

Fear and Primordial Trust

From Becoming an Ego to Becoming Whole

Monika Renz

First published 2022

ISBN: 978-1-032-00963-6 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-17657-2 (ebk)

Chapter I

The human being: a citizen of two
worlds (claim)

(CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003176572-1



The human being: a citizen of two worlds (claim)

Abstract

Before and behind our normal, ego-bound mode of being lies a non-dual, timeless world. This lies beyond sensory perception and consciousness and is the spiritual origin of humankind. This chapter discusses the two modes of being (non-dual and ego-bound) and the transition between them. We internalize these modes, which thus become part of our soul. I conceptualize these two modes in terms of psychic layers: the non-dual is our basis, while the ego-bound mode of being corresponds to our everyday consciousness. In between lie various stages of changed perception, such as dream consciousness and musical sensitivity. Near-death experience (NDE) illustrates the non-dual modes of being and our longing for this other world. Especially music touches us deeply: we are capable of hearing even in the non-dual mode of being. Our sensitivity for sound and music increases in the liminal sphere. These two facts provide music therapy with a special opportunity to reach deeper levels of the psyche. Chapter 1 concludes with an overview of the developmental perspective, and of different experiences of being and their respective psychic layers, language, and symbols.

1.1 Humankind, an explosive concept

What or where were we before we became human? Does human existence begin with procreation and end with death? Or does something inside us transcend our existence and its duration? Our concept of humankind determines whether we assume that nothingness begins and ends life, or whether something final and whole epitomizes substance and energy. Although experiences shape us and our view of the world, the opposite also applies: our concept of humankind determines how we interpret our experiences and whether these perhaps represent quite another reality, that of a sacred and spiritual realm. In this book, I speak of a *non-dual*, timeless mode of existence. This lies beyond sensory perception and is the spiritual origin of humankind (section 1.2). Although this mode lies beyond consciousness, non-dual “reality” is ubiquitous—and might be understood as a “completely different way

of existence.” Within us, something knows (about) this utterly different state, from which we emerge—and to which we return.

The child emerges from this Wholly Other and gradually enters our world and mode of perception. The beginnings of human development are determined by our closeness to this entirely different realm. Human development (individuation, socialization) means that we must first *enter* the human mode of existence—with our body, our senses, and our feelings. Our organism develops, and our self-awareness must first awaken. Only this enables us to perceive, to feel, to react, and to convey messages of our own.¹

What follows explores our *ego-bound existence*. Being a person represents the ego-bound mode of being. Basically, our sensory and even our bodily sensations and reactions are ego-bound (section 1.3). Ego-bound means subjective. In general, perception thus refers to an ego, to rudiments of an ego, and to our own body. Consciously or unconsciously, we perceive from our own perspective, on our own terms—rather than, for instance, as a medium. We see, hear, smell, and feel with our body—and as such experience ourselves more or less consciously as an ego. We also communicate and act as who we are. We protect ourselves and eat to satisfy ourselves. We act on our own accord and fulfill our instincts. Our body embodies us. We have our own voice, odor, and brain. Our life is guided, consciously or unconsciously, by the fact we are ourselves, that is, individuals.

Thus, our ego-boundness or self-centeredness, which seems self-evident to us in the Western world, is neither the solely valid nor the purely original mode of being. It is instead already an important outcome of early human development. The child gradually grows into this state, the dying person leaves it again.

When emerging from the Wholly Other into this world and into itself, the child undergoes a *transition* (section 1.4). This begins in the womb, where it experiences the first kinds of differentiation. Ego-boundness and the various preliminary stages leading to this state develop long before we can speak of an ego. This transition takes a long time. It is not completed until ego-bound perception has asserted itself in the waking state—and until the child has adopted that relationship with reality that our everyday consciousness and perception consider valid. In our culture, this transitional process as a rule ends at school. The child, now living entirely in the ego, knows that night equals darkness, and that ghosts are fairy-tale figures.

By transition, I mean an *inner process*, one that occurs as our body forms. The main feature of this process is that the mode of perception changes completely. I call this a *transformation of perception*. My approach divides transition into different stages of becoming conscious, which in turn constantly transform the child’s (infant’s, toddler’s) experience (chapters 3–6).

The transition takes place in the liminal sphere between non-duality and ego-boundness. Even after the transition has been completed, the liminal sphere still belongs to the world of human experience (section 1.5). Far

removed from consciousness, it is ever present within us. We fall into this liminal sphere whenever we enter deep sleep or a coma (section 1.6), and above all in the process of dying. I speak of liminal experiences (Renz, 2016). However different, the experiences of the newborn and of the dying are similar in that they are shaped by their closeness to the Wholly Other.²

The *preliminary stages of ego-boundness* are also experienced by animals, and even by plants. They, too, react in their own interests, as is evident in the animal's self-preservation instinct or in plant growth. It is thus perhaps more appropriate to speak of "self-centeredness." Adult humans *speak* about themselves and *know* themselves. The animal *acts* in its own interest. The flourishing or withering plant indicates that it, too, has a sense of well-being and discomfort. Ego-boundness, a significant achievement of evolution, is inconceivable without its preliminary stages. A transition also occurred in collective development: namely, during those evolutionary eras in which a consciousness of self and its threatened existence, of material things and individual objects, of the ego and its realities, and of the patterns of nature gradually developed. This phylogenetic process of gaining consciousness may be assumed to have extended across millions of years.

1.2 Non-dual existence: participating in the Whole

"Holistic" has become a catchword in our culture. Many of us long for more holistic forms of life and for holistic healing. It is a sign of our times that we feel that our worldview and way of life lack something fundamental. The word "holistic" is associated with our physical-psychic-mental unity (head-heart-hand). But its meaning is much more far-reaching. The word "whole" is therefore more productive, as it means "all-embracing" and "encompassing polarities." The Whole encompasses more than our earthly reality and temporality. Nothing is missing nor split-off from the Whole. Here, no duality exists (i.e., black versus white, top versus bottom). I therefore also refer to this mode of being as *non-duality*. This is bound neither to the ego nor to the body. Eluding neurophysiological grasp, it describes an ultimately unfathomable state in which everything is one and whole.³ Consequently, it means participating in God as the Whole. In the pure non-dual mode of being, the human being as such does not yet exist or no longer exists. Part of what enters nascent human life, and which belongs (or belonged) to it, is still or has always been present. It belongs to the Whole, although differently.

As human beings, we are always unconsciously related to this non-dual mode of being. We are citizens of an ego-bound world and at the same time forever part of the Whole. In non-duality, however, we do not feel as an ego. Our body has no boundaries. We are neither fully aware of "ourselves" nor able to pursue our own intentions. Inasmuch as we are guided or governed by our own consciousness, the Whole (God) remains inaccessible to us. Even if we somehow "re-experience," "sense," or "integrate into" non-dual states,

these only ever affect us fragmentarily, from our momentary perspective. In absolute wholeness, there is only that which is, the all-encompassing, all-pervasive One. Thus, while we can never consciously feel the Whole, we can delve into another world to a limited extent and experience the mode of experience valid there. Sometimes, this happens during meditative immersion, in hallucinogen-induced experiences, in sexual union, in trance-like states, or in extreme shock or ecstasy. Dreams and imaginations may also sometimes lead us into the liminal sphere of the Whole and into non-duality. Here are two examples:

During therapy, Christoph, aged 45, had the following vision:

The scene is a large round square surrounded by a city wall. A female and a male path lead around the square at whose center lies a black sphere, embedded in a triangular cubic-like igloo tent. Despite its blackness, light emanates from the central sphere. The light now approaches me. Touched by this, I can no longer tell whether this Something is sound or light. I am no longer able to distinguish opposites like motion and rest, above and below, left and right, individual colors, or different sensations.

Here is how one woman described what she felt while listening to continuous, pulsating drumming during two hours of music-assisted relaxation:

I am physically so full that I feel empty at the same time. Everything flows. I feel so full of life that I almost lie there as if I were dead. I could barely lift my arms or legs. I no longer know whether I am lying on my stomach or back, whether the drum is outside me or identical to my heart. It is neither pleasant nor unpleasant. It simply *is* and yet still fine. As if my body had fallen asleep, and as if I was still completely conscious.

In non-duality, and already in its liminal sphere, the limits of feasibility, of gravity, and of our body are eliminated. Individual aspects have blurred, oppositions are no longer perceptible, and the laws of cause and effect are invalid. Our own shape, if it exists at all, seems altered. Here, in non-duality, the atmosphere is important: a solemn event, a blue light, a clear vision. Atmospheric tensions also become apparent, and therefore are omnipresent (muggy air, a brewing storm). Unlike atmospheres, forms and shapes have contours and boundaries, and hence are further removed from the Whole. The spatial dimension plays a more important role than the temporal one in the liminal sphere. Time seems suspended. Past, present, and future act in unison—while temporal boundaries blur (see the notion of oceanic boundlessness (Dittrich & Scharfetter, 1987, p. 38)). However, in the pure non-dual state, spatial experience is also overcome and no longer bound to any locality. Experience is now non-local, all-encompassing.

In deep dreams, the impossible becomes possible: people fly across the sky and the deceased come to life. The dream-ego is active and at the same time observes events from without. Previously unseen animals and hybrid creatures now appear. Some dreams take place on two distinct levels: one lower, the other higher; one superficial, the other enigmatic. The dream-ego is situated on both levels. The stranger dream patterns seem, the closer a particular dream approaches non-duality. This mode (i.e., the Whole) also consists of what the ego perceives as utterly foreign and extrasensory. Even if the ego acts out, perceives, and thinks all its possibilities, it only ever grasps a part of the Whole. Although it is inaccessible to the ego, what exists beyond ego-bound realities—in the Whole, in God—is nevertheless part of non-duality. The ego can only ever touch the liminal spheres of the Whole and thereby be touched.

My work as a therapist and spiritual carer has taught me that clients who make such limit-experiences often also experience themselves differently. For instance, “I no longer exist, but I am there, part of the cosmos.” Or “I feel what the tree feels, but I am not a tree.” They feel connected to stones, animals, and spirits. As if they knew—to cite Goethe’s *Faust*—“what in its innermost gathers the world and holds it fast” (Part I). And yet, words alone never suffice to describe what we feel in such moments. Seen thus, those who make such experiences are both celebrants and sufferers. They are filled with the enthusiasm, peace, and tension that inheres in the Whole. So close to and so entangled with the Whole leaves their feelings brimming, making them no longer distinctly perceptible (for examples, see Renz, 2015). Everything becomes part of the all-encompassing Whole. Nothing remains outside, nothing emerges as itself. In this state, we have lost any sense of self, any sense of form and purpose.

