

Spiralling Through the Apocalypse: Facing the Death Mother to Claim our Lives

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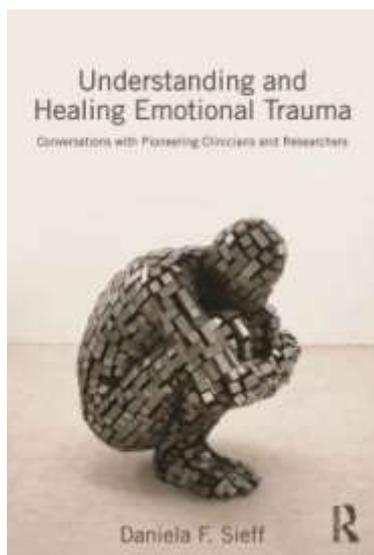
In: Sieff, D.F. (2015) *Understanding and Healing Emotional Trauma: Conversations with Pioneering Clinicians and Researchers*. Routledge, UK

Chapter Summary

Emotional trauma results from being unseen and unvalued as children. It compromises our ability to live a creative and authentic life, and forces us to construct a false persona and to develop inauthentic goals. It makes us determined to control our emotions and our bodies, and leaves us striving for perfection. It propels us towards addictions.

Worse than being unseen, is growing up with a parent who wishes that we, or some part of us, did not exist. The energy manifest by such a parent is symbolised by the archetypal 'Death Mother'. It is a deadening energy which permeates both psyche and body, turning us to stone. It stifles growth and imprints our cells with profound fear and hopelessness. In time, our vitality drains away and we find ourselves yearning for the oblivion of death. Ultimately, our body may turn against itself, as it does with cancer or auto-immune diseases. The Death Mother energy is vividly depicted in the myth of Medusa.

Having internalised the Death Mother energy, reclaiming our life requires a series of descents into the underworld of the unconscious mind and body. During each descent we meet the fierce and uncompromising energy symbolised by the archetype of the 'Apocalyptic Mother'. This energy challenges us to face our truth and to surrender our old ways so that something new and more authentic can be born. Each time we accept this challenge, we move further beyond the clutches of our internalised Death Mother to reclaim more of our lives.



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