

*'I highly recommend this book.'*

**Donald Kalsched**

author of *The Inner World of Trauma*  
and *Trauma and the Soul*



# BODY AS SHADOW

Jung's Method of Embodied Healing

**ERICA LORENTZ**



'In her compelling new book, Erica Lorentz has provided us with both a practical and theoretically grounded approach to working with what she calls "embodied active imagination." Beginning her book with an illuminating review of Jung's own attention to what he called the "somatic unconscious" or "subtle body," Lorentz shows how the simple inward-directed attention to an emotion, a sensation, or a symptom—all resident in the body—can ignite the imagination and restore the healing connection between childhood trauma and the psyche's archetypal depths.

'Those of us who work in the trauma field know that one cannot access the original wounds of our patients, or the intensity of the original emotional experience itself (where potential healing energies lie), through left-hemispheric interpretations or verbal insight alone. For this we need what Lorentz (citing Janet Adler) calls the "grace of direct experience." Her many case studies demonstrate the ways in which "embodied active imagination," carefully applied within the context of a secure therapeutic relationship, can access such direct experience and lead to the healing of those dissociative splits that have resulted from early unremembered trauma. Reading her book has already increased my understanding of the wounded psyche and the methods that best lead to its healing. I highly recommend this book.'

**Donald Kalsched, author of *The Inner World of Trauma*  
and *Trauma and the Soul***

'Erica Lorentz has written a truly wonder-full book, one that should be essential reading for anyone training to be a therapist or Jungian analyst. Lorentz's book provides the missing understanding of the importance of the body and its relation to the soul. It rescues Jung's insights from oblivion and shows how his process of individuation works. And how alchemy working in the depths of our being, can bring about miraculous healing.'

**Anne Baring, PhD, Jungian Analyst (IAAP), author of  
*Dream of the Cosmos: A Quest for the Soul***

'In this beautifully written book, Erica Lorentz speaks to the need for listening to the "sensual authority" of the body, inviting us on a remarkable transformational journey. While I have not personally experienced the embodied active Imagination process or the Authentic Movement modality, the many fascinating examples the author gives of her own and her clients' experiences could just as easily have come from the practice of Holotropic Breathwork®, with which I have been involved for over thirty-five years. Essential to both modalities: allowing the process/energy to move through the body; opening to the power and importance of the archetypal world; and facilitator presence as non-directive witness. This book touched me deeply and I recommend it for anyone interested in expanded states of consciousness in general, as well as approaches that favor embodied expression in particular.'

**Cary Sparks, Director, Institute for Holotropics, Inc.  
(Grof Transpersonal Training)**

# BODY AS SHADOW

Jung's Method of  
Embodied Healing

*Erica Lorentz*



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## Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I have deep gratitude for my teacher, mentor, and witness, Janet Adler. After studying various forms of dance and movement, being on the authentic movement floor felt like coming home. (See introduction.) Janet witnessed and processed with me one of the most essential and profound initiations of my life, which changed my view of reality. She put my foot on the path that led me to the work I still do and this book.

I would like to thank my many clients who were courageous enough to explore the unconscious through their bodies. They taught me how to facilitate their work using an embodied, imaginal approach in real time within the therapeutic relationship and the interactive field. I still grow and develop from them. Some of them wrote up their experiences and graciously gave me copyright permission. It's their words that illustrate the book's theory so richly.

I honor the many analysts who challenged and supported me. With them, I refined my clinical and theoretical skills, which were crucial to the development of my work.

I am grateful to Marilyn Matthews, who headed my thesis committee and trusted my voice when I made my first attempt to put this book down

on paper in 1997 for my thesis. Also, Dell McNealy and Alden Josey who were on the committee.

In 2007, Donald Kalsched read my thesis and wanted to send it to his editor at Routledge. I wasn't ready, and the material needed to gestate for fourteen more years, but he planted the seed that I was on to something and gave me the courage to write the book.

Anita Greene was the analyst who finally re-mothered me. As a part of the analysis, we worked with authentic movement and the Rubenfeld method. She bequeathed to me her watch from Romania, which I treasure to this day.

Robert Bosnak has facilitated the honing of my own personal experience with embodied imagination and, in particular, with the archetypal world. I deeply value his knowledge and support.

I am thankful for Amy Dorta-McIlwaine, my editor, who taught me how to write and encouraged me by pointing out what worked in my writing and organization. She allowed me to send her one chapter at a time as they emerged and trusted my process. When my sentences were too convoluted, she fine-tuned and smoothed them. We were a team.