Non-duality—as near-death experiences, among others, tell us—is central to human longing and nevertheless overwhelms us. We find this state intolerable for as long as we are human. Our sense of absorption, of sinking into this condition, and of completely losing our sense of self overpowers us. While we can participate in the mystery of the Whole, we can never really feel or understand it. Human consciousness is too limited. Even liminal experiences “tell” us that we can neither “stand above” nor “talk about” them. The mystery of the Whole eludes us. It simply *exists*, and we must accept it as precisely that.

Across the world, what I am calling the Whole has many names: God, Yahweh, Allah, Mother Earth, Great Mother, undivided being, energy, light, life. Although these designations capture the underlying concepts, at least in part, they fall short of what the Whole ultimately is. Common to these various ideas is their sense of the Whole as all-encompassing, as complete, as eternally true, as infinitely large, and as unfathomable. In face of the Whole, we feel small. Depending on our culture and background, we feel safe and secure, borne, or instead sinful or even futile toward the Whole. Rudolf Otto (1923,

p. 10) referred to the latter experience as “creaturely feeling”—that is, how the creature feels when it descends into its own nothingness and fades away from what defines all creatures. Otto describes this greatness in terms of several qualities: the numinous, the terrible, the overwhelming, the energetic, the Wholly Other, the antinomic, the mysterious, the wonderful, the sacred, and so on (*ibid.*). We struggle to grasp, in broad enough terms, what the Whole might be, or indeed what it might be like. It is first and foremost *whole* and thus contains everything and lacks nothing. None of its contents are superfluous. And it is *undivided*. As such, we might imagine the Whole as the inexplicable coincidence of opposites or as unquestionable distinctions. Otto speaks of “contrast-harmony” (p. 36).

What is the Whole? I have observed that many people are less afraid of terms like “cosmos,” “transcendence,” or “creative nothingness” (Schellenbaum, 1991, p. 175) than of the word “God.” In search of spirituality and the expansion of consciousness, many people prefer not to enter into a relationship with God or to commit themselves to the Whole. In doing so, however, they not only reject religion but also face a deep emotional problem: they can neither bear to feel nor to endure a Thou.

What, I wonder, makes this so difficult? As I wish to show in this book, more lies behind our unease to call God by name than merely an enlightened or esoteric *zeitgeist*. Our plight in this regard reveals that the relationship between the human being and the Whole has been unsettled. In the past, the Whole was experienced increasingly as a threat: during transition (in the history of humanity and individually). It therefore needed to be played down—and still is. If, on the other hand, we speak of “cosmos” (instead of God/Wholeness), the ego feels less obliged to commit to absoluteness. While we feel freer to breathe, live, and create, we do not realize that or when our ego overestimates itself (inflation, megalomania).⁴ The ego is easily misled to shirk the necessary developments and feels free. And yet, this freedom is illusory. For no commitment means that the ego is neither relativized nor limited. There is neither a vocation nor a higher mission, nor any experience of being loved and addressed by an outermost counterpart.

The Whole is whole. It dissolves boundaries within us and means that God is an autonomous force. It comprises both a *pantheistic* and a *personal* aspect. Wholeness is everything: *being, relationship, energy*. It encompasses being and becoming, the protective and the emerging, that which grants, eternally, and that which calls. Every image of God concerns the unviewable in its own particular way and foregrounds a part of the Whole. No matter how cultures and people call this Other, it is important that images and designations approach what connects the essence of the Whole and polar opposites. Even the original Whole contains the seemingly “Other,” the antinomic, or that which emerges only later. Otherwise, it would not be complete. Rhythm inheres in primordial sound, time in primordial space, transcendence in eternity, the son in the mother, the human being in God. Only an outermost and at the

same time innermost relatedness of polar opposites really makes the Whole whole. Holistic means all-encompassing in an inconceivable totality. Holistic being is undivided participation in the Whole because it means being part of God.

In non-dual reality, even good and evil are inseparable and therefore neither exists on its own. There is no question of good or evil. Perhaps a primordial state, palpable in the togetherness of good and evil, is to some extent unsolved and unredeemed. Does the unresolved exist in God? Or an original tension in the original state? Does a force inhere in the Whole that urges toward development and humanization?... So that creatures may themselves help shape creation and become God's counterpart? Does a striving for consciousness inhere in the Whole?

God
Creator of all things
You are not
Good
You are not
Bad
You are *Rose Ausländer* (1988, p. 124)

1.3 Ego-bound existence: facing the world as who we are

Ego-bound existence and experience develop and are distinct from timeless non-duality. The former refers to our familiar—physical and sensory—existence in the here and now. We become ego-bound as soon as we are capable of unconscious or conscious perception, and of reactions of our own. We take for granted that we live and experience as who we are, and possess our own center. We feel united with the world and other living beings at best momentarily or during temporary liminal experiences. Deep mediumistic abilities, dreams, visions, or psychotic liminal states are long-awaited or even feared exceptional states. They confirm that ordinary human feeling is different, more limited, centered, and structured in its own particular way. By ego-bound, I mean precisely this structured existence. According to Daniel Stern (1985), we process our experiences instinctively, so “that they appear to belong to some kind of unique subjective organization that we commonly call the sense of self” (p. 6). He also speaks of an “invariant pattern of awareness,” of a “form of organization” (p. 7).

Ego-boundness (i.e., ego-centeredness) is the basis of human feeling. In terms of developmental psychology, it is the *precondition* for ego-consciousness.⁵ For me to feel like an individual on my own terms requires a corresponding perception of the world. To the ego-bound person, the world appears as the surrounding world, as the world around us. And we obviously consider our fellow humans to be a counterpart, a “Thou.”

The ego corresponds to everyday consciousness. Christian Scharfetter (1994) has connected the ego, perception, and the state of consciousness as follows:

We do not have consciousness, but are embodied consciousness. This consciousness is in constant flux.... If we are awake and focused on everyday reality, we are in so-called day-consciousness or everyday consciousness, in which the categories of space, linear time, and causality... apply. In this everyday consciousness we experience our personhood,... the temporary constellation of characteristics and functions, which we call "ego." Our orientation in this... day-consciousness is... rational. (p. 16)

The mature feeling of being an ego is preceded—as many processes of development and maturation reveal—by the development of ego-boundness: already the unborn child, which hears and moves, “develops toward itself.” Likewise, the newborn, which feels hungry or cries to express its needs, is ego-bound in such moments, whereas in others it is still in the non-dual state. Even animals and plants grow partly into this mode of being. They, too, are organized by a center within themselves. According to Stern (1985), *a sense of self* also exists in preverbal form (see pp. 6–7). This tangible experiential reality of substance, action, sensory impression, affect, and time (p. 71) also develops in numerous higher animal species.

With plants and animals, we do not speak of an “ego.” Precisely this, however, shows that the ego needs not be fully developed for ego-bound perception⁶ and reaction to begin functioning. When the plant reaches up toward light out of the shade, this indicates its ability to differentiate and its tendency to ensure its own well-being. This is even more evident with the animal as it prepares to fight. Only the extent of “ego-bound” feeling and consciousness differs.⁷ However, varying degrees of consciousness in humans and animals do not change the fact that the evolutive process from non-duality to ego-boundness also includes animals and plants. The fact that ego-boundness begins to develop so early suggests that important experiences, either part of our individual life history or of cultural and human history, occur before our ego has fully developed: ontogenetically, in the womb, as a fetus; phylogenetically, in the life of plants, animals, and primitive humans.

The leap from the Whole to ourselves is and remains a mystery. Self-organization might be said to always involve drawing boundaries to the Whole. The extent to which an organism functions on its own, or how a creature perceives, senses, feels,⁸ and emits signals of its own, indicates that it is no longer connected to the Whole.

This progression also involves *isolation*, *filtering*, and *selection*. Becoming an ego, we are no longer able to feel the Whole in its holistic character, because it is too numinous and appears threatening to the emerging ego.

Eternal fullness or wholeness leave no scope for ego-development. For the ego to become an ego requires new, ego-bound perception to emerge. Yet this kind of perception, rather than serving the Whole, serves individual well-being. This shift in perception means that individual aspects of the Whole can be selected and foregrounded, and thus become conscious, while others remain deeply unconscious. This selection precedes subsequent repression. It also involves tabooing: whatever is considered too threatening for the ego may neither be perceived nor become conscious. As perception shifts, the original Whole splits into many individual aspects (heart sounds amid the intrauterine background noise, the mother's uncertain eyes, stars in the night sky). The entire world becomes the sum of many details (mountains, trees, animals, the sun, storm clouds, etc.). The forever incomprehensible or too threatening is excluded from the visual field, yet remains invisible as an "outside reality." *Polarities* emerge. Light stands out from darkness, water from air, movement from stillness, the pleasant from the unpleasant, good from evil. Instead of unity in primordial wholeness, an ego increasingly faces material surroundings with which it must come to terms.

Ego-boundedness is a natural part of being human and should not be equated with egoism. The term ego-bound is non-judgmental, unlike ego-centric or egotistic. It also means something else than subjective. Subjective refers to individual differences and draws attention to the contrast between subjective and objective. Ego-bound means subject-related and refers to *what all human perception has in common*: every person who has their mental faculties (senses!) recognizes objects, which stand out against the background, and, for instance, experiences air differently than water.

However, ego-bound perception does not assert itself in the same way in all individuals and cultures. Less pronounced ego-boundedness does not mean that people (e.g., a medium) are sick, or that animals and plants are inferior, or that cultures are underdeveloped. Rather, this raises a basic question: What is real, what normal, what healthy? Do these (humanly defined) values perhaps exclude what a collective neither tolerates nor knows? Individual and cultural differences with regard to more or less ego-boundedness refer to ancient imprints: while human becoming was determined by heightened fear and threat from the outset, subsequent development brought forth coping strategies such as flight and defense.

Ego-boundedness is both limitation and opportunity. This kind of perception enables the ego to perceive individual aspects of the Whole and diverse phenomena, for instance, creatures and things. These are accessible to human consciousness, while the undivided Whole remains unconscious. Our ego-boundedness enables to grasp, assess, shape, and relate from our own perspective. We receive *freedom*, and thus also *responsibility*.

Various *creation myths* attempted to vividly describe the shift of perception from Wholeness to ego-boundedness, which began asserting itself in humankind

(in Genesis 1–3, Adam and Eve had “their eyes opened” and were expelled from Paradise; see section 5.17). Such myths also differ according to culture. One Indian creation myth, for instance, speaks of a more or less reversible “accident.”⁹ Nevertheless, I remain cautious about assuming cultural differences, because cultures have several and quite different creation myths.

