

And the infant is someone because an infant is whole spirit, freshly and uniquely embodied. Have you ever experienced the aura of a newborn baby? Our 'isness' shines before we take our first suck of mother's milk. Our particular way of being has an immediate and profound impact on others from our first moment on. We are all source points of energy.

If we deny this 'source' energy then we become selfish, not selfless. We become suckers of others' energy, dependent and attached; self-absorbed in our emptiness and generators of an addictive consumer society. Furthermore, if we continue to

experience ourselves as a victim of mother then it is hardly surprising that we should later retaliate by victimising Mother Earth. A primal state of blaming passivity leads to exploitation and a fanatical desire to control when, with our grown bodies, we eventually stir to action. Unless we grow up psychologically, by claiming our intrinsic and initial wholeness we shall remain compulsive consumers. We need to stop going back to mother (or, rather, not stop at going back to mother) and re-enter our essential infant power so that we can begin to water the seed of the full adult woman or man in us.

Further Reading

Alice Miller, *The Drama of Being a Child*, Virago

Jill Hall, *The Reluctant Adult*, Prism Press 1993

Demons are Alive and Well

John Rowan

Anyone who thinks that the belief in demons and exorcism is dying out should read the interesting paper by Samuel Pfeifer from his work in Switzerland. He surveyed 343 mainly Protestant outpatients of a psychiatric clinic who described themselves as religious. Of these, 38% believed in the possible causation of their problems through the influence of evil spirits, labelling this as 'occult bondage' or 'possession'. In the case of patients in charismatic free churches suffering

from anxiety disorders and schizophrenia, 70% had been involved in rituals of exorcism. Those so involved thought they were good, but no visible improvement in their condition resulted. They actually got worse where medical treatment was refused and coercive forms of exorcism were used.

The author makes the point that therapists should be aware that some of their patients may hold these beliefs, and be prepared to empathise with them.

Samuel Pfeifer, 'Belief in Demons and Exorcism in Psychiatric Patients in Switzerland', *British Journal of Medical Psychology* Vol 67 No3, 1994