



OREGON
FRIENDS OF
C.G. JUNG

BULLETIN

NOVEMBER 2016

◆ WELCOME ◆

“Every epoch of our biological life has a numinous character: birth, puberty, marriage, illness, death.”
—from Jung’s letter to Pastor William Lachat (1-18-1955), Letters, Vol. 2: 1951-1961

In Memoriam: M. Gregg Smith

The last of the aspen leaves were falling like golden discs outside my window when I learned of Gregg Smith’s death on October 31. He was my friend and OFJ’s friend for thirty years, and his spirit and presence will be missed by all in our OFJ family, even those who didn’t know him personally.

It’s fair to say that we would not be the Oregon Friends of Jung we are today had Gregg Smith not been one of us. He served as past President, attended most lectures, took on numerous volunteer tasks in his healthier years, and generously gave of his time, energy, and resources. His love for our organization was palpable, as was his belief that OFJ must exist in order to help bring consciousness into the world. He’d say about us, “I’ve found my tribe.”

Born in 1940 into working-class beginnings and raised in the mill towns of Eastern Oregon, Gregg sought a larger world. He studied in Germany, received an advanced degree from Johns Hopkins in International Relations, served in the Peace Corps in Nepal, worked in Oregon state government, raised a family in Salem, and was a successful real estate developer. Always a seeker, he befriended Jungians around the world and attended many Jungian seminars and conferences.

In 2007, Gregg was diagnosed with a brain tumor, a *glioblastoma multiforme* grade IV. He was told he had only a few months, but he lived for nine years—

time to enjoy his children, deepen friendships, pursue his inner work, and generously support many worthy organizations. Though Gregg joked that his defying the medical odds “must be because of the glass of Oregon Pinot I drink each day,” he consciously accepted rather than battled his situation. When asked to make sense of his unexpectedly long survival, he’d answer simply, “I’m still here.”

Jung wrote in his Prologue to *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*:

Life has always seemed to me like a plant that lives on its rhizome. Its true life is invisible, . . . hidden in the rhizome. The part that appears above ground lasts only a single summer. Then it withers away – an ephemeral apparition. When we think of the unending growth and decay of life and civilizations, we cannot escape the impression of absolute nullity. Yet I have never lost a sense of something that lives and endures underneath the eternal flux. What we see is the blossom, which passes. The rhizome remains.

I know I am not alone in drawing comfort from Jung’s words as we celebrate the life of our friend, Gregg Smith.

Jolinda Osborne, Executive Coordinator
Oregon Friends of C.G. Jung

ANNOUNCEMENT

Six hearing assistance devices are available free for lecture attendees. To check out a device, find the table in the lobby with the yellow sign. We will ask you to leave your phone number and your driver’s license or a credit card. The table volunteer will show you how to operate the devices, but each hearing device has a simple instruction card attached to it. After the lecture is over, return your device to the same table and collect your ID.

Self-Directed Book Group Forming

Currently a self-directed book group is forming around *Trauma and the Soul: A Psycho-spiritual Approach to Human Development and its Interruption* (Routledge, 2013), written by Dr. Donald Kalsched, this month's speaker. Everyone is welcome. To participate, please read the following:

1. A sign-up sheet for the book group is located on the book table in the lobby. Please clearly print your name, email address, phone number, and residential area (SE Portland, Salem, etc.) on the clipboard sheet. Place an X by your name if you are willing to help contact the others to set up the 1st meeting.
2. At the end of the evening, we'll collect the sign-up sheet, scan it, and email it to each signee on the list. We'll also include tips for starting and maintaining a successful book group.
3. One or more of you will then need to take the initiative to contact the others on your list, set a time and place to meet in person, and then, together, decide upon a meeting schedule that serves your group.
4. Please note: **a few copies of *Trauma and the Soul* are available for purchase in the lobby.**

An excerpt from the Introduction of *Trauma and the Soul: A Psycho-spiritual Approach to Human Development and its Interruption* (Routledge, 2013), reproduced with permission of author Donald Kalsched.

Standing on the deck of our Newfoundland home at sunset on a summer evening, I am suspended between two worlds. Behind me through the screen door I can hear the Canadian television announcer describing the latest suicide bombing in Kandahar Afghanistan—29 dead, 50 wounded . . . unimaginable trauma. I can hardly bear to listen.

Before me to the south lies the wild Atlantic ocean, its undulating swells crashing into the cliffs of Skerwink head, the day-dimmed stars slowly blinking on through a deepening azure sky as the last seabirds make their way across the horizon to offshore islands. The tremulous cry of a loon echoes across the water and over the extraordinary beauty of this gentle scene, a distant foghorn blows its soothing benediction. Held in this beauty, my soul feels at home and I am at peace.

These worlds seem incommensurable and I struggle as I try to hold them together. The first feels “profane,” filled with human tragedy and the mind-numbing suffering that comes with mortal, embodied existence in a violent, polarized world. This world presents me with the fragmenting reality of human conflict—destructive rage that I simply cannot metabolize—and in reaction to it I feel myself shutting down, closing up, dissociating, leaving my body: the essence of a traumatic response. The second world feel sacred, beautiful, boundless, and eternal, opening into an ineffable mystery that soothes the soul—into what Rudolf Otto (1917) called the *numinous* dimension of human experience. And when I open to this larger reality, I can feel the “knitting up of the raveled sleeve of care” (Macbeth, 2.2: 35-39) of my day-world anxieties and troubles; yet there is a haunting loneliness to this beautiful and impersonal world. There are no people in it, except myself.

How do we manage to live a full life between these two worlds? How is it possible to live an ensouled life after the “Kandahars” of our traumatic childhoods? *And how is this possible without using either world as an escape from the other*—without bypassing the realities of human suffering on the one hand or discounting (as mere illusions) the reality of those infinite and ineffable mysteries that the poet Czeslaw Milosz (2004) calls the “Second Space,” on the other? In [the philosopher Abraham] Heschel’s language, how do we maintain our “dual allegiance”—how do we honor our citizenship in both realms?

We invite you to visit us online at www.OFJ.org. Feel free to contact us at 503-223-3080 or by email via our website. A member of our Board will get back to you.