Today, we can once again sense what it means to have lost *non-dual unity*, as happens to many of us in the Western world: for we learn only then, through detours and catastrophes, what we have inflicted upon nature and other creatures. We were unable to see with the eyes of nature nor feel united with dying trees, suffering animals, and exploited humans. Our distinct ego-boundness means we are unable to feel part of the connections inherent in the Whole. This explains why—unlike animals—we are capable of such hubris and ruthless exploitation. Environmental destruction expresses our broken relationship with the Whole.

Help might come from becoming conscious and from gaining insight into the relativity of ego-bound perspectives (see endnote 9): whenever we endure the constant presence of a completely different way of being, while remaining connected to the here and now, both worlds cross-fertilize each other. In everyday life, coping with reality can stand beside contemplation and ecstatic experiences, progress beside an affinity with nature.

1.4 ... and in between lies a formative transition

As a citizen of two worlds, we are at home in both ways of being: we are ourselves, as much as part of the Whole, even if we do not feel the latter. Unconsciously, we carry within ourselves something that participates forever in the Whole and in non-duality. Our earliest childhood also continues to affect us: “The child that I was” and “the way in which my inner child experienced the transition from non-duality to ego-boundness.” The entire sphere in-between, in which the non-dual and ego-bound way of feeling come into contact, or indeed merge, is of utmost importance—also with regard to human imprinting and disorders.

Experts keep debating whether predisposition or rather the environment accounts more for human imprinting. In this book, I assume that three factors are jointly responsible for early imprints: besides *individual predisposition* and *environmental influences*, the *mode of perception* at the time of a formative event is hugely significant. Together, these three dimensions determine how gently or traumatically, how pleasurably or anxiously, we experience. Our experience of transition is crucial for early imprinting and disorder.

By way of illustration: depending on the child, *environment* and *predisposition* fit better or worse. A dreamy child’s energetic mother once told me: “I’m probably the wrong mother for my child.” She added that she could not connect with her child.

Considering the interaction between *environment* and the *mode of perception*, we ought to bear in mind that not every environment accounts for the fact

that children still live in the liminal sphere to non-duality. How spontaneously can a particular environment empathize with a child's challenges during its transition from non-dual being and perception to ego-boundness? How much scope does society, with its norms and worldviews, provide for presensory and extrasensory experience and reality? How hectic and overcrowded is a specific day and age? Today, even the child's weekly schedule is overloaded, just as the boundaries between supportive and overwhelming surroundings become blurred. Overburdening may stifle one child's development, yet accelerate another's. Thus, already the unborn child, the fetus, and the infant might be excessively strained by an overstimulated environment, as well as by the unconscious messages, feelings, and tensions that are conveyed to it. Its transitional process may be hampered as a result. When the child hears, it focuses more on messages that are transmitted atmospherically rather than verbally. It senses the comfort or discomfort that resonates in a person's tone of a voice, or that looms in the family room, yet ought not to exist.

For one intelligent and gifted woman, this meant that she was affected more by the unconscious heaviness of her whole family system than by being wanted by her loving mother. Her body had grown very tense already when she was a baby, and she later suffered from a numbness and despair that she was unable to understand.

The interplay of all three factors—*predisposition*, *environment*, and *perception*—also includes the observation that adverse experiences affect comparable environments differently. And yet, predisposition alone does not explain such differences. Instead, we need to ask how a child felt when it made an adverse experience. Therapy later in life might help to illumine matters:

A woman who was aware of the detriment that she had experienced as an infant (a narcissistic mother and extended stays at a children's home) wondered why she still was so trusting. She was seldom afraid, had no problems with her appetite and digestion, and rarely had problems sleeping. Later experiences at school seemed to have affected her much more lastingly. During music-assisted relaxation, she received an answer to her question: an angelic light appeared several times. She felt reassured ("at home") whenever it appeared. Along with this light, the children's home and her mother were present, and yet they were not. This woman had evidently lived through her transition slowly and had often felt safe and secure in the Wholly Other during infancy.¹⁰

Why, however, do some children undergo their transition quickly and others slowly? While environmental influences impair or accelerate transition, predisposition also plays its part. For instance, our desire to live or our longing for the Wholly Other varies depending on our predisposition. Their predisposition, then, makes some children more or less vivacious. An intelligent child,

for instance, might enter the here and now sooner than others. Does it catch on more quickly? Does it undergo its transition swiftly? Does this characterize what we call intelligence? And yet, the child that enters the here and now quickly is also more exposed (and hence at risk) during this earliest stage of life: it is dependent on its environment and vulnerable; and because it awakens sooner and more often, it is no longer safe and secure in the Wholly Other. It feels more powerless, more afraid, and more imposed upon both earlier and more absolutely than a child that undergoes its transition slowly. So are some intelligent children particularly susceptible to early disorders?

I suspect that a similar early sensitivity to environmental influences also exists in musically sensitive children. Their predisposition makes them particularly vulnerable during their transition, as they are more sensitive to noise levels and atmospheres, as well as to the double binds that are conveyed implicitly by an adult's tone of voice. My experiences as a music therapist and as a psychotherapist confirm my suspicion that people who suffer early disorders are often either intelligent or musically sensitive, or indeed both.

What characterizes *predispositions* in contrast to *early imprintings* or *disorders*? Once again, I am cautious. Therapeutic processes with many patients have taught me that what was first called predisposition was in fact early imprinting. All of a sudden, these patients sensed that they were neither who others said they were, nor who they themselves believed they were. They asked themselves: "Do I really have a learning disability, or am I normally intelligent?" "Am I lazy or full of energy after all?" "Am I orderly or chaotic?" Even gifts like musicality, creativity, sensitivity, assertiveness, or an exceptional memory are not always congenital. They may also have been developed as a strategy to compensate for early distress. I often experience how people marvel at themselves when they realize how much they have made of themselves and their imprinting. They have developed in the truest sense of the word: they have freed themselves from old entanglements by acquiring skills and abilities.

Contrary insights also emerge: some people are startled when they realize how many gifts and joys they lost during their earliest childhood. Buried skills and talents reemerge during the therapeutic process or after a major crisis. Mirjam, who was extremely sensitive to noise, rediscovered her musicality. Bettina became creative. Julia discovered her intellectual giftedness after years of being unable to read books.

In every single case, we must ask ourselves: What is predisposition? What imprinting? What was this person's environment really like? How did they perceive it? How strongly do predisposition, environment, early imprinting, and development converge with what is "meant for" us from within, either by destiny or by God? Which imprinting do we want to, or indeed can we, become conscious of and change—for instance, through a therapeutic process? We often cling to a mistaken image of so-called good parents, to avoid feeling the pain we felt at the time.

No environment consists merely of a mother, father, siblings, animals, air, and so on. Our environmental systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) include immediate life spheres (our parents' home, school, residential area), indirect influences (our parents' workplaces), societal conditions and—I would add—our collective heritage of millions of years. All of this resonates atmospherically. Every one of us enters a collective that long ago belonged to the evolutionary process and that has developed cultural peculiarities before we come into this world. Western people go through their transition differently than Eastern ones already on account of their specific cultural precepts. Socialization always also means entering cultural specificities. While we undergo our individual transition, we also adopt the traces of collective transitional events.

Profound imprintings were initiated long before our consciousness and volition became able to codetermine our development. Early imprinting can change (only) to the same extent as it once developed: in the liminal sphere between us and the Whole/God. In this book, I wish to show through which depths healing paths lead. I also wish to show that however difficult such changes may be, they are possible. And I wish to show that at the beginning of early imprinting lies archaic fear.

1.5 Liminal sphere and liminal experiences

The child in transition lives between two worlds. Even in the adult, this liminal sphere is a *permanent reality beyond* what we normally perceive and what we believe is true. The boundaries between ego-bound and non-dual existence blur in deep sleep, in a coma, amid convulsion.

Early imprintings were initiated in the liminal sphere, from where they can also be relativized and corrected again. The liminal sphere (like the non-dual state of being) is deeply unconscious. It belongs to what our everyday consciousness usually finds unbearable and what we are unable to reason out: namely, whatever is too close to the Whole, the numinous, fullness, monotony, the (almost) eternal. On the other hand, this is where we may also experience infinite happiness, wonderful fullness, and primordial peace. Here we may discover the deepest invigorating forces and ultimate experiences of being loved.

During *liminal experience*, the liminal sphere fragmentarily breaks into human consciousness. On one occasion, the *emotional aspect* is foregrounded: letting go—enduring—becoming new. On another, the *spiritual aspect* is central: the boundaries of everyday perception protecting the ego are exploded. I am thinking, for example, of profound dreams, of key experiences during therapy or spiritual retreats, of awakening from a coma or being close to death. Liminal experiences also occur *through the body*: for instance, as a bodily experienced “resurrective force,” or as a physical expanse where a moment ago there was nothing but tension.

Since the ego's boundaries, safeguards, and behavioral patterns risk collapsing in the outermost liminal sphere, we are only ever prepared to let ourselves

fall into liminal experience in great distress. Too great is our fear of becoming totally powerless (i.e., of losing our ego-bound power, defenses, control, and drive). And so, too, is our fear of losing our ego. The liminal sphere is anything but harmless. And yet, I wonder whether we might not consider emotional disorders such as *depression*, *delirium*, and *psychosis* also in terms of potential liminal experience: depression as the crippling of driving forces and almost extinguished spiritual longing. Delirium and psychosis as states lacking an intact perceptual basis in the ego (ego-bound perception).

In depression research, Daniel Hell (2005) has advocated the therapeutic treatment of depression, especially when emotions become numb, in addition to physical treatment (psychopharmacological, light therapy, sleep deprivation). Depression is more than a pathological change of the metabolism (p. 271). Hell speaks of a profound “overall change in experience.” Moreover, “Persons with depression have lost something that they took for granted before. They are shocked to discover that they are no longer able to perceive, feel and think as they used to” (p. 261).¹¹ Therapy should not be limited to treating depressive episodes (p. 263), but also needs to explore patients’ specific characteristics and resources. In many cases, these include their essential closeness to non-duality—that is, their pronounced, yet withering spirituality. These people would have something important to contribute to our society, which it lacks—because of its total separation from the non-dual and sacred (see section 7.4).¹²

As early as 1984, Reinhart Lempp described psychosis as a type of reaction that “may occur in every human being.” The decisive criterion is the “degree to which the relationship with jointly experienced reality is disturbed” (1984, p. 11). Besides a functioning ego, and the ability to function in everyday life and in society, “jointly experienced reality” also includes *ego-bound perception*. Phenomenologically, psychosis involves the blurring or blending of an ego-bound and a non-dual reality. In this state, no clear boundary exists between the ego and the Whole. Once again, the “distress-ego” (German *Not-Ich*; see section 7.1), which stands on shaky ground anyway, is flooded. The selection mechanism preceding ego-formation and socialization is broken, and the view of the Whole expands.