My readers were vital to this writing. I intentionally chose professionals from various mental health disciplines. I wanted my book to reach people interested in Jung from multiple perspectives.

Lisa Fladager is a PhD candidate in depth psychology from Pacifica who combined Jung, trauma, and the body in her dissertation—she encouraged me to publish because when she read my thesis, she realized that she had needed it for her dissertation. She was excellent at challenging my ideas and how I spoke to my audience. She made me grapple with what I was describing and how I was explaining the work and to whom.

Judy Hall is trained and works in the area of wilderness journeying and transformation. Being a Virgo, she caught the nuances and little mistakes, and her support was full and grounded. She completely understood my ideas and commended me for sharing my knowledge of Jung and the body with the world. When I needed an extra editing eye, she willingly took on the task.

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Don Bisson, priest, spiritual director, and trainer doing Jungian work with inner-city youth and young adults, knows Jung deeply and helped me to hone the writing to make it useful to the spiritual community. His wisdom and many years in the field served me well.

Then there is Karnac. I am so honored that they accepted my book and have fully embraced it. Meeting Kate Pearce in London for coffee was very special. I was impressed not only by her professional knowledge and experience, but also by her earthiness, open heart and mind, and genuine interest in who I was and my story; she readily shared her own. After that meeting, I felt seen and met in a way that I hadn't imagined from a publisher. I have been blessed with her patience as I struggled to get the cover image to work, find poems that were not under copyright, and deal with all the little details of creating and copy-editing a book about which I hadn't a clue. She is steady, loving, and firm. And, of course, I would like to thank all the staff at Karnac who make books happen, from copy-editing to cover design, typesetting, proofreading, and finally, printing and marketing.

Writing a book was daunting. I was trapped in a huge writing complex. I was absolutely convinced that I could not. Most of my mother's family were in the publishing profession or teachers of English and literature. They all wrote prose and poetry. Early on, I rejected that world, and my passion turned to dance and singing until I met Patricia Lee Lewis. She is versed in the Amherst Writing Method, which focuses on what works in the writing. As she gently encouraged me to articulate my feelings, images, and thoughts through story, I began to relax. I would write from a prompt and read, and other writers would be amazed at what came from my pen. I was more amazed at their amazement. I will never forget the moment Patricia exclaimed to me, "You're one of those writers who writes and then it's done!" That blew me away. Of course, writing a manuscript isn't that simple. Now, I am grateful for the writing genes that seem to have been passed down to me.

In my personal life, I have many friends who have cheered me on and supported my work, and have even read a chapter or two with delight. They understood when I said, "I can't do anything in the afternoon because, you see, there is this pressure that is pushing me to sit down and birth this book." They gave nods to the cover design and title and listened to my endless waxing about what I was thinking and doing.

I am blessed to have people in my life who understand what I am trying to convey.

And lastly, I want to thank my colleagues who endorsed me:

- Edward Tick is a colleague and friend. He is a warrior for the archetypal work. As a scholar who writes beautifully, he shares in his books his love of Greece, Greek healing traditions through dreams (Asclepius), and his extensive trauma work with veterans. We share a deep respect and knowledge of Jung. I value his opinion of my work and his caring spirit. I am floored and honored that he wanted to write a foreword.
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- I met Anurahda Sathiyaseelan at Christ (Deemed to be University) in Bangalore, India, in 2024. She invited me to give a little speech at the inauguration of the Indian Psychology Lab, of which she is the head. I was immensely honored. She also came to my Introduction to Jung lecture for the graduate psychology department. Our personal meeting after this was full of excitement and passion as we shared and compared our love for our work.
- Cary Sparks is director of the Grof Transpersonal Training, and we met at a Grof Transpersonal Breathwork module. Through a series of curious circumstances, I gave her a couple of chapters which she loved. She graciously read and endorsed my manuscript. We both honor the significant connection between Jung and Grof's ideas and model of experiential transformation.

In the end, I am deeply thankful for the daimon who guided me along the path of Jung, the body, and spirituality. Since 2007, I kept wondering

if I should write this book, but I was scared and didn't know how. Finally, I was so pregnant with it that I had no choice. When Lisa Fladager and Monika Wikman nudged me, I knew it was time. To be honest, it was a long, but relatively painless birth. From my teaching, I learned how to weave theory and clinical examples. That format persisted throughout. The most fun was playing with words, as I had seen my mother and aunts doing. I loved the thesaurus, which was a fun tool for choosing words with the subtle nuances that gave texture to the writing. As the ideas and words flowed onto the page, I began to formulate my knowledge and experience in a way that I had never done before. I started to understand the extent of my theoretical and clinical experience, and I developed my own unique expression of it. What was fluid and unorganized about reading Jung's work as an embodied process, took form and organized itself. I wanted to bring Jung into the conversation about working with the body, which is a burgeoning area in psychology right now, where he belongs.



