opportunity offered by that analytic treatment, are transferred on to the person of the doctor' (1991:494). From Freud onwards the perception and isolation of the transference, and corresponding counter-transference, has been refined and developed by successive waves of therapists and therapies. Again, this is not to say that transference / countertransference is not an important factor in spiritual direction, but rather to say that in psychotherapy / counselling it is placed far more centre stage and it is difficult to imagine a form of this therapy that did not pay attention to these processes in a way that does not seem so essential to spiritual direction. Indeed, the formal, rigorous and strict 'boundaries' of therapy / counselling (we do not meet the client for social events outside the clinical setting, we reveal little about ourselves, we have a set time and place for meeting, a fixed fee etc.). All this induces and encourages the transference whereas the very looseness and more informality of spiritual direction will tend towards 'spiking' this. I am not adverse to meeting my directees outside of direction either in church settings or social gatherings, am more flexible about the meeting time etc and reveal an awful lot of my own story and journey in the spiritual direction setting. In this respect I am not alone and know that many other spiritual directors operate a similar flexibility of boundaries in spiritual direction that is rarer within the psychological setting.

Staying with the 'tools' of therapy, again we find a whole battery of techniques and methods, refined and developed within each branch of therapy that are not so common within spiritual direction. Freudian, post-Freudian and Object Relations schools will emphasise what Michael Jacobs calls the 'presenting past' (See Jacobs 1999). That is to say, the importance of regression, looking at basic stages of childhood development and how they are linked to present day neuroses. Freud famously talked of the oral, anal and genital phases of development. Klein introduced the Paranoid-Schizoid and Splitting elements whereas Reich talks of the basic 'character structures' and their relationship to early developmental phases. Questions in therapy / counselling such as 'How old do you feel right now?' and 'What happened to you at this age?' will help articulate unarticulated early fears, fantasies and desires.

A third place where the emphasis shifts in therapy from spiritual direction is the encounter with the here and now. In spiritual direction our emphasis,

rightly so, is upon the spiritual and transpersonal elements of the self. In therapy / counselling by contrast the whole person is taken into account with its four modes of existence – body, mind, heart and spirit. Depending on the school, again therapy / counselling cannot afford to ignore the 'bodywork' of therapy (See Dychtwald 1986) Even in the most unbody-orientated therapy the therapist must be aware of bodily reactions to the therapy situation – headaches, backaches, dizziness etc that occur throughout the session. Similarly, the perennial question 'how do you feel now?' is the lodestone that guides the therapist through the developing relationship of trust in the consulting room.

Fourthly, the psychological therapies from their inception have been concerned to develop 'life maps' for steering and conceptualising the processes of individual development. Jung in the essay 'The Stages of Life' (Jung 1953) developed his idea of a evolution of the self throughout life by a 'growing over' or beyond of the 'ego'. This notion of 'individuation' has allowed many models of individual development to occur, often influenced by the work of Erikson and Kohlberg. Although the Christian tradition has its own notions of transformative development, most notably in the model of the 'threefold path' of mystical development (See Tyler 2005) it is to psychological models that religious commentators have turned to in recent years to understand human development and potential and how this can best be expressed in the therapeutic situation (See, for example, Fowler 1996).

In summary then, we can isolate the following four characteristics as peculiar to the psychological therapies:

- The clinical nature of therapy / counselling
- Its use of particular tools suited to its own approach. Often placing as much if not more emphasis on process rather than content.
- Its use of the four modes of existence, not just the transpersonal and spiritual
- Its use of psychological life maps to direct its work.

Having isolated certain particular characteristics of both the psychological therapies and spiritual direction it is not necessary to see where this leaves us for our own work, especially in regard to our views of *spiritus* and *psyche*.

Conclusions – Spirit and Psyche, Similarities, Differences and Synergies

As will be apparent by now, the basic argument of my article has been that spiritual direction and psychotherapy are two approaches, methodologies or entrances into the worlds of *psyche* and *spiritus*. It is no accident that one has Greek roots in the night, mystery and *Psyche's* nocturnal and secret visitations to the sleeping *Eros*, whilst the other emerges in the Latin world with its fascination with other religions and order. I have argued that there is much in common between the two processes. Both are helping 'cures' that aim to give space to the individual to explore their own journey largely through the choreography of the *logos* in 'saying and showing'. Yet I have emphasised that there are crucial divergences as well between the two approaches. Christian spiritual direction presupposes a whole hinterland of faith development, prayer and the *ecclesia* that is not necessary for psychotherapy. The psychological therapies, on the other hand, explore the minutiae of interpersonal interaction to such a precise extent that its analysis is brought to a refined science. The codification and systemisation of transference, countertransference, developmental issues and individuation gives us a highly refined tool to engage in interpersonal discourse as never before. Yet, I would argue, to subsume *spiritus* into a province of *psyche* or see all of *psyche* as a manifestation of *spiritus* is a grave mistake. The past ten years have seen a growing trend to equate the action of the Holy Spirit with good mental health. This *may* be the case, but as they used to say, it ain't necessarily so. 'The spirit (pneuma) blows where it will' we are told in John's Gospel. Who are we to restrict the action of God's spirit to a particular consulting room with a particular registered person at a particular time slot on a particular week day? The spirit blows where it will and the true *pneumatikos pater / mater* must sniff the spirit where it blows, this *may* be in the spiritual direction consulting room, but it may equally well be on the tube train, in the park, at the post office or in the pub.

In summary, as we see in church circles a tendency to adopt the rigours and professonalisations of therapy / counselling to the ancient practices of spiritual direction I would counsel a little caution. As a working model I would finally prefer to see spiritual direction as a form of *befriending* which by its nature will sometimes have to transcend or transgress the firm boundaries of therapy / counselling.

Just as Christians need to be cautious in adopting too easily the tropes and forms of psychology, so I would argue that psychologists must be

cautious about how they tread on the sacred ground of the spiritual. As argued, psychologists may want to see 'spirituality' as a province of 'good mental health' but, I argue here, this can never be possible. The Living Spirit of the Lord will, by definition, always resist such tendencies, leading it's followers 'where it will'. As psychologists rush to incorporate the spiritual into their practices a certain caution is counselled that the original rawness and strangeness of the Living Spirit of God is not lost as She becomes over-domesticated in the consulting room, hospital and clinic.

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