In light of my approach, two aspects are interesting in this respect: first, psychosis as a rule occurs on the level of *perception* (distorted impressions and sensations); and second, the contents of crisis and delusion are often spiritual (people attribute God-like powers to themselves). Not just the ego, but already its foundation is disturbed; this happened in a spiritual realm, during the spiritual challenge of transition. Consequently, healing would also presuppose the spiritual dimension (i.e., being rooted and related to the Whole, yet not identified with it). This process is often difficult and overwhelming. I would define the therapeutic goal quite modestly: it is already sufficient to develop a *capacity for reality*. Its attainment turns the spiritual receptivity of psychotic persons into a potential (on early disorders and resources, see Renz, 2007, p. 54).

Finally, I am also cautious about using the term *delirium*, not least due to its stigmatizing effect. In my field of work, I encounter the phenomenon of mental confusion in three settings:

- the terminal communication of the dying (Daniel Büche, a palliative physician and colleague at St. Gallen Cantonal Hospital, reports—based on Breitbart and Alici (2008)—that 60 to 85 percent of patients are delirious);
- patients suffering from acute leukemia, for instance, who need high-dose chemotherapy and then develop aplasia (the condition in which patients lack antibodies);
- in people with psychotic disorders in the proper sense of the term: here, recourse to symbolism, such as associative work, usually does not help. Many of these people were psychotic before they developed cancer. Cancer often even “provides” mentally ill persons with stability.

Scharfetter (1994) and Jacobowitz (1994) distinguish psychotic and spiritual crises, despite these states seeming to be similar. Spiritual crisis is less about the survival of the ego, its value and power, than about rooting oneself in higher, transpersonal consciousness (Jacobowitz, 1994, p. 88). In the context of this book, this is exactly what happens in liminal experience: we do not fall out of the world (i.e., our ego-bound relationship to reality), but “only” back into unitary reality. Under certain circumstances, we even regain our sense of home and might know what we thirst for. Through spiritual crises—that is, liminal experiences—a needy distress-ego living on brittle primordial ground finds a new foundation. This is and promises more than mere scaffolding.

Such a fundamental “restructuring of personality” shows that liminal experiences are uncompromising—and not simply a trip to self-discovery. Before the outermost limit lies—figuratively speaking—the gate. On one of its sides stands the ego with its corresponding action competencies. “Here you must let go of your shape,” one patient was told in a dream. Thus, before the gate, we must let go of many insights and skills (even of basic personality traits) that we have acquired during our lifetime: professional skills; thinking skills; special gifts and talents; the need to plan ahead and to be beautiful and glorious; previous standards and ego-centered values. These all become meaningless in the face of spiritual crisis or liminal experience. Figuratively speaking, we sink into the underworld without knowing whether and how we will reappear. According to a Sumerian myth, the goddess Inanna was made to abandon all her divine attributes at the gates to the underworld on her way to Ereshkigal (Brinton Perera, 1981, p. 13). And so, too, must we, at the entrance to the outermost liminal sphere, as a rule let go of what our ego was most attached to.¹³ Under certain circumstances, this applies even to our sense of being an ego.

Nevertheless, in my present logic, we ultimately experience the state that we previously feared as pleasant. Whoever passes through the lowest

point, and whoever is allowed to pass through it from within (*Kairos*), touches “bottom,” and thereby finds new ground (justification) and identity. We resurface when the time is ripe. Every ascent is different to the previous descent. The way down was traumatic. It involved, symbolically speaking, being plunged into a fountain (see the old German fairy-tale about “Mother Hulda,” Grimm & Grimm, 1884) or being swallowed by the fish (Book of Jonah, chapter 2). The ascent, if guided from within, becomes a natural entry into life. As Golden Mary passes through the gate, a shower of gold pours over her, while the fish spits out Jonah over dry, safe ground.

What does a liminal experience change in a person’s life? Energies reconstellate themselves. Exaggerated resistance transforms into strength. Split-off rage becomes channeled. Sadness becomes longing, as well as a driver of future commitment. The feeling of primordial security is rekindled, while fear is relativized. Yet in spite of earlier healing liminal experiences, the outermost sphere never ceases to instill respect. The fear at the gate recurs every time. Previous healing liminal experiences, however, convey the insight and serenity that fear is not the last thing. It is similar with dying: death never loses its awe-inspiring face. Fortunately, although dying cannot be optimized, past liminal experiences still seem to extend a helping hand to the dying.

1.6 We are beings of longing: thinking in terms of psychic layers

Long did I not let go off my angel, and he
 sank into poverty in my arms and became small
 and I became large: all of a sudden I was
 compassion, and he nothing but a trembling demand.
 Thus I gave him his heavens
 and he left me all that is close, from which he vanished
 he learned to walk on clouds, I learned to live,
 and slowly we got to know each other

Rainer Maria Rilke, *Early Poems*

Those who return to life after a near-death experience know this longing, just as former drug addicts sometimes do. Rilke “realized” what he longed for and how, reaching out to what lay “close,” he had abandoned and lost his angel. Is it meant to be like this, to the point where even the ego, shaped by reason, stops longing? What might remain is emptiness, addiction, aimless roaming.

So why does the primordial ground close itself off to us at some point in our ego development? And how might we explain what the primordial ground is, and what, in contrast, the world of the ego? As a rule, I begin my

further training programs about end-of-life care, spiritual care, fear and trust, and processes of maturation by introducing the concept of psychic layers.¹⁴ These lie one upon the other and, together, they form our unconscious (see “On the Topography of the Unconscious: Psychic Layers,” section 7.8). Next, I briefly explain that the various media with which I work (the word/rational comprehension – the dream/working with symbols – receptive music therapy – spiritual experience) touch our soul in different ways. When I approach patients, I ask myself: Where (on which level) might this person be touched? Where lies his or her hidden distress and need? It is precisely there, in the corresponding psychic layer, that I search for an answer together with that person and offer them, if possible, the opportunity to experience a process.

Thus, I focus less on additive, accumulated achievements, in terms of a biopscho-socio-spiritual approach, than on indication. Because rather than needing every kind of treatment (e.g., spiritual care, music therapy, psychotherapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, therapy dog, Tai Chi, homeopathy, social services, etc.), patients mostly require something quite specific. Can we draw closer to what patients need and, if so, through which medium? Thinking in terms of psychic layers also helps us grasp the profound effects of music-assisted relaxation: it undergirds thought structures and defense mechanisms. It touches us, wordlessly, and opens us up to find words. I leave it to other forms of therapy to determine their respective media and their specific benefits. Below, I offer a schematic illustration of this thinking, which also structures this book (chapters 2–9). I discuss the individual psychic layers, and what happens in each of these, in more detail as this book unfolds. I also illustrate what this model means for working with patients (section 7.9). Various visuals complement my reflections (chapters 2–9; I also refer to the film, “A loose connection with eternity”; see www.monikarenz.ch/therapy) (Figure 1.1).

The striking feature of this illustration is the black area. It represents darkness, the abysmal, primordial fear, and early imprinting. It often blocks the ego’s natural connection with its primordial ground (see video *a loose connection with eternity*: monikarenz.ch/Therapie.php?Sprache=en). It does so to such an extent that, in our present times, we normally no longer know anything about. We have lost our deeper relatedness and sense of belonging. We are, as I tend to say, no longer “connected,” even if the grid (to use an electrical metaphor) still exists. A dying media celebrity once observed: “To be connected or disconnected—that’s the question. I was disconnected all my life and lost what would have been most important.” On his deathbed, he mourned his self-indulgent, at times excessive life, which had lacked *religio* (reconnection). And yet, at some stage, he nevertheless found serenity.

It becomes a question of fate whether the ego, in the course of its (later) development, reconnects with non-duality, at least rudimentarily (the above illustration shows that the mature ego is connected to the Whole and thus strengthened). This path leads inward and follows deepest longing. C.G. Jung

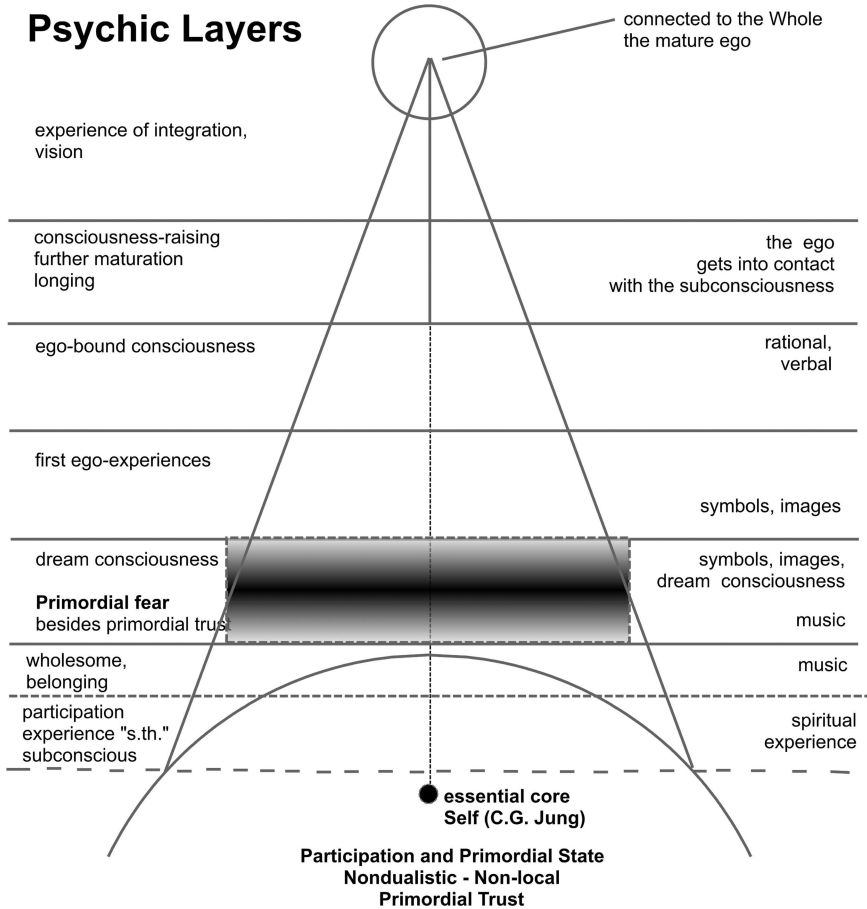


Figure 1.1 Psychic Layers.

spoke of the first half of life as ego-time and of the second as self-time.¹⁵ Richard Rohr (2011) talks about a spiritual journey into the second half of life. According to the evangelist Mark, Jesus's teaching began with the words: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15).