## About the author

**Erica Lorentz** fell in love with dance as a child. Later, she was interested in a broad range of dance and movement modalities that brought her into energetic, emotional, and imaginal expression. At the age of twenty-three, she began working with her authentic movement (Movement as Active Imagination) mentor, Janet Adler. Adler put her feet on the path of an embodied approach to psychology. Authentic movement taught her not only how to tune deeply into her own embodied soul (energy, emotions, imagination, somatic unconscious, and subtle body), but also it taught her how to sit with and witness others without judgment or interpretation. This became a foundation for her analytic work.

In graduate school, Erica Lorentz focused on object relations under the tutelage of psychoanalyst Dr. Elaine Siegel. Working with autistic and schizophrenic children and adolescents demanded that she use an embodied nonverbal approach to create a transference relationship. After graduating, she taught object relations at Antioch Graduate School of Professional Psychology for four years.

Her training did not feel complete. It left out the creative and archetypal power of the unconscious world. In 1988, she began training to become a psychoanalyst with the Inter-Regional Society of Jungian Analysts (IRSJA). At this time, she had a clinical practice and taught

courses and lectures on Jung and the expressive arts at the Jung Center in Houston, TX. Eventually, she became the director of the School for Expressive Arts.

In 1998, she wrote her thesis on “Jung, Spirituality, and the Body” and became a Jungian psychoanalyst (IAAP). The research for her thesis revealed how much Jung honored and spoke of the importance of embodied experience for transformation and how central it was in his theory. She became a training analyst for the IRSJA. Presently, she is a training analyst in the C. G. Jung Institute of New England and has a private practice.

Since 1986, she has given lectures and taught workshops focused on Jung and the body and embodied active imagination throughout the US and Canada, and in the UK. She has created several webinars for the Jung Platform and has been interviewed by Pacific radio. One of her lectures was filmed by New England Public Radio. In 2024, she had the honor of teaching in India for the Jungian psychoanalytic router training program, SMART, an expressive arts training program, and Christ University, where she gave a brief talk at the inauguration of the Indian Psychology Lab and a lecture for the graduate psychology department.

## Foreword

*Edward Tick, PhD*

Walt Whitman chanted, “I sing the body electric....” and declared that it is one with the soul. We ask, in our alienated, stress- and technology-filled lives, where that song went and how we might return it not just to understand our numbed condition, but through our healing efforts, restore that electricity.

As I was reading Jungian analyst Erica Lorentz’s important new book *Body as Shadow*, this twisted childhood version of an old folk song kept playing in my head: “My *body* lies over the ocean.” In our archetypal understanding, the ocean is the womb of life and the personal and collective unconscious. Indeed, as Jung and now Erica demonstrate, our bodies do lie atop this vast reservoir of primordial instincts, energies, and images, are intimately connected, and, in fact are at one with the invisible. The challenge to depth therapists is not how to relieve troubling symptoms; we know they are trying to express the hidden. It is how to recognize our hidden soul dimensions in and through the body, access it, and allow it to surface and heal.

How do we read the soul in and through the body? How do we help it heal? The body has been so neglected in our attempts to be holistic that Erica Lorentz is pioneering in taking up this noble and too-neglected task.

Erica is a devoted Jungian. She studies, contemplates, applies, and utilizes both Jung's accessible and mysterious works to a great depth and seeks to expand theory and practice. Thus, Erica not only practices analysis but also, as we hear, uses the arts, dance, authentic movement, breathwork, and other modalities to bring clients back into the body as well as allow the body to speak without words what the soul has been containing and striving to express.

This is so critical to the healing process that Erica references Jung on this several times. She explains that Jung speaks of the somatic unconscious as the subtle body. From his Zarathustra seminar:

The physiological unconscious, the so-called somatic unconscious which is the subtle body ... becomes material, because the body is the living unit and our conscious and our unconscious are embedded in it: they contact the body. Somewhere there is a place where the two ends meet and become interlocked. And that is the place where one cannot know whether it is matter, or what one calls "psyche."