The figure below, in addition to psychic layers, introduces a developmental psychology perspective and an energetic perspective: some energies seek to strengthen the ego and increase awareness, while others strive for wholeness. The latter are effective in the mature ego's renewed devotion to the primordial ground, but also in the dying process and its three phases: pre-transition – transition – post-transition (Renz, 2018). Dying often confronts us once again

with primordial fear. Maturation strengthens our so called ego-self axis (C.G. Jung); it reconnects us increasingly with the Whole and makes us more conscious of it (see section 7.8) (Figure 1.2).

1.7 Music and music therapy: approaching the deepest psychic layers

Music has opened up deepest feelings and images to me. It is the most important medium in my work. When I was working with children and young people with learning disabilities, as well as now, for over 20 years, in my work

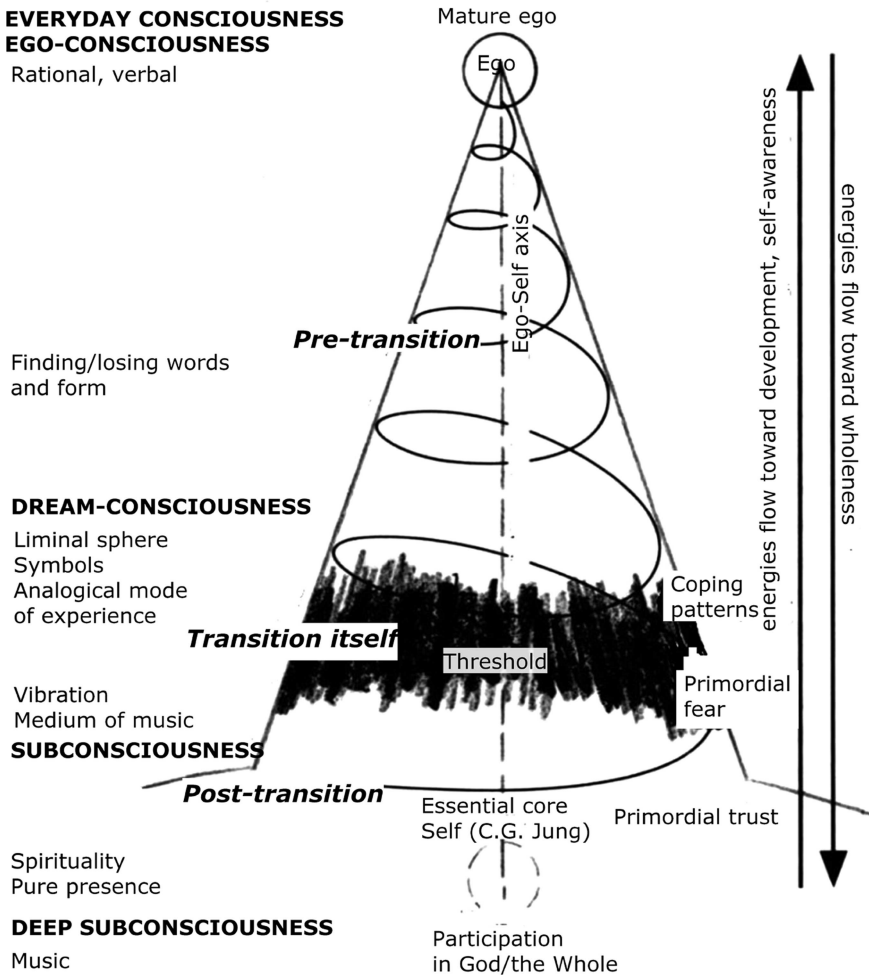


Figure 1.2 Everyday Consciousness, Ego Consciousness (1).

with cancer patients, dying people, and in training programs with professionals and interested laypersons.

Music can be understood as the all-encompassing sonic and rhythmic dimension. It includes silence and noise, intonation, inaudible plant sounds, rhythms in body movements, and speech. Traffic noise influences us as much as symphony concerts or Indian ragas. Music can be divided into various parameters: sound, rhythm, melody, dynamics, and form (Hegi, 1986). It is, however, also a self-contained whole, one that takes effect—just like that. In terms of my model, we need to understand music as being perceived by humans—depending on the degree of differentiation:¹⁶ the fetus hears something different than the toddler or the adult, who combines dissonances and harmonies. We hear differently in a trance than in waking consciousness.

Words are islands of consciousness in the midst of music. Their meaning sets them apart from the background of sound and rhythm. Music, including silence, embraces. Music, understood thus, is omnipresent and occupies more space than words, just as the unconscious occupies more space than consciousness. As an incomprehensible to unbearable atmosphere, music threatens to flood knowledge. Every vibration can be regarded as music; everything that vibrates has its own sound (Berendt, 1991).

Sound and rhythm are the basic elements of music. Sound is substance, matter. Processes and movements are rhythms. Being and space recall the acoustic dimension, while what becomes, pulsates, structures, and occupies time recalls the rhythmic one. It is a law that inheres in all life, according to which pairs such as sound and rhythm, space and time, being and becoming are mutually dependent and complement each other: rhythm becomes audible through sound and takes effect as sound fades in and out (temporal dimension). Sound is the acoustic, space-filling thing that we perceive through our ears or skin. We do not hear rhythm; it is an expression of time and structure. In order to perceive rhythm, we need a sense of time and transience, at least some kind of memory, however hazy.

Rhythm without sound resembles a deadly silent temporal order. It is structure without substance. It is like riding the train opposite a teenager wearing noise-cancelling headphones: the teenager's head moves to the rhythm (or pulse) of the music without us being able to hear why. The opposite, *sounds without (perceptible) rhythms/time/regulation*, is equally unnatural: a never-ending hammer drill, a continuous buzzing, or endless silence! But even these noises contain rhythms (in the form of minute vibrations and their periods), but they are not audible as such. The sense of “static sounds” at best *approximates* non-duality. Every *melody* is already a connection of sound (audio material) and rhythm (emphasis). Its force is never as archetypal as sound and rhythm, yet nevertheless embodies the individual.

Rhythm urges us to arrive in life on our earth. It places us in the here and now, as well as pulls, beats, and rocks us into the flow of life. Rhythm moves and is the structure within which movement happens. The dimension of

sound, on the other hand, hints at the vastness of the cosmos; sounds represent devotion to the infinite. Sound fills structure, the individual sound is moved. This happens when music fades in and out. The interaction of sound and rhythm creates music. The more excessively we live in acoustic spheres (sound), the more we lack any reference to reality, to the heaviness of the earth, to our subjecthood. Our experience of reality will be listless, powerless, and somehow unrealistic or diffuse. Although physically present, in this state we will not be permeated by pulsating life.

If we overemphasize rhythm, we will be less likely to experience the depth (of thought) and flights of fancy into larger dimensions. We might lack sensitivity for the underlying contexts of life and meaning or for the nuances of our emotions. Our relation to reality will remain purely functional, and our life will become monotonous. A fulfilled life needs both: rhythm and sound, structure and feeling, reality and enthusiasm.

Music is the first and universal mother tongue, the medium of earliest communication. Sounds and rhythms already surround the embryo. Especially the ear develops very early as an organ of perception. We can imagine the unborn child's experience of the world as vibrational. What goes on inside it? What and how does it hear? Such questions lead to the outer limits of what can be studied.¹⁷ In the dialogue between mother and infant, not the abstract word is effective, but rather how it sounds, what resonates and lies wordlessly in the air. It has been speculated that the basic patterns of preverbal communication are closely related to the basic patterns of music.¹⁸

Besides what people experience during music therapy, healing rites also illumine archaic sound experience. Music plays a crucial role in the ceremonies of different peoples (e.g., in Papua New Guinea, in the Amazon region, or among Australian Aborigines).¹⁹ Frescoes dating back to the 4th millennium BCE suggest that Egyptian priest-doctors used musical incantation in the context of medical treatment. Assyrian cuneiform tablets from Mesopotamia attest that music was included in medical treatment to banish evil spirits. The fire dance, which developed in the Balkans in the 3rd millennium BCE, and eventually led to the worshipping of Dionysus (Bacchus) and served to banish disease-causing spirits, was preceded by a three-day initiation in which archaic musical elements were significant. In the 2nd millennium BCE, liturgical chants and hymns were sung in India to invoke Indra and Rudra, the gods of healing (Spintge & Droh, 1992, p. 6).

Although rites have varied over time, music has been used for similar purposes in different eras and regions. It banishes spirits and facilitates inner purification (catharsis)—yet how exactly? Concretely, it guides us into another state of consciousness (e.g., rapture, enthusiasm, deep relaxation). As such, it is used at the beginning of rituals, either for the healer or for the person seeking healing. Next, contact is established with the spirits or the deity, often without the use of music. From this emerge concrete answers to the welfare of those seeking healing. The person who has been put into a

trance then finds their way back to the here and now—again under the influence of music. On the whole, music has the task of returning us to a different mode of perception and from there back to everyday consciousness. *Music is a bridge between two worlds*, a medium of transition. What, then, could be more obvious than to attribute a bridging function to music in early human development, moreover also in comas and in death? In this context, I speak of auditive phases of life.

Music therapy works with the manifold effects of music:

- Music activates the joy of life at the deepest level.
- It creates tension and relaxation.
- It enables us to experience the child's speechless suffering and unspeakable joy: unfathomable fears, deepest feelings of security, and the unheard all become audible.
- It leads into salutary regression (into preverbal dimensions reaching deeper and beyond any trauma).
- It touches us and opens us up across great distances and through (inner) walls.
- It make us playful (e.g., the transition from the preverbal to the verbal).
- It opens us up to physical proximity (the boundaries between music and bodies are fluid).
- Through rhythm, it helps us discover measure, structures, and a relationship with reality.
- It helps us deal with boundless states such as noise, sound, and silence.
- It touches the sacred and transcendental.

All in all, music promotes awareness and processing, and thus complements the spoken word. As in any other form of psychotherapy, the ultimate concern is the individual process. While knowledge and professional experience help us as therapists to offer interpretations or experiences, spontaneous intuition remains crucial. We can make suggestions, for instance, recommend a "Dialogue with the Father" or "listening to a lullaby and being touched by my hands." And yet, patients, children, and inwardly even many dying persons, decide for themselves whether they can accept our offer.

My work often combines music, the body, symbols, and finding words. It involves the body through bodily perception (music touches us physically, all music-making takes place through the body), and symbols through the combination of music and imagination, for instance, in so-called *music-assisted relaxation*.²⁰ Dreams can be deepened through the imagination or restaged through music in active forms of music therapy. Music triggers and carries; the body feels and is the vessel of our soul; the symbol brings a certain energy into the picture and into consciousness; the word names and makes understandable.

The basis of all therapy is the therapeutic relationship. This provides both a framework and a projection screen. The therapist's empathic participation and

belief in healing processes are decisive. The difference between music therapy and purely verbal therapy is that the music therapist must also grasp the relationship with the patient musically and, if necessary, be able to engage in a “primitive,” musical dialogue (Nitzschke, 1984). The therapist’s own capacity for regression then becomes what he or she may “lend” the patient. His or her respectful attitude toward non-verbal patient signals, and his or her inner awe of the unspoken, influence the process just as much as any active measures. Such qualities enable music-assisted relaxation or musical dialogue to become effective.

The rule is: the more powerless the patient, the more sensitive and careful the therapist needs to be. Throughout, music is not *one* medium alongside others (e.g., painting, painting therapy, occupational therapy). Rather, its specific qualities of being archaic, removed from consciousness, are now called for (see the model of psychic layers, section 1.6). Music also reaches the patient when other media no longer do.

Music therapy can trigger a lot and help patients come to terms. It is the astonishingly deep effects of music that make this form of therapy so special. And yet, improvements (progress!) cannot simply be attributed to therapy alone, because steps toward healing as a rule require many factors to interact. Changes in our deep psychic layers are a matter of grace. Suddenly, what we have long fought for arises from within and from without.

1.8 Mirjam: “I don’t want to live—I don’t want to die—I want to be in paradise”²¹

Mirjam’s story provides an impressive account of the liminal sphere. Today, Mirjam is a young woman with learning difficulties. Before her car accident and the resulting brain contusion, she was a normally gifted schoolgirl. The accident left her unconscious for weeks. There were serious doubts about whether she would ever return to life. Now, Mirjam is back, and yet she is not “here.” She is forgetful and finds no joy in life. When I asked her about this, she replied: “If only the people in the hospital had known that everything was much too loud. I couldn’t say anything, I wasn’t actually there, but I suffered.” After her accident, Mirjam experienced a harsh second transition, another profound shock. Is that why she now has a learning disability? Has something frozen inside her, out of fear? Mirjam’s experience shook me:

The accident happened when I was trying to cross the road. Before the accident I was angry. After the accident, I was gone for a long time. I remember waking up briefly and praying that I wouldn’t have to die. Then I was gone again.

At some point I woke up in the hospital. At first, I saw something that seemed far away. A wooden hut with a thatched roof in Paradise. Three or five trees

stood in front of it. There was a river full of water lilies and a meadow with beautiful flowers. Insects, bees, butterflies, and birds were flying around. There was a man and a woman, Adam and Eve. There were no mountains, only gentle hills. Eve sat down by the river. Adam was not there at first. Maybe he was behind the hut. Suddenly he appeared and sat down above Eve on the edge of the river. I looked into the hut, there was no door.

Suddenly the expression on Mirjam's face seemed sad. She told me something about the hospital. I interrupted her: "You are running away. Are you afraid?" She nodded, taken aback, and said: "Yes, I'm very scared." She seemed close to tears. Then she continued describing her experience of paradise: "Birds and bees flew toward Adam and Eve without stinging them. The birds chirped quietly. There was a beautiful silence. Adam and Eve loved all the animals, everything was so beautiful. Angelic melodies came from afar. I asked myself: from where? It was Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*.²² Apparently, this was played to me in the hospital. It brought me back into life. When I awoke, I could barely breathe. Even today, I often have difficulty breathing. I am very afraid of dying. I would like to cry, but can't. I wish reality were as it was there (in Paradise). I am always disappointed and sad about what I find. Even today, I need people who don't speak to me loudly, but as gently as the atmosphere was back there. If people speak loudly, I am frightened. Back then, everything was suddenly loud. From the moment I opened my eyes, even before that, I was surrounded by terrible noise. Every kind of stress reminds me of this moment. When I woke up, I saw a person lying in the opposite bed, surrounded by many people. When I woke up, I also felt the warmth leave me. Even today, I am often cold. I don't want to die, but I don't want to live either. I want to be in Paradise.

I hadn't eaten in the hospital for a long time. I had to learn to write, to walk, and to eat again. Even today, I am often in another world. I don't feel understood. Everything is too much for me. I have no desire to do anything, but I have even less desire to die than to live. That's what I'm afraid of."

We talked for a while about this experience and about her condition today. When I mentioned God, she interrupted me, horrified, and said: "I also saw a light. It was very bright and hurt my eyes. At the same time, it was pleasant. It was this light that gave me warmth. As soon as it went away, I froze. I sometimes see this light even today. Then I get scared, it almost shakes me."

Mirjam has been unable to cope with the world ever since her accident in two ways: on the one hand, she cannot understand what happened to her during the coma. She can barely remember anything about that time. In this state, however, something incomprehensible, God-like seemed to have been present. Mirjam often wished she could understand her condition at the time. Yet

she knows very well, having been so close to the incomprehensible, that this will forever overwhelm her. On the other hand, she can understand neither the hectic behavior nor the values of her environment. She has become an entirely different person ever since experiencing the Wholly Other: other things are important; the here and now is too loud.

Strikingly, Mirjam's images, her very own paradise, arose shortly before she awakened from her coma. Images and dreams only appear when differentiations (colors, forms, objects) are once again possible, that is, close to waking consciousness. Nothing can be seen amid non-duality ("It hurt my eyes"), where everything is full, whole, and eternal. Presumably, people in a coma participate in the Whole, which explains why this experience remains deeply unconscious to them. Was it abundance or emptiness, wholeness or nothingness? Mirjam only says: "Indescribable, timeless... and this light."

We return to life from the Whole already *before* we are visibly awake. The ego-bound basis of perception begins to reappear in the unconscious state: from sleeping consciousness through dream consciousness to everyday consciousness. When we leave behind the Whole, we experience something of that quality of being—although deeply unconsciously. We can experience the former, or traces of it, on the threshold, where a second, contrasting quality emerges. This helps us understand that images like Paradise always thematize a wonderful, serene atmosphere, as well as the painful farewell from or the falling out of that state. We are about to lose the paradisiacal happiness, which we see before us. It is precisely when the fullness characterizing the Whole empties itself, and when the peace of primordial unity begins to shift, that we experience part of what is losing itself. It is stored and now epitomizes all longing.

At this point, the function of archetypal images (e.g., Paradise) also becomes clear. Mirjam was not describing the reality of the hospital. At best, this became integrated into her dream image through the theme of Mozart's music. The images of paradise stand for inner, unspeakable experience. In the process of becoming conscious, images are created long before words and concepts are possible. Symbolic reality lies far deeper than the word (see the model of psychic layers, section 1.6). It is amazing how a young schoolgirl unconsciously found her way to such classical images. Mirjam allowed me to publish her experience. She was even pleased and said: "Maybe I am not alone with this experience after all."

1.9 "Participation in the Whole" and a model of conscious realization (overview I)

My lectures and courses have never stopped teaching me that, as human beings, we seek final answers and need help imagining these. Even though words and graphic representations lag behind the essence and are only

human conceptions, they help us understand. Thus, we ask ourselves: “What does participation mean?” “How should I imagine this?” “Where is the boundary between God and myself? After all, I am different to HIM.” “How can *all* of us participate? Don’t we get in each other’s way? I feel claustrophobic.” “Is God outside or inside me? Or is one inside the other?” “Why am I so far away from God although I am participating in him? Why don’t I feel anything? What separates us and since when?” “Does the path to God lead through my unconscious or is it a conscious search?”

In this book, I attempt to describe both our (ultimately) unfathomable participation in the Whole and human development in various ways: the pyramid-shaped figures presented above (section 1.6); various sketches and tables (see below). My working hypothesis is: we are citizens of two worlds. Our roots reach into unfathomable depths, where our primordial trust lies rooted (Figure 1.3).

Left: The origin: the One, the Whole, the undivided unity, participation.

Center: The crystallizing individual is both itself and limited, and yet part of the Whole.

Right: The ego, conceived of as deeply connected to the Whole. Here lies—or would lie—the source of our primordial trust. Or as a dream told me one night: “Your core has existed since time immemorial.”

The following table provides an overview of the levels of conscious realization (see chapters 2–9 and Tables Ia and Ib, section 7.9). It lists corresponding topics, musical experiences, psychic images, symbols, experiences of wholeness, and images of God—each based on therapeutic experiences and deep dreams. It does not wish to encourage schematic thinking. As we mature, each of us traverses the larger trajectory delineated here in our own way and at our own specific time. The consecutive stages shown here may also occur simultaneously or one within the other.

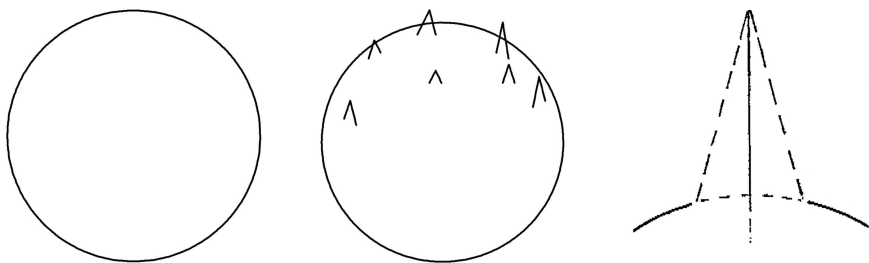


Figure 1.3 Human Development.