Erica seeks this interlocking place and challenges us to declare and demonstrate how we can engage this process:

[W]e need not only archetypal guides, but a human guide and companion as well. Part of my analytic work involves slowly building a vessel of consciousness—an inner witness ... of the imaginal and subtle body: embodied soul. Then therapist and client can dare to enter the straits ... If we therapists know how to navigate this mysterious backcountry for ourselves—this rugged terrain that is not often part of the conversation in depth psychology today—then perhaps we can sit dumb and simply not-know with our clients.

One delightful aspect of this work is that, through theory, practice, and stories from her teachers, colleagues, clinical work, and her own journey, Erica moves comfortably from the theoretical to the personal, from ideas to embodiment. We meet teachers throughout her life and hear experiences she and clients have had as they seek the spontaneous and truthful, not reducing experience to theory but opening us to its depths and wisdom.

Reading Erica's work and aligning with her goals reminds me of the Spanish concept of *duende*. Here it is briefly described by poet Federico García Lorca. I see Erica's work in this vivid portrait: "In the art of the dance, the body struggles against the invisible mist that envelopes it and tries to bring to light the dominant profile demanded ... Ardent struggle, endless vigil." Erica teaches us to guide this struggle, sit in silent vigil and witness as the soul emerges through the body.

Silence and not-knowing instruct us in an unexpectedly intimate, nonverbal dialogue. When emergent feelings and visionary beings surprise and even startle us ... we have stumbled upon an authentic transmission from the unconscious. Image and meaning ... deliver a clarifying template of new possibilities.

We can declare and salute Erica Lorenz's goal:

[T]o reinstate the somatic unconscious/subtle body in our work. This is the "solution" that Jung attempted to bring to modern psychology: to complete the map of the human psyche, to re-member the psyche/soma/cosmic relationship.

To honor Erica's devotion and accomplishment, we turn once more to the poets, and again realize the intimate connections between archetypal and poetic imaginations that Erica embraces through active imagination and body as vessel and metaphor. William Butler Yeats wrote, "O body swayed to music, O brightening glance, How can we know the dancer from the dance?" In her determined and courageous campaign to return the body to Jungian analytic theory and practice and help reunite body and soul, analyst Erica Lorenz becomes both the dancer and the dance.

\* \* \*

**Edward Tick** PhD, is an internationally recognized archetypal psychotherapist, author, educator, poet, pilgrimage guide, and peace activist. He has pioneered archetypal and culturally based healing for almost half a century. He is a specialist on ancient Greece, the origins of medicine and psychotherapy, healing the invisible wounds of war and violence, and restoring the *polis*. Among his books, *The Practice of Dream Healing* and *War and the Soul* are modern classics, and his books have been translated into several languages. In addition to

private practice Ed works in Greece and Vietnam on holistic and spiritually based healing, restoration of the Asklepiian dream incubation tradition, and other ancient practices, and with Ukraine and Russia on war trauma healing as it is happening. His newest book is *Passage to Poros: In the Sanctuary of the Sea God*.

# Introduction

*God is in our sensuality ... God has forged a glorious union between the soul and the body ... Be at home with your body, for God willed that we have a twofold nature: sensual and spiritual.*  
—Julian of Norwich (1342–c.1416)

Many books are written from the soul of the writer. Mine is no exception. Even where the writing itself includes no personal biographical information, authors may expound upon experiences and ideas that have grown in the fertile soil of their childhood and psyche, whether these have been lived out or left in the shadows to be revealed in our clinical work and on the page. The archetypal cornerstones of the writer's psyche also shape the narrative in a way that may go unnoticed even by the author.

This book was conceived in 1979, when I was writing my thesis for my analytic training. It grew from my own and my clients' experiences. I was pregnant with it until in 2021, when my belly became so large with it that I had to give it birth. But my story began in my childhood, of course, with pivotal experiences that shaped my personality and complexes, channeled my deepest passion, and revealed my future as a student of psychology and the transpersonal.



## Childhood experiences

I grew up in the Allegheny Mountains, in the poorest county in Pennsylvania. My father was the country doctor and loved his life. My mother was a frustrated singer and a depressed 1950s housewife. It was a safe time in rural America, and I was free to roam and be with nature.