Table 1a Levels of Conscious Realization: Dynamics and Medium of Music

Stage	What happens?	Experience in the medium of music
Unitary reality Primordial state	non-dual, eternal, participating being inside the core since time immemorial	unlimitable sound beyond experiences of rhythm and time
Dynamics of roundness Uroboros	A striving at work behind all becoming that urges into life	
<i>Transition</i>		
1st stage Threshold/disappearing non-duality	A The nascent ego begins detaching itself. As we bid farewell, we experience parts of the Whole. Primordial trust	- being in harmony - "static" sound - spherical sound the oldest <i>experience</i> of music
2nd stage Wholesome containment	B The nascent ego experiences itself within containment. Envelopment Dual-unity with the world of atmosphere and vibration. Primordial sheltering force and the primordial force of emergence. Primordial trust	- being inside the Great Sound. Sound space - great pulse - rhythm <i>within</i> the womb - the Great Mother's voice - rhythm/time take effect, imperceptibly within sound
3rd stage Ambivalent containment	C The nascent ego distinguishes between itself and others, between the pleasant and the unpleasant. But the surrounding world is not yet broken down into its constituents. = The ego is contained within an ambivalent world of atmosphere and vibration =wholesome to threatening = primordial fear beside primordial trust	ambivalent sound: fullness (noise) emptiness (monotony) chaos - rhythm as support - the mother's voice as pre-personal orientation - in between wholesomeness as before
4th stage Entering the ego	D From the Whole to the concrete. The feeling of containment dissipates. The concrete surroundings are perceived: parents, siblings, objects. Zest for life From trust to the trusted From primordial fear to coping patterns	Rhythm + melody From space to time Rhythm as new orientation and zest for life identification with melody/voice as individual, personal Music: from aura to communication
<i>Post-transition</i> The ego or distress-ego	E The relation to reality remains stable. Splitting of the unconscious from consciousness Strengthening of the ego Coping patterns become effective One-sidedness, taboos	Verbal communication; Music is reduced to art, technology, sound art. Musical structures and forms One-sidedness: Time vis-à-vis space Rhythm vis-à-vis sound
Conscious suffering/ From becoming an ego to becoming whole	F Integration Strengthening ego, suffering from splitting, once again turning to non-duality Conscious/unconscious (e.g. with the help of psychotherapy) Approaching the child one used to be	Rediscovering music as a non-verbal medium (e.g. in music therapy). Incorporating the spherical, atonal and spiritual in contemporary music.
Visions Target state Dialogics	G Unifying opposites Love instead of power Reconciling the primordial forces	Space <i>and</i> time Music as a vibrational environment <i>and</i> as a creative means

Table 1b Levels of Conscious Realization: Experiences and Images

	Self-experience/experience of wholeness	Images, colours, metaphors
	Being, primordial order, inherent basic tension. inexperiencable, oppositionless, undivorced <i>State</i>	imageless, unconscious gold, round
	Roundness opens up	Dynamics of roundness Uroboros
A	Fullness, happiness, order, destiny, reconciled being, related and unrelated, ensouling primordial energy Experience of state Experience of Wholeness A	Paradise, eternal home, peace, atmosphere of blue light, formless colour, yellow, violet, apple, snake, beam of light
B	Primordial relationship: Wholeness -- nascent ego Primordial shelteredness, dual-unity, envelopment inside = outside. All experience involves being "inside" "You are fundamentally loved, nurtured, sheltered." Concretising state Experience of Wholeness B	nurturing mother's womb Great mother + son celestial dome, primordial space black mood goddess, Mother Earth the peaceful couple the bloodless meal biting into the apple unbedeviled black snake and tree
C	Primordial relationship: Wholeness - ego The Great is seen as an ambivalent counterpart <i>and</i> as envelopment. The nascent ego and the primordial energies are wholesomely contained to trapped inside. The realistically ambivalent versus the basically evil. Wholesomeness beside powerlessness and deficiency. Inevitable state Experience of Wholeness C	The ambivalent Great Mother The devouring and the trapped. Dragon, elephant, the good and the menacing wolf. Threatening mass Horror - grey black and bloody red Chaos/lost paradise Curse and damned earth Eyes
D	From being to path. From darkness to light. From the primordial relationship to personal relationships. Separate experience of: Oneself/mother, father, world/wholeness From state to linear-causal feeling. Experiences of Wholeness become images of God Entering the ego D	<i>Events:</i> Birth, leap, fall, spiral, fighting the dragon <i>Images of oneself:</i> snake, lion, lizard; white, green <i>The relationship to the other:</i> Eyes, covenant, Abraham as the archetype of individuation and vocation Devil and witch God of departure
E	The self-conscious, self-inflated and limited ego defines itself and its origin through history, manifold suffering is not understood Experience of the ego E	No direct experience of wholeness is possible the taboo behind all taboos tabooed wholeness
F	not healthy, healthy beside sick Search for meaning From suffering to hope F	the hero battle and victory God in heaven Devil in hell God who strengthens the ego/the non-existent God
	Ego-bondedness <i>and</i> non-duality G	Symbols fostering integration: Reversal, virgin, angel, phoenix, bird, centering spider, fish shadow dreams
G	Peace - reconciliation - redemption - salvation - the eschatological feast The human being as part <i>and</i> opposite of the Whole Christ as inner reality	Holy wedding, divine child, redeemed table fellowship, new covenant, home for all Mandala, ellipsis, spiral reopened paradise

Notes

- 1 Neurobiological research distinguishes ego-bound experience and older forms of experience that precede the experience of selfhood. D. J. Siegel's summary account (2012) holds that while "implicit" processing systems—behavioral memories, emotional memories, perceptual recollections, and possibly also somatosensory memories—exist at birth, they are as yet not tied to an actual self, to "explicit" memory, which is associated with the experience of selfhood. Thus, the human being is imprinted on entering the world.
- 2 In this respect, we might note the charisma of people with premonitions of death (Renz, 2008).
- 3 Pim van Lommel (2010) speaks of an endless, non-local consciousness beyond what can be scientifically proven. The aspects of memory (see Siegel, 2012) presented as "implicit" by neurobiology in its distance from the ego can at best reflect approximations and the most distant presentiments from a threshold area of such being (see also Long, 2010; Joyce, 2017; Zaleski, 1987).
- 4 The danger of a megalomania (inflation of the Mana personality according to C.G. Jung) exists whenever humans are close to the Whole. Delusions of grandeur and the excessive fear of it, however, also suggest that we have not encountered the messages of the absolute and unconditional (e.g., via dreams). Such messages always contain limitations and trigger decisions.
- 5 The concept of the ego has been defined variously. Philosophical considerations differ from depth-psychological ones. I refer to Dorsch's *Psychologisches Wörterbuch* (1982): "According to philosophical interpretation, the ego is 1. the subject of all perceptions, ideas, thoughts, feelings, actions (= theory of the subject, Saint Augustine, Kant), 2. an immaterial substance (= theory of substance, Berkeley, Descartes, John Stuart Mill), (...) Freud characterizes the ego as an instance beside the superego and the id. These instances are functional systems, and the ego (...) has the task (...) of establishing a relation to the outside world, to the superego and to the id" (p. 295). — In the personality model of analytical psychology (C.G. Jung), the ego is the perceiving, decisive, and consciously acting instance and, as such, the polar opposite of the self. Both poles together control the play of mental forces (cf. Hark, 1988, p. 71f.). — Regarding the ego, my model in this book refers neither to Freud nor to Jung, and instead asks more everyday questions: What precedes the "feeling of being an ego?" How is it that the ego becomes the "subject of all perceptions" (see theory of the subject)? Etymologically, according to Dorsch (1982), "I" means as much as "my here-ness" (p. 295). This book asks: "How does this here-ness arise?" In this respect, it is similar to the work of Christian Scharfetter (1994, p. 16).
- 6 This book and my model speak of ego-bound perception instead of self-centeredness because the concept of self is used differently in Jungian psychology (see chapter 2, endnote 2).
- 7 W. Obrist (1988) measures the degree of consciousness among other things by our ability to become aware of our own projections: "It can also be stated (...) that seeing through the fact that one has projected is synonymous with becoming conscious" (p. 96). Thus, knowing that what we see and experience, we emerge from phylogenetic unconsciousness and leave the stage of archaic, unconscious insertion in the environment that is characteristic of the magical epochs. According to Obrist, biological cognition researchers have not only observed unconscious states in chimpanzees, as in other higher animals, but for the first time also signs of something like sparks of consciousness.— would add that becoming aware of our projections also means realizing that our ego-perception is entirely relative.
- 8 Emotions are meaningful. They have a process-triggering, evaluative, filtering function in the earliest processing of external impulses. D.J. Siegel (2012, pp. 146–185) has

located such impulses in non-verbal social communication. In terms of my present approach, especially the existence of extreme liminal states, I even assume that impulses precede all interpersonal human relationships. In particular, I understand the (still) undivided, undifferentiated Whole as a source of impulses. It triggers primordial experience.

- 9 Considering the mythology of Vishnu, Heinrich Zimmer (1972, p. 42f.) refers to the adventures of the mighty sage Mārkaṇḍeya during the pause of non-manifestation between the dissolution and the recreation of the universe. By a wonderful and strange coincidence, Mārkaṇḍeya sees Vishnu in a series of archetypal transformations: “first in the elemental cladding of the cosmic sea, then as a giant resting on the water...” (p. 42). “Alone, a gigantic figure on the immortal substance of the ocean, half submerged, half flooding the waves, he enjoys his slumber. No one can see him, no one can understand him...” (p. 45). Then Mārkaṇḍeya traverses the interior of Vishnu’s body. “But now an accident occurs. In the course of his endless walks, the sturdy old man [Mārkaṇḍeya] accidentally slips away from the mouth of the universal God [Vishnu]. In the tremendous silence of the night, Vishnu sleeps, with slightly opened lips; his breath makes a deep, sonorous, rhythmic sound. And the astonished saint, falling from the sleeper’s giant lip, plunges headlong into the cosmic sea” (p. 46). At first, Mārkaṇḍeya does not see the sleeping giant at all, “but only the dark sea extending in all directions into the starless night. Despair seizes him and he fears for his life. Swimming in the water at night, he suddenly becomes thoughtful, broods and begins to doubt. ‘Is it a dream? Or am I under the spell of an illusion? Truly, all this alienation must be a product of my imagination, for the world, as I have observed it in its harmonious course, does not deserve this destruction, which now suddenly seems to befall it. I see no sun, no moon, I feel no wind; all the mountains have disappeared and the earth has dissolved. What kind of universe is this in which I find myself here?’” (p. 46).
- 10 We sometimes hear similar things from women who were raped, either as children or as prisoners of war: in therapy, they report not only how awful everything was—this too, of course—but sometimes also that the proximity of a strange light (i.e., a luminous figure) helped them to survive at all. There were moments when they were there and yet not. So-called dissociation may also be spiritual experience.
- 11 Many patients also exhibit various other disorders (appetite, digestion, sexuality, concentration, and sleep). The ground has been swept from under their feet. Hell (2005) observes that feelings lose clarity: “Sadness turns into diffuse sorrow, nausea into sallow weariness, anger into disgruntlement, fear into fuzzy anxiety, shame into embarrassment, guilt into accusation” (p. 262). It is extremely difficult amid all of this “to stand up for oneself or to make decisions” (p. 261).
- 12 According to Hell (2005), modern psychiatry tends “to interpret depression as a chemical-physical event. (...) Even psychotherapeutic researchers search for physiological equivalences—such as altered brain activity” (p. 259f.). The disturbance of certain brain functions is located particularly in the middle and anterior areas of the brain, that is, in the medial prefrontal cortex, the amygdala, and in the horizontal stress axis. “Genetic or psychosocial strain leaves the neuronal system unable to process or cushion a stressful event in such a way that brain functioning is not disturbed” (p. 259). Accordingly, the therapeutic goal is “to correct the dysfunctional neuronal changes with biological or psychosocial means” (p. 259). Hell does not reject this view, but extends it to the relational and emotional aspect: “We are more than a poorly functioning body; we are capable of coming out of ourselves and of facing others and ourselves. Thus, for instance, important developments have occurred if hidden anger, frozen sadness, or split-off disgust finds expression” (see p. 265f.). Because depressions are contagious, the therapist’s mindfulness and gathering ourselves is so important. Only this enables therapists to protect themselves against overreaction (contagion or counterattack).