Our family attended the local Presbyterian church every Sunday. I hated it. The pastor's fire-and-brimstone sermons bored me and totally contradicted something I intuited deep in my gut. I didn't quite know what I believed, but certainly it wasn't that. The real problem was, I wanted to know God. Leaving church after the service, I would cry all the way home because God clearly didn't live there. I argued with my Sunday school teacher. I hadn't a clue what I was talking about, but I found her interpretation of the Bible stories moralistic and ridiculous.

A few tent revival meetings came through town, and I was moved by the energy of the singing and the group. As a preteen, I sang in the church choir and sat right behind the altar candle. When the minister started the sermon, I would tune him out and stare at the flame, imagining that I could play with its flickering shape, and so I learned to meditate.

At age fifteen I was sent to a private school where I was nurtured in an intellectual landscape. Seeds were planted, the horizon expanded, and a new life was sown.

At age sixteen, I traveled across the country with family friends, taking in the sights along the way. We stopped in the Badlands of South Dakota, and I was struck dumb, entering a state of awe, silence, and calm—some kind of subtle body experience that I could not name. Amid the breathtaking vistas of the Rocky Mountains, I cried and cocooned in this quiet reverence. Even beyond the pure beauty, however, something had opened in my heart, and my soul peeked out.

Upon our return to Pennsylvania, I felt bereft. For three nights I sat in the backyard, gazing into the dark and asking, "Who am I? What am I doing here?" There was no answer.

On the third night, I said, "I'm not leaving this spot until you answer me." Softly, a shift in perception opened, and I became totally aware of who I was and why I was there. No words could express that sense

of knowing, peace, and contentment. I just knew in my body. I felt connected to the oneness of the universe and all of life.

Although I was a shy and introverted person, when I returned to prep school other girls—who previously had paid little attention to me—sought my counsel for problems they were having. I was a good listener. But the blissful knowing that had been so palpable faded in just a few months, and I was left depressed. I did not know where it came from or how to pursue it. There was no teacher to consult, and I hadn't the faintest idea of how to articulate my experience.

Luckily, the Pendle Hill Quaker community was nearby. I spent time there and got serious about meditating, and so started the search for my spiritual path. This fundamental pattern of spiritual discovery has stayed with me—the awakening, the knowing, the loss—to be repeated and explored throughout my life.

### **In pursuit of my incarnation**

In 1975, at the age of twenty-three, I started working with Janet Adler in the practice of Authentic Movement, the Jungian form of movement work. Dance spoke to my soul, and I had studied numerous styles by that time. I wasn't performance oriented, but I was very enthusiastic, looking for something I couldn't name. Being on the Authentic Movement floor felt coming home. I was a disembodied soul, slowly—with Janet's clear and patient witnessing—beginning to incarnate into my living body. Coming into one's own embodied presence is a process that is never complete, and this was just the beginning.

In Authentic Movement, also known as Movement as Active Imagination, one listens for and trusts the impulse from the somatic unconscious, and allows this urge to flow into emotional, energetic, rhythmic expression and movement. Memory, aspects of psyche and the complexes, and archetypal manifestations stream into embodied consciousness. Authentic Movement engages an intimate lens of embodied perception in order to manifest internal states that need to become visible. Different layers of the psyche are given the space to enter into the subtle body and imaginal world of the mover and the group, and to blossom into consciousness. This conscious dialogue with the somatic unconscious brings insight and ultimately transformation. Through this body dream, we can awaken to somatic awareness and healing.

The container and sacred space are held by the witness or witnesses who sit on the boundary of the circle. There is neither direction from the facilitator nor external music to provide rhythm or mood. Sound and rhythm can flow from the mover(s) without the use of words. Witnesses keep the time boundary for entering into and coming out of the movement.

The pureness and purpose of this practice can be profound in a way I have not encountered in any other body-oriented modality. The goal for both witness and mover is to enter into a deep interactive field that emerges from the body, movement, energy, emotion, imagination, subtle body, and the group unconscious. The mover may travel to childhood memory and trauma or into a state of spiritual awareness and aliveness. The somatic unconscious is the guide.

After the movement ends, the participants try, through visual arts and the written or spoken word, to digest and give voice to what they experienced. No interpretation is given. As mover and witness engage again and again in this penetration of and return from the somatic unconscious, the meaning unfolds from the experience itself. Interpretation and analysis are not useful at this point in the process.

Janet put my feet on the path of Movement as Active Imagination, and I would work with her on and off for twenty years. Her witnessing brought to me a new depth of seeing and a clear presence. Conscious healing—sometimes gentle and measured, sometimes irruptive—permeated my body and psyche. She was one of the most important mentors I have known.

This healing continues to this day as I pursue the practice of Authentic Movement as well as other forms of embodied psychological and spiritual work. My path has brought me to a number of teachers, healers, and analysts who have been instrumental in my journey. Several of these Jungian-oriented practices are described in this book.

### **Education and curiosity**

It became clear to me fairly early on that I wanted to study psychology. I began a master's degree in 1978 and was very fortunate to intern for a year with Freudian psychoanalyst Dr. Elaine Siegel, who also worked with the body. My passion for studying the depth of psychology was

answered for a while here, working with schizophrenic and developmentally delayed children and adolescents.

Siegel's focus was object relations, and she knew that subject like the back of her hand. Before starting with her on this—one of the richest experiences of my training—I had to read René Spitz, Donald Winnicott, Harold Searles, and a book on child development. Besides our supervision sessions, we had workshops (including one on Dr. Judith Kestenberg's work on developmental rhythms), and every week I read journal articles from *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*. I became fairly well versed in this perspective and, upon my graduation, taught object relations at Antioch Graduate School of Professional Psychology for four years. Object relations and attachment theory became a lasting foundation of my work.

I relocated to Houston in 1986, and while I was immersed in Jungian analysis with Julia Morgan, clinical work, and teaching, a difficult physical situation arose in my life. In 1987, I suddenly developed constant headaches that no medication could touch and that the medical system could not diagnose. I experienced perceptual shifts, particularly in the evening. My eyes were extremely sensitive to light, especially fluorescent bulbs, so I often wore dark glasses. While I could not explain this, I was not afraid, and my analyst was supportive. I began to realize that my body was trying to say something, and I needed to listen to it. Thus began a descent into my embodied soul that enlarged my view of the collective unconscious and archetypal phenomena.

I hadn't seen Janet Adler for a while, but she came to facilitate an Authentic Movement workshop at the Jung Center where I taught. We reconnected in a most loving way. When I started moving in the sacred temenos with her as witness, my way of entering into the inner depths of my body totally changed. Instead of moving from an image into the body, as I had for years, I came into total awareness of sensations and energetic cues. Sensation is my third function, the portal into the collective unconscious. These guided me to interface directly with somatic unconscious material more deeply than I ever had fathomed.

The unwavering pursuit of tracking, following, and embodying this specific guidance became my focus. Healing became syntonik with specific body positions, directions, gestures, and the raw energy flow that emerged as I moved. The dark wisdom of my sensory perception

was the doorway into the subtle body. Images were rare, and words could not adequately articulate what I was following and learning. I knew that to unravel the mystery of my headaches, I had to devote myself to the full acceptance of these emergent energies being midwifed through my body.

I traveled frequently to California to participate in an Authentic Movement group with Janet—some of the most profound transformational work that I have ever done. At first my movement was subtle and small. I had to pay strict attention to how my body should orient, position, and move. From the movement, an image might occur: In one recurring pattern, as I moved slowly on my knees with my forehead on the floor, I was looking with my forehead through black glass into the earth. In another, the energy in my head was a centrifuge—hardly any motion from the outside while the inside rotated intensely, clearing my energy and mind. These experiences had no memories or personal associations. I fully trusted my body and was not apprehensive about following this deep instinct; listening to and following this inner compass always produced a sense of completion, clarity, and peace. Beyond these movements that came from the dictates of the energy phenomenon, I also explored childhood themes, emotions, and fantasies in the group and in my analysis.

As I continued to work in Authentic Movement, I became aware of a specific energy that wanted to flow up through my body. Starting quietly, it eventually developed into large, undulating motions. With my feet firmly planted on the ground, I would stand and sweep my hips and torso forward and back; my arms flowed out and up to facilitate the energy that wanted to proceed up my spine and torso. Although I did not normally move like this, I allowed my body to engage with the river of energy. More and more, it became a vigorous, powerful, and releasing experience. An intense sensation of energy also yearned to move out from the soles of my feet and the palms of my hands. I would rub them to free the tension, or put my hands on others to facilitate the flow of this energy.

As I would seek and smooth the path in my body for the rhythmic stream of energy, it would get stuck in places. Curiously, although we all had our eyes closed for deeper kinesthetic listening, some fellow mover would instinctively touch the exact place where the energy had slowed, releasing it to continue on its path. In this way,

I learned to trust the interactive field and the unconscious of the group mind.