Hell takes the spiritual aspect, which he does not dwell on conceptually, from the insights of the desert fathers, for instance, who were also concerned with correctly countering the temptation of so-called *akedia* (ancient Greek for tedium, disgust) and its depressive side (p. 269). Hell quotes Evagrius: “Just accept what temptation brings upon you! Above all, look the temptation of *akedia* in the eye, for it is the worst of all, but also produces the greatest purification of the soul.” Following Evagrius, Hell recommends “tears,” that is, sadness, then perseverance, patience, and, moreover, awareness of one’s own finiteness.

- 13 See also the biblical text of the rich young man and his disciples and of the camel and the eye of the needle (Mark 10:17–31).
- 14 For instance, at the Royal Society of Medicine in London in March 2019.
- 15 According to Jung, the ego is the center of consciousness and only a part of the total personality. “With the concept of the self, Jung tries to describe the wholeness of the human personality as a whole” (Hark, 1988, p. 150). “The beginnings of our whole spiritual life seem to spring inextricably from this point, and all the highest and ultimate goals seem to run toward it” (p. 152).
- 16 See sections 3.6, 4.3, 5.8, 6.3, 7.1, and 8.6.
- 17 See Tomatis, 1987, p. 54f.; DeCaspar, 1983; Salk, 1973; Kisilevsky et al. 2003; Lecanuet & Schaal, 1996. On the limitations of what can be researched at all, see Stern 1985, p. 237.
- 18 See Papoušek, 1994, pp. 13, 128f., 148: “Today it is assumed that musical and linguistic perceptual abilities are based on common organizational principles (...) Infants process melodic contours as global patterns, as ‘shapes.’ (...) In the infant’s natural auditory environment, the conditions of form perception are optimally fulfilled by the prototypical melodies of the mother’s way of speaking. In addition, parents ensure the basic prerequisites for (...) successful learning through slow pace, frequent repetitions with attention-modulating variations and recourse to a few high-contrast prototypical contours. (...) The melodic contours (...) enable the infant to detect, perceive, and categorize global basic units of language” (p. 148). See also Nöcker-Ribaupierre, 2003.
- 19 See Ebersoll, 1985; Simon, 1983; Spintge & Droh, 1992.
- 20 Music-assisted relaxation begins with guided physical relaxation, mostly lying down. It often includes visual stimuli. I invite patients to look around: “Where am I? What does it look like here? Am I doing something? And if so, what? Are there other people, animals, living beings, important objects? Visual stimuli must be open to contrasting, so as to avoid manipulation. After music-assisted relaxation, I play a purposefully chosen instrument or several ones. The patient engages with the quality of feeling, body sensations, and images that now arise. He or she becomes his or her own observer. If this becomes active imagination (a concept developed by C.G. Jung; see Maass, 1989, p. 152f.), what is experienced assumes the depth of a dream: the images arising during music-assisted relaxation are not created, but occur unexpected. Unlike in dreams, we can follow the event with our waking consciousness, enter into active contact with dream figures, and even, if desired, interrupt the process. It goes without saying that transmissions and countertransferences enter such “journeys.” Why do I need to play loudly or particularly quietly? Why do I want to change the instrument? Why do I get a headache? In seminars, participants can review their music-assisted relaxation, while this method often sends seriously ill patients to sleep.
- 21 The names of patients have been altered throughout.
- 22 Tomatis used ear training to let people re-experience the sound of life. Apart from the patient’s mother’s voice, Mozart’s music proved most appropriate (see Tomatis, 1987, pp. 30, 78, 192).

References

- Ausländer, R. (1988): Und preise die kühlende Liebe der Luft. Gedichte 1983–1987. In: H. Braun (ed.): *Gesammelte Werke in sieben Bänden: Bd. 7*. Frankfurt/Main: Fischer.
- Berendt, J.E. (1991): *The world is sound: Nada Brahma: Music and the world of consciousness*. Rochester, VT: Destiny Books.
- Breitbart, W., & Alici, Y. (2008): Agitation and delirium at the end of life: “We couldn’t manage him.” *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 300(24), 2898–2910.
- Brinton Perera, S. (1981): *Descent to the goddess. A way of initiation for women*. Toronto: Inner City Books.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979): *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- DeCaspar, A.J. (1983): The intrauterine heartbeat: A potent reinforcer for newborns. *Infant Behavior & Development*, 6, 19–25.
- Dittrich, A., & Scharfetter, C. (1987): Phänomenologie außergewöhnlicher Bewusstseinszustände. In: A. Dittrich & C. Scharfetter (eds.): *Eitlmopsychotherapie: Psychotherapie mittels aussergewöhnlicher Bewusstseinszustände in westlichen und indigenen Kulturen* (pp. 35–44). Stuttgart: Enke.
- Dorsch, F. (ed.). (1982): *Psychologisches Wörterbuch*. Bern: Hans Huber.
- Ebersoll, B. (1985): Musik der Geister und Menschen in indianischen Heilriten, Teil 1, 2. *Musiktherapeutische Umschau*, 6(1–16), 101–120.
- Grimm, J., & Grimm, W. (1884): *Household tales by the brothers Grimm* (M. Hunt, transl.). London: George Bell and Sons. Retrieved from https://www.worldoftales.com/fairy_tales/Grimm_fairy_tales_Margaret_Hunt.html#gsc.tab=0
- Hark, H. (1988): *Lexikon Jungscher Grundbegriffe*. Olten: Walter.
- Hegi, F. (1986): *Improvisation und Musiktherapie. Möglichkeiten und Wirkungen von freier Musik*. Paderborn: Junfermann.
- Hell, D. (2005): Geistig-seelische Momente in der Depressionstherapie. In: P. Bäurle, H. Förstl, D. Hell, H. Radebold, I. Riedel, & K. Studer (eds.): *Spiritualität und Kreativität in der Psychotherapie mit älteren Menschen* (pp. 259–271). Bern: Huber.
- Jacobowitz, S. (1994): Die dunkle Nacht des Johannes vom Kreuz. In: Ch. Scharfetter (ed.): *Der spirituelle Weg und seine Gefahren* (pp. 76–85). Stuttgart: Enke.
- Joyce, S.R. (2017). Tuning the mind in the frequency domain. Karl Pribram’s holonomic brain theory and David Bohm’s implicate order. *Cosmos and History*, 13(2), 166–184.
- Kisilevsky, B.S., Hains, S.M., Lee, K., Xie, X., Huang, H., Ye, H.H. Zhang, K., & Wang, Z. (2003): Effects of experience on fetal voice recognition. *Psychological Science*, 14(3), 220–224.
- Lecanuet, J.P., & Schaal, B. (1996): Fetal sensory competencies, *European Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology and Reproductive Biology*, 68(1–2), 1–23.
- Lempp, R. (1984): *Psychische Entwicklung und Schizophrenie. Die Schizophrenien als funktionelle Regressionen und Reaktionen*. Bern: Hans Huber.
- Lommel, P. van (2010). *Consciousness beyond life: The science of the near-death experience*. New York, NY: HarperOne.
- Long, P. (2010): *Evidence of the afterlife. The science of near-death experiences* (with P. Perry). New York, NY: HarperOne.
- Maass, H. (1989): *Wach-Träume. Selbstheilung durch das Unbewusste*. Olten: Walter.
- Nitzschke, B. (1984): Frühe Formen des Dialogs, Musikalisches Erleben – Psychoanalytische Reflexion. *Musiktherapeutische Umschau*, 5, 167–187.
- Nöcker-Ribaupierre, M. (2003): *Hören – Brücke ins Leben: Musiktherapie mit früh und neugeborenen Kindern. Forschung und klinische Praxis*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

- Obrist, W. (1988): *Neues Bewusstsein und Religiosität*. Olten: Walter.
- Otto, R. (1923): *The idea of the holy: An inquiry into the non-rational factor in the idea of the divine and its relation to the rational* (J.W. Harvey, transl.). Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1917).
- Papoušek, M. (1994): *Vom ersten Schrei zum ersten Wort. Anfänge der Sprachentwicklung in der vorsprachlichen Kommunikation*. Bern: Hans Huber.
- Renz, M. (2007): *Von der Chance, wesentlich zu werden. Reflexionen zu Spiritualität, Reifung und Sterben* [mit CD]. Paderborn: Junfermann.
- Renz, M. (2008): *Zeugnisse Sterbender. Todesnähe als Wandlung und letzte Reifung. Ergänzte und überarbeitete Neuauflage*. Paderborn: Junfermann.
- Renz, M. (2015): *Dying: A transition* (M. Kyburz with J. Peck, transl.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Renz, M. (2016): *Hope and grace: Spiritual experiences in severe distress, illness and dying* (M. Kyburz, transl.). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Renz, M. (2018): *Hinübergehen: Was beim Sterben geschieht Ein Lehrbuch mit Graphiken*. Freiburg i.Br.: Kreuz,
- Rohr, R. (2011): *Falling upward. A spirituality for the two halves of life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Salk, L. (1973): The role of the heartbeat in the relations between mother and infant. *Scientific American*, 228, 24–29.
- Scharfetter, C. (1994): *Der spirituelle Weg und seine Gefahren*. Stuttgart: Enke.
- Schellenbaum, P. (1991): *Abschied von der Selbstzerstörung*. München: dtv.
- Siegel, D.J. (2012): *The developing mind. How interrelationships and the brain interact to shape who we are* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Simon, A. (1983): Musik in afrikanischen Besessenheitsriten. In: A. Simon (ed.): *Musik in Afrika* (pp. 284–297). Berlin: Museum für Völkerkunde.
- Spintge, R., & Droh, R. (1992): *Musik – Medizin. Physiologische Grundlagen und praktische Anwendungen*. Stuttgart: Gustav Fischer.
- Stern, D.N. (1985): *The interpersonal world of the infant: A view from psychoanalysis and developmental psychology*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Tomatis, A. (1987): *Der Klang des Lebens. Vorgeburtliche Kommunikation – Die Anfänge der seelischen Entwicklung*. Reinbek: Rowohlt.
- Zaleski, C. (1987): *Otherworld journeys. Accounts of near-death experience in medieval and modern times*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zimmer, H. (1972): *Indische Mythen und Symbole*. Düsseldorf: Eugen Diederichs.