Speaking with Janet whenever I went to the group helped me find a language to describe what was occurring in my energy field. She named my experiences “altered states” and seemed to “see” into my process, though she never interpreted anything. Over time, I became conscious of what Jung called the *Mundus Imaginalis*, a term borrowed from the Sufi scholar Henry Corbin. Again, I was not anxious about this process, but simply accepted what was occurring and understood the importance of allowing it to continue through my body.

During this time, I was seeing clients, in analysis, in a marital relationship, and training to be a Jungian analyst. Besides this archetypal activity, at other times in the movement period I would have embodied visitations from my personal unconscious around my childhood, shadow, and trauma. These were equally valuable for my conscious evolution and brought new consciousness to complexes and relationship issues. Through my work with Authentic Movement and Janet Adler, during one of the richest times in my life, I gained a new awareness of the significance of embodied practice and witnessing this level of communication with my clients.

Finally, after five years of dedication to working with the energy and these deepening, expanding undulations, one day the energy shot through my solar plexus, up and out through my head and arms, and down through my legs. My whole body was vibrating, and I was sobbing with relief and gratitude, in a state of ecstasy. My headaches disappeared. The dark numinosum had spoken, had been met, and was unveiled, though words could not define the resolution. My panorama of the fullness and depth of the unconscious expanded in a way I could not have plumbed in any other fashion. I understood archetypal phenomena from an embodied dimensional standpoint. This was to inform my clinical work with clients.

### Analytic training

In 1988, I entered the Inter-Regional Society of Jungian Analysts as a candidate in training, eager to study Jung in depth, to read and discuss clinical work from a Jungian/archetypal perspective, and to balance

my training in object relations. During this era, many in the profession expressed doubts about the classical/archetypal approach, as Jungian analysts began pursuing in-depth studies in attachment theory and developmental work. While I genuinely respect their willingness to open their inquiry and clinical work into Freudian, attachment, and other avenues of psychotherapeutic work, I was more inclined toward archetypal study and understanding. Nonetheless, I loved my studies and continued to expand my theoretical and clinical knowledge.

Fully understanding the importance of the attachment frame, I could see the one-sidedness of the classical archetypal view as it had developed and was then practiced in the profession. However, over time I have also come to recognize the limits of a psychological perspective that does not recognize the power and importance of the archetypal world and an embodied relationship to it. Modern clinical knowledge and practice leave out the embodied soul, the *Mundus Imaginalis*, and what Jungian analyst Murray Stein calls “advanced individuation” (Kingsley, 2018b, 19:46). Stein continues:

The training programs, by and large, do not train analysts to [work with the Spirit of the Depth or archetypal experience]. They have to learn that on their own ... But within the context of the training programs, I would say if it is done at all, [it is] very light, extremely light. And that is conforming to the spirit of our times. It's fast-paced, wanting solutions now, wanting to correct and adjust various parts of the personality that handicap you from getting ahead and doing well in our society ... The training programs have not really encouraged the development of that kind of deep engagement. (20:49)

While Stein and the philosophy scholar Peter Kingsley go on to discuss the difficulty of working with this level of “advanced individuation,” this remains an important aspect of Jungian work that cannot be omitted. As shamanism shows, someone has to have an innate proclivity for the archetypal world to be “trained” in it; those being admitted to Jungian training programs need to already have a sense of and hopefully a few experiences with this dimension of psychological and transcendent reality. Then, I believe, the training programs have an imperative to “train” candidates to contain and work with archetypal



material. Fortunately, I was already engaged in my embodied active imagination process when I entered training. We need to remember that at the heart of Jung's archetypal knowledge and the embodied active imagination process that he developed and lived so profoundly is a crucial resource of transformative work. The question is how to bring this knowledge back into the training of Jungian analysts and Jungian-oriented therapists.

There are analysts whom I highly respect who have managed to integrate both the attachment and the archetypal fields. For me, Jung's model of the complex is the framework for this. It reaches into our childhood roots; maps the memory and formation of the personality, including shadow and the contra-sexual; and then points to the power of the archetypal core. I have found that it is critical, when working with any engrained complex, to come to terms with this archetypal core on its own ground. We must acknowledge the archetype as a powerful force that influences us and can disrupt or bring healing in our lives. As Jungian analyst James Hillman (2010) points out, quoting the poet W. H. Auden, "We are lived by powers we pretend to understand" (1:09:18–20).

### Surprising research

As I studied Jung and learned to trust my body, I began to wonder what Jung might say about all this. I developed my own index on the body while studying each volume of the *Collected Works* and other writings by Jung and others. To my surprise, I discovered that Jung said a lot about the value of embodied knowing in our individual journey toward individuation. In fact, his descent into the unconscious as described in *The Black Books* was his journey following the Soul into his own inner embodied experience. I found that he reiterated, over and over, that one cannot transform without one's body—that this would be like "the wind in the desert" (1997, *The Visions Seminar*, vol. 2, p. 473): no one is there to experience it. Without embodying the work, we cannot be truly affected by a psychological or spiritual process. Thus was birthed the topic of my thesis—"Jung, spirituality, and the body", written in 1998—which expanded over time in knowledge, experience, and depth, eventually flowing out into this book.

*The Black Books* are the true chronicle of how in touch, emotionally and energetically, Jung was during his own journey. We see the raw effect of his active imagination method on his own emotional state. He writes of the pressure from the unconscious that asks him to engage. He chooses to defy the Western scientific community and its focus on outward data and the ego. He trusts and follows his Soul, hearkening back to the creative instinct he engaged with in his childhood.

Yet Jung's focus on the body is not well known. A handful of analysts have written about it—Marion Woodman, Joan Chodorow, Anita Greene, Tina Stromsted, Marian Dunlea, Cedrus Monte, Jane Bacon, Robert Bosnak, and Nathan Schwartz-Salant, to name a few—and only sixty or so Jungian analysts worldwide work in an embodied way. I decided to delve more fully into Jung's understanding of the role of the body, examining both the corpus of his theory and his active imagination process.

Meanwhile, even as I was encountering the unconscious in my own subtle body, many of my clients sought to discuss their “altered-state experiences.” I had not advertised in any way to draw these clients to me. As they described their body phenomena, my own history empowered me to help them explore these altered states and their significance. They were relieved to find someone who—amid our cultural milieu so lacking in acceptance and comprehension of embodied archetypal phenomena—would listen, not judge, and even offer a theoretical and experiential framework to help them gain perspective and come to terms with what their body was telling them.

Working with clients has provided an opportunity to grow my own knowledge and develop my clinical approach in these areas, and I am extremely grateful. The vast knowledge that I gleaned from them has contributed immensely to both my learning and my writing. As clients continue to come to me with energetic and imaginal processes that take them into the *Mundus Imaginalis*, my expertise expands. Every client is unique, and these differences are always enlightening. I am honored to welcome them as part of my deepening understanding and to continue learning from the individual stories and experiences they carry along the edge, weaving between personal and archetypal processes.

In his many volumes, Jung expounds on his theories and research by assembling ideas from mythology, religion, philosophy, alchemy, and

science, applying his unique intellectual analysis and understanding. In the midst of this investigation, he raises the profound importance of the soul, body, emotion, energy, imagination, and the subtle body. As Iain McGilchrist would say, this is the right-hemisphere response to modern culture's left-hemisphere obsession. For Jung, the two halves are not separate realities, but a constant that he weaves throughout his work.

I have followed this thread through his life and writings, and now I offer this complex tapestry to the Jungian community and the therapeutic community in general. My training and experience in Authentic Movement have given me the framework and tools to be able to sit and “not-know” as the emergent embodied narrative unfolds. Witnessing without judgment or the need to interpret, in a state of open presence in my body, is another hallmark of my clinical work. From my research, I know that embodied practice as a core element in our Jungian tradition has been there all along, woven through his theory and work, but is only now coming to the fore. It is time to honor this aspect of his experience, understanding, and writing.

The evolution of my understanding of complex theory with its archetypal core, and how it is lived in each individual, has been invaluable in my personal and clinical work. In explicating the role of the body and the mythopoetic in Jung's theory, this book addresses the split that has occurred between the developmental and archetypal approaches. Balance must be restored, through linking these two aspects of psychological and transpersonal development and growth.

Embodied active imagination—a method contained and worked in the alembic (the vessel) of the therapeutic relationship—can bridge the childhood and the archetypal. It was Jung's preferred method of clinical work, and it remains an effective vehicle for embracing the depths of both psyche and body. As Jung tells us again and again throughout his writing, we cannot transform without the body.

## Note to the reader

**I**n this book, I have purposefully chosen to use the words “therapist” and “analyst” intermittently because I mean to include both. Although I write as a Jungian psychoanalyst, I am also speaking to my colleagues as a therapist because we all do therapy with clients. By using both terms, I also wish to reach the larger group of psychotherapists who have an interest in depth psychology and for whom this material is just as relevant.